Motherhood and the Construction of Feminist Identities: Variations in a Women's Movement Organization

Jo Reger, ***Skidmore College***

This paper examines the relationship between feminism and motherhood as it plays out in the construction of feminist identities. Through a qualitative analysis of two grassroots chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW), I examine how members' understandings and experiences with motherhood and their community context and organizational environment shape the construction of shared feminist identities. Central to this study is the conception of motherhood as a historically constructed ideology that provides a gendered model of behavior for women. In the organizations studied, I find that motherhood is interpreted two ways: as a social status with political ramifications and as the act of caring and taking responsibility for relationships. These interpretations are incorporated into "frames" extended to potential recruits and shape the group's actions. As a result these two ideologically similar liberal feminist organizations construct distinct feminist identities.

Early in the second wave of United States feminism, activists identified motherhood as a target for transformation and reevaluation (Farganis 1986, Umansky 1996). Some feminists framed motherhood as an essentially positive experience, damaged by patriarchal constraints that devalued women's work. Other feminists critiqued motherhood as the basis of women's oppression (see Umansky 1996). Because of these different approaches and responses, feminism's relationship with motherhood is a tumultuous one, leading one social observer to conclude that motherhood "is a problem that modern feminists cannot face" (Hewlett 1986, p. 185).

Yet feminist scholarship provides evidence of the connection between motherhood and social activism. Theorists have written extensively on the extension of motherhood into the public arena. Historically, maternalism as an ideology served as a foundation of social change that shaped the welfare state (see Koven and Michel 1990, Skocpol 1992). Other work illustrates how the role of mother and maternal concerns can become the basis for political action in communities and national movements (Naples 1998, Blumberg 1990, Taylor 1996).

In this study I examine the relationship between motherhood and feminism in a social movement context. Drawing on the conception of motherhood as a gendered ideology, this work investigates the relationship between interpretations of motherhood and the construction feminist identities within women's movement organizations.

Sociological Inquiry, Vol. 71, No. 1, Winter 2001, 85–110

Motherhood as a historically constructed ideology provides a gendered model of behavior for all women, even those who have not given birth or raised children (Hays 1996, Russo 1976, Taylor 1996). Russo (1976) refers to this ideology as the "mother mandate." The "mother mandate" socializes women to develop a "sensitivity to the needs of others and the assumption of responsibility for taking care" (Gilligan 1982, p. 16). This "ethic of care," as Gilligan labels it, leads women to define themselves in a context of human relationships. Therefore, the ideology of motherhood encourages all women to do "mothering" both in and outside of the family.

Because gender is a structure organizing social life, separating people into different statuses that represent relationships of power, it can serve as a basis of societal oppression and a foundation of social protest and political strength (Connell 1987, Gamson 1994, Smith 1987). Thus, motherhood, a gendered model of behavior, can serve as source of oppressive practices and a basis of feminist critique and activism.

Although motherhood is a gender ideology present for all women, scholars caution against assuming that any social categories, such as gender, race, class, or sexuality, have uniform interpretations within movements. Robnett (1996) argues that studies of the civil rights movement tend to treat the category of race as the foundation of a coherent and singular collective identity. She asserts that interpretations of race lead to the construction of multiple activist identities. Building on her work, I explore how motherhood is interpreted differently within women's movement organizations and therefore shapes feminist identities differentially.

To examine these interpretations, I focus on two chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW), a large women's movement organization. Since its inception in 1966, NOW has been one of the most visible women's movement organizations in the United States. Claiming 500,000 members nationwide (National Organization for Women 1999), NOW eschews radical politics in favor of more mainstream tactics and embraces an ideology that favors the inclusion of women in the societal systems of power as the major vehicle of change (Freeman 1975, Ferree and Hess 1985/1995, Echols 1989). Reflecting this liberal feminist ideology, the organization's goal is "to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society" (National Organization for Women 1966).

NOW is a particularly appropriate site to explore the influence of interpretations of motherhood on collective identity construction. A national organization, NOW has developed a federated structure that involves members in an interconnected system of national, regional, state, and local levels. NOW's local chapters are semi-autonomous grassroots organizations that allow members to select issues and actions (Carden 1974, Freeman 1975). Most studies of NOW

have focused on the national level (Freeman 1975, Carden 1974, Ryan 1992, see exception Staggenborg 1989), assuming the presence of a singular feminist identity throughout the organization.

Through a case study analysis, I find that motherhood is interpreted in "frames" that are politicized explanations constructed within a group and extended to potential recruits and the public. In these frames, the ideology of motherhood is interpreted two ways: as a social status with political ramifications all women experience and as the act of caring and taking responsibility for relationships. However, I find that, though both groups drew on these frames of motherhood, they interpreted these frames differently. To understand these differences, I turn to social movement theories of recruitment and identity.

Feminist Identity Construction

Two processes contribute to the construction of a shared feminist identity: recruitment efforts through social networks and the alignment of individual beliefs with a movement's ideology. Once women begin to interact within a social movement community (Buechler 1990), they come to define and interpret their world and lives in new political ways and create a shared activist identity (Melucci 1989, Taylor and Whittier 1992, Whittier 1997, 1995).

To recruit participants, movement activists often engage in face-to-face interaction (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988). In the women's movement, one recruitment site has been informal networks of women who know each other through prior activism, friendship, or neighborhood networks, or through workplace interaction (Cable 1992, Carden 1974, Evans 1979, Freeman 1975). These networks or small groups, called micromobilization contexts, are sites where individual actors come in contact with new "cultural materials" and embark on a group process of defining identities, grievances, resources, and opportunities (Mueller 1992, p. 7).

A key process in recruitment and mobilization is the connection of an individual's beliefs to the movement's goals and rhetoric termed "frame alignment" (Snow, Rochford, Worden, and Benford 1986). Framing takes place when social movement frames are extended into micromobilization contexts. Frames act to convince participants of the legitimacy of social movement participation (Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994). Frame amplification occurs when the movement's beliefs and values are portrayed as compatible with those of the potential participant (Snow et al. 1986).

Women often join social movements when life events are cast in the context of movement discourse (Stewart 1994). Events such as divorce, child custody battles, or family violence can draw women into feminist organizations addressing these issues. These interpretative frames offer potential participants politicized understandings of their life experiences and events, thus bringing them into

a movement. However, by offering specific interpretations of events and conditions, frames may also work to "screen" who enters the organization and participates in the construction of a shared activist identity. In the women's movement, frame alignment processes regarding motherhood contributed to movement homogeneity and the exclusion of women who did not "align" with the group's motherhood discourse. However, the construction of different motherhood frames among women's movement organizations mitigates this homogenizing tendency.

As women come together and form feminist communities, networks, or groups, they participate in the construction of a shared "collective" activist identity. This identity is shaped both by the internal processes of the group (e.g., individuals' life experiences and understanding of gender roles) and external forces faced by the group (e.g., political and cultural opportunities) (Melucci 1989). Part of the process of identity construction is drawing boundaries between activists and the "web of others in the contested social world" (Taylor and Whittier 1992, p. 111). By defining who is and is not a member, activists can connect to each other, reinforcing their commitment to the group. Boundaries can develop from distinctions of geography, religion, race, or cultural beliefs or institutions (Taylor and Whittier 1992). In the case of feminism, a critique of gender roles and the concept of patriarchy serve to define boundaries between feminist networks and "mainstream" society.

