

Academic Feminists and the Women's Movement in Canada: Continuity or Discontinuity

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From Radicals to Conservatives?

MOST ANALYSES OF RADICALISM IN THE 1960S and 1970s contain some variant of the "Jerry-Rubin-turns-stockbroker" thesis. One popular version of the thesis holds that the student radicals simply grew up. According to that view, once the radicals' identities had been fully formed in the act of rebellion against their elders, and once they were saddled with jobs and families, they became as conservative as everybody else. Even a Yippy like Jerry Rubin could become a Yuppy stockbroker.

A second version of the thesis appears to be particularly popular among some feminists. According to that interpretation, the radicals changed little as they aged; what became more conservative and "Yuppified" was the movement itself. Stated otherwise, the younger generation failed to live up

to the noble goals and energetic activism of the founders. As Betty Friedan (1985: xiii) wrote a few years ago: "[T]he new young women ... simply take for granted their own personhood and choices and the rights and opportunities we fought for.... I am told by daughters that feminism is becoming a dirty word."

The "Jerry-Rubin-turns-stockbroker" thesis has perhaps been most eagerly applied to feminist academics. Some feminists, both inside and outside the university, are concerned that a rift has grown between feminist scholarship and the feminist movement. Bell Hooks, for example, argues that there is a widening schism between feminist theorizing and political practice which is undermining feminist movement. She is especially concerned about this development because she believes that there can be no effective feminist movement without liberating feminist theory (Hooks, 1988: 35). In

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Talking Back. Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black, Hooks (1988: 40-41) writes:

To reaffirm the primacy of feminist struggle, feminist scholars must renew our collective commitment to a radical theoretical agenda, to a feminist education that is the practice of freedom. We begin this task by acknowledging that feminist theory is losing its vital connection to feminist struggle and that connection must be firmly reestablished and understood if our work is to have significant political impact (see also Trumain, 1991).

A major factor contributing to this rift between feminist academics and political practice is allegedly the institutionalization of women's/feminist studies in the university. Friedan and others (for example, Epstein in English *et al.*, 1985; Segal, 1987) argue that the women who developed the first courses and programs in women's/feminist studies were motivated by their involvement in the feminist movement. With the institutionalization of the area as a discipline in the university, however, increasing numbers of scholars approach women's/feminist studies as a field of inquiry not necessarily having practical or political implications. According to Hooks (1988: 37):

As institutional structures impose values, modes of thought, ways of being on our consciousness, those of us who work in academic settings often unwittingly become engaged in the production of a feminist theory that aims to create a new sphere of theoretical elitism ... which deflects our critical energies and defeats our purpose.

This tendency towards an increasingly abstract theoretical discourse, in combination with the pressure to establish professional credentials, has supposedly led to a decline in political activism.

In this paper, I examine the "Jerry-Rubinturns-stockbroker" thesis and, in particular, Friedan's version of it, by looking at the political activism of professors who teach women's/feminist studies in Canadian universities.¹ Two questions are explored: (1) Are later generations of feminist scholars less committed to the feminist movement

or have they simply changed somewhat the *form* of their participation, maintaining the same *level* of activism and strength of commitment? (2) Have women's/feminist studies been depoliticized, co-opted by a basically patriarchal university system which objects to a feminist political agenda within its walls, or do they continue to serve as a tool for social change in Canada?

The answers to these questions are far from clear. As we shall see, only a minority of the professors who teach women's/feminist studies agree with Friedan's pessimistic assessment.

Methodological Considerations

The main source of data for my analysis is the Canadian Women's Studies Project,² a large-scale study that collected information on professors teaching women's/feminist studies at Canadian universities offering at least a bachelor's degree. The data were collected in four phases. Phase One involved writing to the registrars of all 166 eligible institutions for the official documentation of offerings in women's/feminist studies.³ Phase Two used a mailed questionnaire to survey all professors who had ever taught at least one credit course that was either in the area of women's studies or that employed a feminist perspective.⁴ Phase Three involved open-ended telephone interviews with a random sample of 100 of the women and all 83 of the men selected from the 892 professors who responded to the questionnaire in Phase Two.⁵ Phase Four involved telephone interviews with the authors, regardless of country of residence, who were listed by the Phase Two population as the "most useful for [their] own work." The following discussion draws primarily from the Phase Two data.