The construction of boundaries can also be the result of competition between groups. Zald and Ash (1966) argue that social movement organizations may compete with each other for resources. Organizations that are too similar, or exist in a multi-organizational environment may have difficulty recruiting members and surviving. To distinguish themselves from other organizations, groups may work to define themselves as clearly different from other organizations, carving out an ideological or activist "niche" and consequentially constructing oppositional identities. In environments where there is less competition for members and resources, groups may not develop such boundaries between themselves and other activist organizations.

Data and Method

My goal in this qualitative analysis is two-fold. First, I seek to investigate conceptions, definitions, and interpretations of motherhood and mothering by feminists through an analysis of "activist stories" from women involved in NOW chapters. I conducted intensive interviews with twenty-six NOW members and also used interviews with three key informants involved in the national, state or regional levels of NOW. My second goal is to gain an understanding of chapter-wide discourse through an analysis of chapter activities, documented in newsletters, press releases, and chapter histories. For this, I examined documents

throughout the histories of the Cleveland and New York City NOW chapters. These documents were analyzed to uncover how interpretations of motherhood shaped recruitment and chapter-level rhetoric on mothers and issues of motherhood.

This two-pronged analysis emerges from theories of collective identity, frames, and micromobilization contexts. Collective identity construction creates a group sense of purpose while at the same time, politicizing everyday life (Melucci 1989, Taylor and Whittier 1992). This group sense of purpose creates an "internal accountability" to the movement (Mansbridge 1995, p. 27). I explore this internal accountability discourse by investigating women's understanding of feminism, feminist goals, and the construction of identity and organizational boundaries.

I conducted twenty six in-depth interviews with participants from the chapters. Respondents were identified and recruited through key chapter contacts, snowball procedures, blind letters, and phone calls. I intentionally sought out women who had played leadership roles in the chapter in order to uncover organizational culture and framing strategies. The sample does not represent the entire chapter membership but instead provides an understanding of the focus of chapter leadership. Key informants provided "outsider" views of chapter activism useful in understanding how the chapters changed over time. All interviews were open-ended and semi-structured. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and three and one-half hours, with most lasting approximately an hour and a half. Interview questions addressed the nature of the women's participation in the chapter, the sense of identity and community arising from that participation (including an examination of feminist ideology and other organizational affiliations), the activity level and general state of the chapter (including characterizations of membership), and respondents' views on the current state of feminism, nationally and locally. Interviewees were also asked to describe themselves in terms of their most salient social roles and statuses. Interviewees were promised anonymity and confidentiality with their comments. To protect their identities, some information about them has been withheld.

All interviews except one were tape-recorded and transcribed in full. One respondent requested that she not be recorded; instead, I took detailed notes of her interview. Interview transcripts, documents, and notes on documents were first coded into categories such as events, issues, personal reflections, and organizational coalitions. These categories were later cross-analyzed for frames, identity statements, and recruitment strategies.

A second major documentary source is the chapters' papers housed in their offices and different archival collections. These documents contain information on national, regional, state, and chapter activities. Each collection contains newsletters and documents from the national organization, personal correspondence, minutes of meetings, bylaws of the chapter, and publications from feminist

organizations. The documents provide information on the history of the chapters, organizational activities, and events. The documents also contain members' personal reflections on feminism and, at times, specifically addressed issues related to mothers and motherhood as a social issue. This data was then sorted into the same categories as the interviews and examined for themes relating to motherhood.

Using the NUD.IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing) program, the data was coded into specific and theoretically focused categories that are the emphasis of my analysis: collective identity, collective action and micromobilization contexts, and frames extended to potential recruits. These categories were sorted to identify themes and were examined specifically for their connection to gender roles, motherhood, and mothering.

Members of both chapters typify NOW's general membership patterns. That is, demographically, they resemble characterizations of liberal feminists by other scholars (Carden 1974, Evans 1979, Freeman 1975, Ryan 1992). NOW is described as an organization with white, mostly middle-class, educated women as members (Carden 1974, Freeman 1975). Of those interviewed, twenty-four (92%) of the women were white. The majority (69%) were employed in managerial or professional occupations, and their incomes ranged from $20,000 to more than $70,000 a year. Although employment status and income are not absolute indicators of social class, the majority of the women interviewed were living what could be considered, socioeconomically, a middle-class life. All of the women interviewed reported having at least having attended college and thirteen (50%) had post-graduate degrees. Fifty percent of the Cleveland women and approximately 30% of the New York women interviewed were mothers.

The lack of racial and class diversity in my sample is a limitation representative of the chapters' demographics. Increasing participation by women of color was a goal for many of the leaders interviewed, and the lack of racial diversity in the chapter was viewed as a personal failure by some leaders. While some of former leaders were proud of their chapters having a diversity of age and occupations, many concluded that their group memberships were predominately white and middle-class. This racial and class characterization of NOW has its roots in the early years of the movement. Freeman (1975) notes that the liberal branch of the movement originally recruited from professional and white-collar networks, resulting in organizations that were (and have remained) largely white. It is important to note that conceptions of motherhood vary by race, ethnicity, and class. For example, Collins (1990) argues that race and class shape motherhood in her discussion of "other mothers" in African American communities. Naples (1998) identifies class as a component influencing the "activist mothering" done by women in low income neighborhoods. This study is based on a predominately

white, middle-class sample, and the findings are not meant to represent experiences of all women.

Chapter Histories and Descriptions

Both of the chapters formed early in the national organization's history and have experienced periods of intense mobilization and movement "doldrums" (Rupp and Taylor 1987). As members of a federated social movement organization, the chapters receive direction from the national level. However, NOW is organized to allow chapter flexibility and a degree of freedom in the issues and actions they pursue.

New York City NOW

The New York City (NYC) chapter, founded in 1967, has a long and rich history of activism. NYC NOW was the first chapter and continues to be one of the largest, claiming 2,000 to 4,000 members. It grew quickly, and its presence was enhanced by its location in one of the centers of 1960s activism.

Being in a "hotbed" of feminist organizing helped NYC NOW grow, but it also made it susceptible to debates, controversies, and schisms. One of the first schisms occurred in 1968 when a group critiqued the organization's formal structure and hierarchy and eventually split off. NYC NOW members also experienced several internal disputes with the national level on issues such as membership dues and the election of National NOW officers.

NYC NOW is one of the few chapters to consistently have an office. Even after three moves prompted by rising rents and financial difficulties, the chapter continued to maintain an office in the Manhattan area. NYC NOW also quickly developed a centralized and formal structure, modeled after National NOW's infrastructure. The leadership system has a clear chain of authority established through a hierarchy of officers, including a president, multiple vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and a board of directors. NYC NOW also differs from other chapters in that it was able to professionalize and pay some of its leadership and staff.

Many members credit the chapter's strength to the long-term involvement of leaders. Leaders involved in the early years of NYC NOW were still active in the 1990s, and former presidents created an informal "advising club," offering guidance to new leaders.

The chapter's issues and actions are a mixture of national issues and local community-based concerns. The chapter's early years focused on local actions that drew national media, such as a protest of sexist advertising by a jeweler. The chapter also became involved in the national Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) campaign and sent members to organize in other states. After the amendment's

defeat in the 1980s, the chapter became embroiled in a city-wide battle against Operation Rescue, a nationwide anti-abortion campaign that attempted to close down women's health clinics. The 1990s brought a mixture of national and local concerns ranging from the Anita Hill–Clarence Thomas sexual harassment hearings to local protests against welfare reform.

Cleveland NOW

The Cleveland chapter formed in 1970 and grew to a mid-sized chapter, claiming between 200 to 600 members. In terms of growth, the group was in its heyday in the mid-1970s when the Cleveland community flourished with a number of feminist organizations.

The chapter's early growth led to a proposal that the area develop a suburban chapter system. The proposal was initially rejected, but as members began to complain about a lack of locally focused actions, the chapter divided into six suburban chapters in the mid-1970s. While women did join the suburban chapters, two chapters, Cleveland NOW and Cleveland East NOW, remained the largest and most active. With declining membership in the 1980s, the suburban chapters eventually merged into these two large chapters.

Cleveland is a city divided both by a river and by class, race, and ethnic status. Cleveland NOW members often spoke of "getting out their passports" to attend meetings on the other side of the city. The socioeconomic division is between affluent white suburbs on the east side and the working-class ethnic enclaves or predominately African American neighborhoods on the west side. This "passport syndrome" was to be the cause of continuing conflict throughout Cleveland NOW's history. Members of the Cleveland East chapter were predominately affluent middle-class suburban women. The west side Cleveland chapter also had members from middle-class neighborhoods, but was primarily made up of working class women. Cleveland and Cleveland East became embroiled in a number of "turf" wars such as one group's attempt to change its name to "Greater Cleveland" NOW, a name the other chapter claimed was misleading.

The strain between the two chapters did not decrease until the mid-1980s, when the growing anti-abortion movement and declining membership drew the chapters together. In 1990, the chapters merged to become Greater Cleveland NOW. However, class tensions remained with the east side members refusing to meet at west side neighborhoods. With the resignation of a dynamic leader, the chapter went into a state of decline in mid-1990s.

The chapter's history of fragmentation led to the development of multiple organizational structures. Many of the chapters had a leadership hierarchy of at least a president, secretary, and treasurer but some experimented with facilitators and rotating leadership. Later the merged chapter instituted a co-president system with a variety of officers, task forces, and committees. The final structural

adaptation came in 1994 when members created a five-member steering committee with no leadership positions. One result of the fragmentation was that the chapter did not have a permanent office until the 1990s, and there were no paid leadership or staff for any of the chapters.

The divisions and subsequent merging also took a toll on the leadership. Few presidents remained in the chapter for long periods of time, and many quit the chapter after their terms. Most of the past leaders interviewed reported suffering from "burn-out" and needing time away from chapter activities. As a result, Cleveland NOW, in all its structural forms, had little consistent leadership or guidance throughout its history.

Similar to the NYC NOW, Cleveland NOW addressed a mixture of local and national issues. In the 1970s, the chapter also focused on the ERA and local actions such as a newspaper's sex-segregated want-ads and a restaurant's men-only policy. In addition, the suburban chapter focused on local issues such as school lunch programs and textbook selection. In the 1980s, Cleveland was also targeted by Operation Rescue, and the entire city mobilized to keep the clinics open. Some of the chapter's final actions in the 1990s included doing street theater protesting the Gulf War, and an extensive campaign against a local school board in a sexual harassment case.

Findings and Discussion

In an examination of the feminist discourse in the chapters, motherhood was framed in two ways. First, motherhood was framed as a social status assumed by women who bear or care for children. In both chapters, this view of motherhood was politicized as a gender role damaged by patriarchal constraints and in need of feminist reform. However, each chapter varied in its interpretation of politicized motherhood. The New York City NOW members framed motherhood as an abstracted social condition subject to the oppression of patriarchy. By abstracted, I mean that motherhood was removed from the realm of personal experience and was a social issue important to feminists because of societal gender roles and expectations. This contrasts with the Cleveland NOW members who linked the personal experience of motherhood with movement discourse, viewing it as a source of empowerment.

The second emergent frame was the conception of motherhood as an act. This interpretation aligns with the idea of the ethic of care (Gilligan 1982). Motherhood, in this frame, was "mothering," the act of caring or assuming responsibility for relationships. Both chapters adopted this frame but employed it differently. NYC NOW framed mothering as an apolitical act, connected with cultural feminism and having the potential to "derail" feminist organizations from activism. The Cleveland NOW members embraced the view that "mothering" each other strengthened commitment to feminism and was a mandate to care for all members of society.

In the following section, I first examine how the chapters framed motherhood as a social status and an act. I then investigate how micromobilization contexts and boundary construction influence the feminist identity of each chapter. I conclude by discussing what these findings mean to women's movement literature and gender analyses.

Framing Motherhood as a Social Status

In both chapters, the situation of mothers, in general, is a political tool used by chapter activists to frame discussions of women's oppression. However, in NYC NOW, the status of mother is abstracted from personal experience and seen through a lens of political activism. Motherhood, in this interpretation, becomes a social condition needing feminist attention and one of the chapter's many social issues. This focus on political action versus personal expression is a part of NYC NOW's culture, evident in members' repeated usage of the phrase "issue-oriented organization" in documents describing the chapter.

This "issue-oriented" stance included concerns related to motherhood and is illustrated in a review of the chapter activities for 1979. Issues related to motherhood include: work on divorce law reform, a boycott of infant formula manufacturers for unscrupulous Third World practices, the formation of an ad-hoc coalition on the White House Conference on Families, and a meeting to reaffirm the chapter's commitment to quality child care.[1] In addition to specific actions, the chapter also established a family relations committee whose goals, according to the coordinator, were to, "on the positive side, to work for egalitarian relationships, and on the negative side, to fight abuse of all kinds within the family."[2]

Along with addressing motherhood-related issues, the situation of mothers is often used to rally activists. For example, in a discussion of NYC teachers being laid off, the education committee coordinator wrote:

> Many women feel particularly resentful, discovering that time taken out for maternity or childcare [sic] has cost them, not only the loss of salary and benefits for those periods, but now the loss of jobs and careers.[3]

In a call for members to participate in the Mother's Day event, one New York City NOW president wrote:

> Once a year, America honors its mothers. Sentimental greeting cards, candy, and flowers become official rewards we bestow for lifetimes of hard work, emotional dedication, love, and sacrifice. What else does society do for mothers? Not much.[4]

Because of this framing, Mother's Day becomes a political event in the New York City chapter. In an attempt to stop Ronald Reagan from winning the 1984 election, chapter members, many of them not mothers, passed out balloons on Mother's Day reading "Moms and kids say stop Reagan now." Members also passed out "Ronald Reagan's Mother's Day Gifts" brochures which detailed federal policies that have "forced millions of women and children" into poverty.[5]

Despite attention to the issues of motherhood, mothers were seldom identified in chapter documents, and women rarely discussed their family relations or first-hand experiences with motherhood and gender discrimination. Each year, the NYC newsletter publishes short "resumes" of each of the candidates for chapter office. Seldom did women address their family situations in these resumes. Instead, the resumes consist of descriptions of their NOW involvement, educational history, and occupation.

The result of this abstracted motherhood is that even members who are mothers come to define the chapter as a place to "step away" from their personal experience and focus on the political issues. One leader, the mother of a teenage boy, describes the chapter like this:

> I've used words like family and community [to describe NYC NOW]. But sometimes it is not. Sometimes it is a very comfortable place to have a relationship with people. [A place] where I don't have to know everything about them in order to talk to this woman. I [can] have a very lovely conversation. I don't have to talk about her kids or my kids, all that kind of stuff. We can drop our personal lives and talk about the issues.

In sum, NYC NOW members did not draw on personal experiences but framed motherhood as an abstracted political condition, one of the many the chapter addressed needing feminist attention and social change. As a result of this frame, motherhood as a personal experience was not a part of chapter discourse.

Cleveland NOW members also interpreted motherhood as a politicized social status but in a manner that drew on the member's personal experiences. Similar to New York City NOW, women's position in the family was a site of political analysis in the chapter. This analysis is reflected in a Cleveland member's views of the future goals of feminism. She said:

> So we have a long way to go. . . . There are a lot of some very ingrained sociological things that we are not real aware of—how we act and treat each other and the interaction between men and women. And also relationships. Parenting is another one I think that we really have to work on. . . . Making men really responsible for family life. Right now it is still the women's responsibility and until we have men doing a lot of the remembering of the things that have to go on in raising kids . . . until we have men doing that, we will never have equality.

However, one difference between New York City and Cleveland was a consistent use of "we" in discussing or describing motherhood and women's role within the family. In the above quotation, the woman, also a mother, personalizes the connection between feminists and women with families. This contrasts of the NYC NOW manner of referring to mothers in third person.

Cleveland members also differ from New York City members, in that their political activism was an extension from the personalized experience (or anticipated experience) of motherhood. In other words, the Cleveland chapter engaged in "activist mothering," a term Naples defines as extending motherhood and an ethic of care into the community (1998, p. 11).

Many of the Cleveland women discussed how it was the personal experience of motherhood cast in the context of movement discourse that compelled them to become activists. One powerful way the personal and political interpretations of motherhood merged in the chapter's discourse was in the rhetoric of reproductive choice. Mothers' concern with the need to preserve reproductive rights for their daughters was a successful frame used in recruitment. One mother remembered attending the 1989 March on Washington for Reproductive Rights because of her concern for her daughter's rights

> I wasn't even a member but from that march I became a member. At that point, I was interested in and starting doing things, or wanted to do things, because I had this great fear that my daughter . . . was having rights taken away from her.

She said she became a leader because she was compelled by the idea that "We could change these things. We could make a difference and it would impact everyone's lives, women's lives and their families, and my daughter." The same woman, after becoming a leader in the organization wrote a column on the chapter's events. In it, she urged members, "Do not give up the struggle, do not give up your dreams, do not allow those who preach hate and ignorance and oppression to dictate their limits on us and our families."[6]

These ideas were repeated by many women in the chapter. A former Cleveland NOW president who currently runs a women's center remembered, "I think having a child got me to go from analyzing in my head . . . [to feeling] I want to do something to change this. I want this to be better for my daughter." The same woman, who eventually left the chapter, saw her feminist activism in terms of improving society for her daughter and other young women. She said, "I think probably one of the questions to ask is where do we go from here? . . . What I find myself doing right now is working more with young people all the sudden."

Because of the salience of motherhood and the family in their activism, issues such as reproductive freedom are framed in terms of the right to make decisions about family, motherhood, and privacy. One Cleveland leader, active in the late 1980s, recalled her reasons for speaking at a pro-choice rally.

> I was the one who spoke up first on what it is like to have an illegal abortion and how it compares to having a legal one. And I felt totally confident and willing to share this experience because I honestly think this is meaningful. Because they think that having abortion is promiscuous. I was a mother of three and I am the only one who knows how much love I have to give, how much finances my family has. What politician has the right to tell me how to run my life? Or the life of my family?

Where personalized views of motherhood were almost never seen in the New York City documents, Cleveland members often merged personal and political interpretations of motherhood. For example, in contrast to the political event-making strategies of New York City NOW, Mother's Day in the Cleveland

chapter was often marked by short newsletter announcements urging members to remember their "moms."

In sum, in Cleveland the social status of motherhood was framed as a political mandate for women, through their personal experiences, to become active to save the rights of their children and future generations of women. As a result, motherhood as a personally experienced social status entered into chapter discourse.

Framing Motherhood as an Act

While the chapters differ on the interpretation of motherhood as a status, they are similar in the framing of motherhood as an act. Motherhood was expressed in both chapters as a form of "mothering" or caring for others. However, the distinction between New York City's more abstract or rationalist perspective and Cleveland's lens of personal experience continues. While the New York City chapter viewed mothering as apolitical, the Cleveland chapter viewed mothering as empowering.

Gilligan argues that women's socialization pits the pursuit for equal rights, or the ethic of justice, in direct conflict with the ethic of care (1982). It is this tension that shapes understandings of motherhood in the NYC NOW chapter. New York City members tend to frame the act of mothering as apolitical and "derailing" feminist activism. Members see themselves as dedicated to the work of the movement, accomplished by avoiding the "pull" to socialize. As one New York City member explained, NOW chapters that spent time socializing and "making people happy" were not perceived as achieving any political goal. She said:

> They [chapters who socialized] weren't putting any pressure on the mayor. Nothing. They were having great Christmas parties and great birthday parties and they were loving to each other and there is a lot of tendency toward that in women, you know? They felt their chapter was very strong and it sure was as a social club. [She laughed] . . . So I always say the tension in NOW is to be a ladies' club or change agent.

The push to be a "change agent" not a "ladies' club" influenced the atmosphere of the chapter. Most members described the chapter in a fashion similar to this longtime New York City member's characterization:

> Our chapter I think was particularly unsocial [*sic*]. I mean people made friends in the chapter there is no question about it but we were very work oriented . . . We wanted to get the work done. The rest was sort of incidental.

Some credit the New York City chapter's "atmosphere" to the locale and its culture. One New York City woman explained:

> We have a new person on our board who was active in Pittsburgh NOW and she said to me this is the least social NOW chapter of any NOW chapter I've known. . . . I think that is just the intensity of the city and the intensity of this chapter because we're so much more in the limelight because . . . we are in New York and because we have all the media here.

Members recognize that women are socialized to abide by the ethic of care, in particular women in prominent positions in the chapter. One New York City member and former president noted that leaders are particularly susceptible to politically disabling demands that they "mother" other chapter members. She explained:

> I think any woman in a leader position finds that there are a lot of demands for you to be [a] mother, because that is the role model we have. Men have authority. Men are fathers. They give directions. Mothers give comfort. You can be comforted to death.

However, it is not just gender socialization that encourages these behaviors. Members make a clear connection between these tendencies and the development of a women's culture. Women's culture has been characterized as an apolitical retreat created by cultural feminists who effectively "killed" off radical feminist activism by encouraging segregation and the building of cultural institutions rather a political agenda (Echols 1989). While scholars debate this view (Taylor and Rupp 1993), New York City NOW members equate women's culture with apolitical socializing and caretaking that many members labeled the "mother thing." According to one activist's description, chapters who participate in building women's culture are seen as enmeshed in "a nice comfy womb."

Through this frame variation, other forms of activism are also seen as apolitical. The term humanist, for example, is equated with women's culture and apolitical mothering. The New York City chapter's goal is to work for the rights of women and not be responsible for all of humankind. One woman defined "womanism" as the opposite of feminism because it is "this nice, touchy feely thing about woman." She remarked:

> I don't like [the term] womanist because I feel it brings up a lot of the stereotypes about women like we're all earth mothers, well, mothers for one thing. I don't know it just has that connotation to me. It's not political at all. It is just kind of cousin of humanist. Let's just all be friends and humanists and why do you need to be a feminist? Well, you need to be a feminist because women are paid 72 cents an hour [for every dollar a man makes].[7]

Whereas New York City members talked of mothering as apolitical, Cleveland NOW members frame the act of mothering differently, conceptualizing it as an empowering and universalizing force that can bring about political and social change. In this frame, the act of caring becomes a political act done by all women. Caring for others, in particular children and families, was emphasized and privileged in the chapter. In other words, personal acts are interpreted as forms of political activism. One Cleveland leader active in the 1980s recalled how she came to understand this connection of personal and political.

> So I was really involved in that preschool group and I found those women very concerned about preschool children in their communities but with the [Cleveland] NOW women, I found that other level. . . . It was that level where it was "We do have to be concerned" . . . It is that [level] of taking it beyond your community.

The act of mothering was not just extended to families and other feminists, but all people. For example, one Cleveland member discussed how she tried to connect with all people, even women in movements opposed to NOW's goals. In a newsletter article, she addressed these comments to a pro-life woman she had seen at an anti-abortion demonstration. She wrote:

> I felt sorry for your children, marching and being carried in the wind and the cold. I tried to stop our chanting when I realized it frightened your young daughter. I couldn't understand why you didn't take her home, You see, I have children too.[8]

The woman later explained that she believes all women can learn to respect each other because of the common bonds of motherhood and family, a view not shared by anti-feminist groups who labeled Cleveland NOW members as dangerous, deadly and different from other women calling them "Nasty Old Witches" [N.O.W.], "black angels of death" and "lesbians with AIDS."[9]

As a result of this frame variation of mothering as political in the 1980s and 1990s, chapter members created environments that were often described as "welcoming" and social in nature. Many described Cleveland NOW members as people who cared about others. The chapter was described as a "welcoming place," where people could come and affect change in their communities. According to one member, the Cleveland chapter was a place where "people who came to meetings felt like they could immediately get involved. They could do something that was productive and was a contribution to the community here."

In sum, the emphasis on mothering as a politically important act led Cleveland NOW members to view themselves and their chapter(s) as warm and welcoming. This interpretation corresponds with Cleveland NOW members' view that motherhood can be viewed as a personal experience, empowering act, and a political condition. In contrast, New York City members consciously avoid entering into behavior that is seen as "mothering" and too focused on personal relationships over political issues. The viewing of mothering as apolitical fits with the New York City chapter's frame of motherhood as an abstract political social issue and apolitical act. To understand the forces influencing these frame variations, I first examine New York City NOW's construction of a feminist identity, before turning to Cleveland NOW.

Feminist Identity Construction In New York City NOW

In the New York City chapter, micromobilization contexts are influenced by two factors. First, recruitment networks are influenced by the chapter's location in a major metropolitan city, and world media and business center. According to members, New York City is seen as a major city where people come to "make" their careers, and this cultural emphasis on work shapes how members are recruited. Indeed, all the of the women interviewed were in professional or

managerial positions, with one student and several paid chapter leaders. Former leaders indicated that they drew on personal networks and word of mouth as the primary forms of recruitment. Many of the women interviewed joined because of people they knew through work or, in the case of one woman, making the acquaintance of a NOW member during her daily commute. This resulted in a membership similar in race and class (i.e., predominately white, and middle-class).

Second, the New York City chapter creates an environment that did not encourage the recruitment or accommodate mothers. Therefore, members do not specifically tap networks of mothers. Of the New York City women interviewed slightly less than one-third were mothers.[10] The resulting lack of mothers in the New York City chapter leadership influences the group's atmosphere. One member in a chapter newsletter column described the chapter's ambivalence. She wrote:

> Do we make all women feel equally valued and welcomed? Take mothers, for example. We like mothers as people but have a hard time making room for them when they bring their children. . . . There is a mixed message here. . . . I wonder if we are afraid that the presence of children will drag us down and back to where we used to be, that place, we are struggling to emerge from?[11]

A former president noted that women with children have difficulty participating in the New York City chapter. She reported that "huge groups of women" in their early 30s and 40s drop out of NOW to have babies.

> And so you don't see us there. . . . When I was there you never saw [women in that age group] and now I know why. I mean [a chapter leader] keeps saying "Come to a meeting." And I am like—What am I going to do with my kid?

However, New York City's reputation as a "career town" and the lack of mothers recruited in the chapters does not explain the view that mothering is apolitical. In fact, some women, who are mothers, joined the chapter and became long-time members. To understand how these frames are interpreted, I turn instead to an examination of the boundaries enacted between the chapter and other social movement organizations.

In the competition for resources (i.e., members, funds, media attention), the social movement groups often work to carve out a niche, in which they are distinguished from other organizations. New York City was the site of much feminist organizing in the early years of the second wave (Ferree and Hess 1985/1995, Freeman 1975). Women interested in learning about feminism, could choose from a variety of groups. One New York City member, active since the 1960s, recounted how many women did not distinguish between the groups' ideologies but often joined the most accessible group. As women's mobilization began to slow down in the 1980s (Taylor and Whittier 1993), the competition for members became more intense.

New York City NOW members' distinctions between the chapter's "brand" of feminism, and radical and cultural feminism can be interpreted as an attempt to distinguish NOW's forms of feminism from other groups. This boundary construction can be traced back to one influential leader's experience with radical feminism. A longtime New York City NOW member, she drew on her experiences with a loosely structured radical feminist organization to create an anti-women's culture ideology adopted throughout the chapter. She recalls why she moved from a radical feminist organization to NOW.

> We were all in this coalition and I realized that [this decentralized women's group with] its structurelessness was not going to be able to do anything to save legalized abortion and I could see in my contacts with NOW that they were going to. They had an organization and with structure . . . So that's when I started getting involved in NOW.

Her status in the chapter encouraged newer members to adopt the same view of activism. Many of the newer members reiterated her ideas or at least acknowledged her views, including one woman who described the chapter as definitely not an "essentialist, menstrual blood . . . group." Another member offered this explanation:

> I think they [radical feminists who joined NOW] brought in cultural feminism—that baggage to become sensitive, to try to recreate a woman's culture. I'm not too terribly sympathetic towards that because . . . it doesn't radicalize. It deradicalizes. It doesn't mobilize. It demobilizes. . . . I think what NOW does, when it does the right things, it challenges male authority, male laws with the idea that you can make a difference. You can bring about change.

Once the boundary between NYC NOW and other forms of feminism are drawn, the chapter becomes a site where political work, defined as actions such as lobbying, doing mailings, and engaging in protests, is privileged over social interaction. Contributing to this atmosphere are the frames interpreting mothering as apolitical that screen out women who did not share the same beliefs, or are looking to experience more emotion-focused feminism.[12] One former leader said:

> I think anyone who stays around in NOW, in the New York City chapter, is someone who, as I said before, is somewhat optimistic about social change, more issue oriented, not needing a women's culture to be created.

The New York City chapter's frames and micromobilization contexts contribute in the construction of a collective identity that is instrumental and focuses on political action. Chapter members define themselves as political workers for the movement. This can be seen in the framing of issues connected to motherhood, such as child care and divorce law reform, through an abstracted, rationalist lens.

Feminism, according to chapter members, can free women from these oppressive roles and norms for women. When asked what feminism meant to them,

many of the women cited the slogan, "Feminism is the radical notion that women are people." One longtime New York City member described a NOW feminist as "basically someone who thinks women should be able to do anything they want to and not be inhibited by artificial barriers." This view does not see women as special or different because of their ability to become mothers. Instead, women are simply people entitled the same opportunities as men.

For women to achieve equality, political action becomes an essential aspect of the NYC NOW feminist identity. One woman discussed the transformation of her feminist identity after joining NYC NOW. She said:

> I'm kind of trying to go back in my mind to college and how it was then. I would say . . . I was always kind of a knee jerk feminist. If I wasn't included or I was treated somehow differently, I was aware of it and I didn't like it. But it was sort of a 'that's not fair response' within a basic acceptance of the way things are.

She said that since joining the New York City chapter, she felt that she had become a "part of an effort to change things." Another member reflected on how she likes to label herself a "mainstream feminist" who believes that action brings equality. She said, "I think change does come about by changing laws and attitudes and a variety of strategies."

By transforming motherhood into an abstracted political frame and discouraging the act of nurturing, socializing, caring, or "mothering" within the chapter, the members contribute to the construction of an identity that defines the political in a justice-over-caring fashion. Chapter members recruit from work networks and mothers are not specifically sought after as members. In addition, in an attempt to create a feminist "niche," the New York City chapter creates boundaries between itself and cultural feminism further creating an identity privileging action over personal expression.

Feminist Identity Construction in Cleveland NOW

Whereas New York City's context was one of a major metropolitan area where people came to make careers, Cleveland's context was different. Cleveland NOW's micromobilization contexts contained suburban networks of mothers and homemakers, and extended frames that validated their experiences and lives. Early in its history, chapter leaders made conscious efforts to reach out and validate the experience of homemakers and mothers. In a 1972 newsletter article on the government's classification of a homemaker as a non-job holding position, a member wrote, "Certainly there is no more diversified job than homemaker and the personal rewards may be many, but the economic status of 'ZERO' is unforgivable!"[13]

One reason for the predominance of these mother-oriented networks lies in Cleveland's history. Cleveland is historically a manufacturing-based city that de-

veloped a series of autonomous suburbs early in its history. The development of suburbs provided a place for people to raise their children away from the city and gave rise to a culture emphasizing career and family. This resulted in neighborhoods of primarily white, middle-class women who were full-time homemakers and mothers.

When Cleveland NOW decided to split into a system of suburban chapters in the mid-1970s, the identities of homemaker and mother became increasingly more salient, and many of the smaller suburban chapters framed their activism in terms of these roles. For example, one Cleveland suburban chapter focused on the lack of school lunches for its first action. When the school board decided to launch a pilot in-school lunch program, the action was applauded as a step towards ending discrimination against mothers with young children.[14]

Suburban chapters relied heavily on homemakers as members. One suburban chapter member described what it was like to be one of the women combining motherhood, homemaking and activism. She said:

> This [activism] was our pastime. Instead of work we did this. I was able to run around with a press release. We used to have a system where there were always two people; one would drive and one would run in and out and deliver the press release. So we were right on top of something as soon as it would happen. We were there in the middle of the day, during business hours when [other women] were working.

Since the personal experience of motherhood was seen as a source of political empowerment, images of motherhood were used to recruit and mobilize members. For example, in the effort to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, the Cleveland chapter joined with other groups and put out a flyer picturing three women, a white middle-aged career woman with a briefcase, an older black woman, and a young white woman with a child. The caption along with the picture read "The Equal Rights Amendment is for all women. It will help housewives. It will help working women."[15]

In addition, Cleveland chapter members sought to recruit women by addressing women's traditional roles. One suburban chapter member addressed the perceived devaluation of the "housewife" when she argued for the adoption of the term "career homemaker." Her reasoning was that the term more adequately reflects:

> a mature woman who has freely opted for a lifetime dedication to marriage and child-raising. The choice of the words, career homemaker, eliminated any possibility that the woman described could be other than a proud, dignified, and self-respecting one.

Unfortunately, career homemakers, she wrote, "believe feminist organizations and their goals have nothing to offer them." To address this problem, the chapter started a column called the "NOW Homemaker" "in an effort to establish formal lines of communication amongst our readers."[16]

The problems faced by mothers were also acknowledged by Cleveland NOW leaders. One chapter president in a 1977 newsletter article made a personalized appeal directed at mothers in the chapter.

> Promise: No remarks about the weather—how bad we all have it, especially mothers who work and mothers who stay home suddenly put in the role of social director, school teacher, substitute referee, morale booster, etc. etc. — roles we adjust to in the summer with relative ease but can't cope with in the winter.[17]

Therefore, the suburban chapter leaders came to depend on mothers and homemakers as activists. However, in the late 1970s when the workforce participation of women with children began to increase, the suburban Cleveland chapters began to lose members and momentum. One activist noted the relationship between women's lives and feminist activism. She said, "Today you don't have women who can leave their work and go around delivering press releases."

Even with the decline in full-time homemakers, Cleveland members continued to reach out to women by stressing the importance of feminism and family. For example, when a member passed the bar exam, the chapter ran an announcement discussing her new career and noting at the same time that she is a mother and a grandmother.[18] It is interesting to note that this notice would have probably drawn criticism from feminists if published in the mainstream press as being sexist. Another suburban chapter encouraged mothers to bring their friends to a program on day care center selection and offered prize incentives for those who recruited new members, reminding members that it is important to reach "those budding feminists out there."[19]

Ohio NOW leaders encouraged this focus. In a speech on the disappearance of chapters in rural areas, one state NOW president said:

> Women in these areas [those with no chapters] are beginning to realize the triple bind they are in as wives, mothers and wage earners. . . . It is up to us to reach out to those women . . . and enable them to be empowered through feminist networks and through the development of new chapters.[20]

When the women's movement went into "abeyance" in the 1980s (Taylor and Whittier 1993), so did the Cleveland area. Finding itself low on members, the chapter began to merge suburban chapters and eventually became a one-chapter area. To survive, the remaining Cleveland chapter worked to enter into coalitions with other organizations, in effect strengthening themselves through a lack of inter-organizational boundaries. One leader from the 1990s recalled how the chapter worked with other groups. She said, "We worked with all kinds of groups. Groups that never would have really worked together before." She continued, "We stopped doing one thing that was just NOW. We used our energy to either come up with ideas to draw in lots of other people or to join what was going on."

In sum, Cleveland NOW, in its different structural forms, consistently worked to mobilize networks of mothers and homemakers. To effectively recruit

mothers, leaders addressed specific concerns of mothers, in particular, their perceived devaluation by feminists and feminist organizations. Cleveland NOW members often targeted mothers and homemakers directly for recruitment working consciously to attract women through the use of frames that construct mothering and motherhood as a universal connector for all people. In the Cleveland chapter, motherhood is mandate for political activism and is a consistent theme throughout the chapter's history, from the early ERA efforts to the abortion rights struggles of the 1980s. This is due, in part, to the construction of a feminist identity that locates activism in a family context.

Because of a consistent reliance on motherhood-related frames and networks, Cleveland NOW members constructed a collective identity that drew on members' transformations of motherhood as political. Members were aware that family and feminism were often portrayed as contested ideologies, and they consciously worked to construct a feminist identity that included motherhood and the family. For example, in the early 1990s, the Cleveland chapter included the following statement in a survey sent to all its members:

> Screaming, unreasonable, crazy, irresponsible, fantasizing, elitist, privileged, man and child hating, radical fringe feminists! We are being told far too often who we are and who we should be, but Greater Cleveland NOW wants to be in control of its own definition of the women and men of NOW. . . . It is our opinion that upon collecting this data we will find that NOW represents a diverse membership of calm, reasonable, clear thinking, responsible, family-loving, feminists."[21]

The Cleveland chapter's shared identity incorporated "family-loving" homemaker and mother identities. In the chapter, feminist, wife, mother and homemaker become complementary, not oppositional identities. For example, in an early fundraising effort, along with "radical" feminist books such as the informational health classic "Our Bodies, Ourselves," the chapter sold sets of "Busy Homemaker" cards picturing women performing a variety of household tasks.[22] Members were aware of how these identities were often seen as contrasting. One woman compared the stereotype of a feminist as a nontraditional woman to her own life experiences. During a phone interview she laughingly confessed that she was baking honey cake for the holidays. She said:

> I'm baking which . . . [is] a very normal thing for a woman to do. I'm actually putting them in the freezer. [The stereotype of a feminist is that] you are not supposed to be doing these things, enjoying these things.

Consequently, motherhood, family, and the ethic of care merge in the construction of an activist feminist identity in Cleveland NOW. One woman remembered how she came to understand and be a part of that identity. She said:

> I recognized early on that the women that I met through NOW were extremely family oriented and that kind of blew my stereotype. . . . What I found was this group of women who were very concerned about the human family.

The identities of mother and homemaker serve to pull women into feminism and act as a frame for recruitment and mobilization. The Cleveland chapter purposely recruited women in the same social networks and shaped issues around their concerns as mothers. Chapter members amplify the belief that motherhood unites all women and is the key to their liberation. By focusing their actions and identity around an ethic of care and motherhood as empowerment, Cleveland NOW members construct feminist activism compatible with their social identities. Working against perceptions that feminism and family are contradictory, members create a feminist identity that allows them to politically merge these identities.

This comparative case study shows that New York City NOW members, because of a "crowded" organizational field, distinguish between their form of liberal, policy-oriented feminism, and other more cultural or radical forms of feminism. This distinction leads to the definition of motherhood as an act of nurturing versus an act of political empowerment. The New York City chapter utilizes its position in Manhattan and draws on professional and career women as members. As a result of organizational and identity boundary construction, NYC NOW members create a feminist identity that is work-oriented and discourages socializing and nurturing.

Cleveland NOW draws upon its suburban networks and extends frames to mobilize mothers and homemakers. The Cleveland chapter enacts no boundaries between itself and other organizations and instead works to build coalitions. Cleveland NOW members create a family-oriented feminist identity that equates caring for humankind as a political act.

Conclusion

One conclusion drawn from this work is that NOW and liberal feminist organizations are often overly simplified in their characterizations. Often called upon by the media to offer feminist "sound bites" on incidents involving women, NOW's national focus has been overstated, ignoring a dynamic and diverse grassroots level. The national level does shape grassroots rhetoric and actions. New York City NOW's campaigns and rhetoric resemble the national level, despite numerous conflicts between the two. Whereas, Cleveland members, in the late 1980s, developed a more "anti-hierarchy" sentiment and directed efforts at coalition building and community work rather than some national campaigns. While the National NOW rhetoric affects chapters, it is through practices at the grassroots level that identities are constructed. These chapters, situated in particular cultures, communities, and networks, are the sites of ongoing feminist identity construction, shaped by understandings of gender.

This study also illustrates how gender shapes social protest and political actions. In both chapters, ideas of motherhood, gender roles, and women's life ex-

periences were politicized and extended to the public by feminists. However, by comparing New York City and Cleveland NOW, it becomes clear that gender is not monolithic, experienced and interpreted in the same manner by women, even those belonging to ideologically similar organizations. Micromobilization contexts and organizational boundaries, shaped by class, race, sexuality, and gender interpretations, influence the creation of feminist thought, action, and strategies.

This work does not argue that feminism can only be understood in "particularities," that is, viewing each community organization as unique. However, these identity distinctions provide encouragement for scholars to examine more closely the influence of structural and cultural forces of grassroots level activism. It is clear, that to view NOW members as people who define feminism in the same way, is to miss the interplay between community-level influence and the individual experience.

ENDNOTES

The author would like to thank editors and anonymous reviewers at *Sociological Inquiry,* Nancy Whittier, Verta Taylor, Gail McGuire, Dawn Cooley, and the panelists and attendees of the Gender and Social Movements session at the 1997 Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association for their comments on this work while in progress. This study was supported by an Elizabeth D. Gee Fund for Research on Women grant at the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Please address all correspondence to Dr. Jo Reger, Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. E-mail: jreger@skidmore.edu

[1]*NOW York Woman.* February 1980. National Organization for Women—New York State Records 1966–88, Series 6, Box 1, Folder 4. Eugene P. Link Papers, Archives of Public Affairs and Policy, Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York. (Hereafter referred to as Link Papers.)

[2]*NOW York Woman.* December 1984. National Organization for Women—New York State Records 1966–88, Series 6, Box 1, Folder 4. Link Papers.

[3]*NOW York Woman.* January 1977. National Organization for Women—New York State Records 1966–88, Series 6, Box 1, Folder 4. Link Papers.

[4]*NOW York Woman.* April 1983. President's Report "Mother's Day Speakout on Child Care." National Organization for Women—New York State Records 1966–88, Series 6, Box 1, Folder 4. Link Papers.

[5]*NOW York Woman.* June 1984. National Organization for Women—New York State Records 1966–88, Series 6, Box 1, Folder 4. Link Papers.

[6]*Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* Winter 1994. Files of the Cleveland NOW chapter.

[7]It should be noted that the term "womanist" in this context is not being used in the same manner as Alice Walker in her 1983 essay " In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens." Walker defines a womanist as an activist who acknowledges and expresses the experience of women of color within Eurocentric women's movement organizations. For her discussion, see Alice Walker (1983).

[8]*Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* December 1989. Files of the Cleveland NOW chapter.

[9]*What She Wants, Cleveland's Feminist Women's Monthly.* July 1989. Files of the Cleveland NOW chapter.

[10]It should be noted that women interviewed are not necessarily representative of the entire chapter's membership but represent women in leadership positions throughout the organization's history.

[11]*NOW NYC News.* [Undated] 1989. Files of the New York City NOW chapter.

[12]Some women did enter NYC NOW, became involved in the consciousness-raising committee, and created a unique and emotion-based culture and identity. For more on this identity, see Reger, Jo. 1997. "Social Movement Culture and Organizational Continuity in the National Organization for Women." Unpublished dissertation. Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

[13]*NOW, Newsletter of the Cleveland Chapter of the National Organization for Women.* "Housewife: High Priced and Under-Paid." March 1972. National Organization for Women archives. Jean Tussey Papers, Box 1, Folder 1. Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio. (Hereafter referred to as WHS.)

[14]Press Statement. "Pilot Lunch Program in Shaker School Begins Elimination of Sexism." June 17, 1975. National Organization for Women archives. Lana Moretsky Papers, Box 2, File 29. [WHS]

[15]Flyer. "Cuyahoga Coalition for Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. [Undated] Ohio National Organization for Women archives, Box 3, Cleveland NOW newsletters 1972–82. The Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio. (Hereafter referred to as OHS.)

[16]*Hillcrest NOW Newsletter.* "Editorial NOW Homemaker." March 1976. Ohio National Organization for Women archives, Box 3, Cleveland NOW newsletters 1972–82. [OHS]

[17]*Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* February 1977. Ohio National Organization for Women archives, Box 3, Cleveland NOW newsletters 1972–82. [OHS]

[18]*Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* August 1990. Files of the Cleveland NOW chapter.

[19]*Lake-Geagua N.O.W. News.* "Announcements." [Undated] 1977. Ohio National Organization for Women archives, Box 3, Lake-Geagua NOW newsletters 1977–82. [OHS]

[20]State of the State address by Ohio NOW President Phyllis Carlson Rheims. [Undated] 1987. Ohio National Organization for Women archives, Box 12, Ohio board meeting minutes 1982–87. [OHS]

[21]*Greater Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* Survey from the 1990s. [Undated] Files of the Cleveland NOW chapter.

[22]*Cleveland NOW Newsletter.* Insert. September 1974. Ohio National Organization for Women archives. Box 3, Cleveland NOW newsletters 1972–82. [OHS]

REFERENCES

Blumberg, Rhoda L. 1990. "White Mothers as Civil Rights Activists: The Interweave of Family and Movement Roles." Pp. 166–79 in *Women and Social Protest,* edited by Guida West and Rhoda L. Blumberg. New York: Oxford University Press.

Buechler, Steven M. 1990. *Women's Movements in the United States.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Cable, Sherry. 1992. "Women's Social Movement Involvement: The Role of Structural Availability in Recruitment and Participation Process." *The Sociological Quarterly* 33:35–50. JAI Press.

Carden, Maren Lockwood. 1974. *The New Feminist Movement.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge.

Connell, Robert. W. 1987. *Gender and Power.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Echols, Alice. 1989. *Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967–1975.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Farganis, Sondra. 1986. *The Social Reconstruction of the Feminine Character*. Totowa, NJ: Rowan & Littlefield.

Ferree, Myra Marx, and Beth B. Hess. 1985/1995. *Controversy and Coalition: The New Feminist Movement*. Boston: Twayne.

Freeman, Jo. 1975. *The Politics of Women's Liberation*. New York: Longman Books.

Gamson, Joshua. 1994. Discussion Statement for the Gender and Political Participation Panel at the American Sociological Association Annual Meetings, Washington, DC.

Gilligan, Carol. 1982. *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hays, Sharon. 1996. *Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hewlett, Sylvia Ann. 1986. *A Lesser Life*. New York: William Morrow and Co.

Hunt, Scott, Robert Benford, and David Snow. 1994. "Identity Fields: Framing Processes and the Social Construction of Movement Identities." Pp. 185–208 in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, edited by Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph Gusfield. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Koven, Seth, and Sonya Michel. 1990. "Womenly Duties: Maternalistic Politics and the Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, 1820–1920." *American History Review* 95:1076–1108.

Mansbridge, Jane J. 1995. "What is the Feminist Movement?" Pp. 27–34 in *Feminist Organizations: Harvest of the New Women's Movement*, edited by Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancey Martin. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. 1988. "Social Movements." Pp. 695–737 in *Handbook of Sociology*, edited by Neil Smelser. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Melucci, Alberto. 1989. *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in a Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Mueller, Carol. 1992. "Building Social Movement Theory." Pp. 3–26 in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, edited by Aldon Morris and Carol M. Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Naples, Nancy. 1998. *Grassroots Warriors: Activist Mothering, Community Work and the War on Poverty*. New York: Routledge.

National Organization for Women. 1999. National Organization for Women Home Page. Internet. July 1999.

———. 1966. "An Invitation to Join." Pp. 220 in *Women Together: A History in Documents of the Women's Movement in the United States*, edited by Judith Papachristou. New York: Alfred Knopf.

Robnett, Belinda. 1996. "African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1965: Gender, Leadership and Micromobilization." *American Journal of Sociology* 101:1661–93.

Rupp, Leila J., and Verta Taylor. 1987. *Survival in the Doldrums: The American Women's Rights Movement, 1945 to 1960s*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Russo, Nancy F. 1976. "The Motherhood Mandate." *Journal of Social Issues*. 32:143–53.

Ryan, Barbara. 1992. *Feminism and the Women's Movement*. New York: Routledge.

Skocpol, Theda. 1992. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Smith, Dorothy. 1987. "Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology." Pp. 84–96 in *Feminism and Methodology*, edited Sandra Harding. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Snow, David A., E. Burke Rochford Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford. 1986. "Frame Alignment, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51:464–81.

Staggenborg, Suzanne. 1989. "Stability and Innovation in the Women's Movement: A Comparison of Two Movement Organizations." *Social Problems* 36:75–92.

Stewart, Abigail J. 1994. "The Women's Movement and Women's Lives: Linking Individual Developments and Social Events." Pp. 230–50 in *Exploring Identity and Gender: The Narrative Study of Lives,* edited by Amia Lieblich and Ruthellen Josselson. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Taylor, Verta. 1996. *Rock-a-by Baby: Feminism, Self-Help, and Postpartum Depression.* New York: Routledge.

Taylor, Verta, and Leila Rupp. 1993. "Women's Culture and Lesbian Feminism Activism: A Reconsideration of Cultural Feminism." *Signs* 19:32–61.

Taylor, Verta, and Nancy Whittier. 1993. "The New Feminist Movement." Pp. 533–48 in *Feminist Frontiers III,* edited by Laurel Richardson and Verta Taylor. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

———. 1992. "Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization." Pp. 104–32 in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory,* edited by Aldon Morris and Carol M. Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Umansky, Lauri. 1996. *Motherhood Reconceived: Feminism and the Legacy of the 1960s.* New York: New York University Press.

Walker, Alice. 1983. "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens." Pp. 231–43 in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose.* New York: Harcourt Brace.

Whittier, Nancy. 1997. "Political Generations, Micro-Cohorts, and the Transformation of Social Movements." *American Sociological Review,* 67:760–78.

———. 1995. *Feminist Generations: The Persistence of the Radical Women's Movement.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Zald, Mayer, and Roberta Ash. 1966. "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change." *Social Forces.* 44:327–41.