For purposes of analysis, I divided the respondents into those who first taught a women's studies course in a Canadian university or college (1) before 1975; (2) between 1975 and 1979; (3) between 1981 and 1984; and (4) between 1985 and 1988. I henceforth refer to these groups as generations one through four. Although the median age of each group is about two years younger for each successive generation, I do not use the term "gen-

eration" to refer to chronological age in the way that Friedan (1985 [1963]) has in distinguishing between "mothers" and "daughters." Rather, I use the term in Mannheim's (1952) sense to refer to groups distinguished from one another by the relatively unique circumstances that they faced when they first began teaching women's/feminist studies. It is, therefore, the date at which they started teaching women's/feminist studies rather than the date when they first started teaching in a university, or indicated an interest in teaching women's/feminist studies, which is of most relevance here. It is precisely the association between (a) teaching women's/feminist studies at different points in the institutionalization of that field in the university and (b) the political activism of the feminist scholars involved that is of interest to me.⁶

A final point needs to be raised concerning the sample. Approximately 10 percent of the respondents are men, and since, for obvious reasons, their relationship to the women's movement differs from that of women, I considered eliminating them from the analysis. But for two reasons I decided in the end to include them. First, their inclusion does not alter the results of my analysis in any significant way. There are a relatively small number of men in the sample and their participation rates in the women's movement over the four specified time periods varied only slightly (between approximately nine percent in period one and fourteen percent in period three). Therefore, significant differences between the 1970s and 1980s cannot be attributed to an influx of men into the movement in later years. Since men generally have much lower participation scores than women, however, the findings are reported separately for each group. Second, if men are involved in women's/feminist studies, then they will have some influence on the field and its relationship to the feminist movement (and also on how political activists outside the university view women's/feminist studies). It may be more accurate, therefore, to examine the entire group of professors and to note the differences between men and women teaching women's/feminist studies.

In addition to several individual items from the questionnaire, two indices were constructed to describe the political involvement of professors. One

index is a composite measure of the respondent's participation in the women's movement. It is based on six questions:

- (1) Have you ever been a member or held an organizing/coordinating position in a women's group?
- (2) Since your initial involvement in women's/feminist studies as an academic perspective, have you been involved in a women's group on an on-going basis?
- (3) ... been politically active on an on-going basis with respect to women's concerns?
- (4) Was one of your motivations in teaching your first women's/feminist studies course a women's consciousness-raising group?
- (5) ... political motivations aimed at improving the position of women?
- (6) Were you a member of a women's group prior to teaching your first course?⁷

The other index is a summary measure of the respondent's identification with feminism. We asked respondents five questions, including whether or not they defined themselves as feminists, read feminist journals on a regular basis, used feminist literature in their work, maintained an on-going involvement in women's concerns and/or research since their initial involvement in women's/feminist studies, and considered the area central to their entire work.⁸

Describing the Rift

Although my analysis focuses on the population of professors teaching women's/feminist studies in Canada, it was originally the influential thinkers in Phase Four who drew my attention to a possible rift between feminist scholarship and political activism. I was impressed by the fact that several of these influential thinkers argued that the once-intimate connection between women's/feminist studies and the feminist movement was eroding, and that feminist scholars were becoming more conservative. Consider, for example, the following quotes from authors in the U.K. and Canada:⁹

there is probably a generation difference because the people who first went into women's studies saw it as political. They saw it as part of

their politics that they were developing these ideas in a theoretical way; that was part of their feminist politics. But I've noticed sometimes over recent years that younger women can't understand. They see it just simply as an academic subject in the university.

I think that in the earliest stages [the relationship between women's/feminist studies and the women's movement] was a very important and central link. I'm not sure that's the case anymore. I think that the two very much had a symbiotic relationship in the early years in terms of content, in terms of support, in terms of concerns... I think that there is a real danger that feminist studies will get institutionalized and it will lose that connection, that connection to change, the connection to radical critique—radical in the sense of going to the roots. And that may separate it from the women's movement to some extent.

These arguments, however, are far from representative of all feminist scholars teaching in Canada. In the follow-up telephone interviews (Phase Three), respondents were asked to comment on the relationship between women's/feminist studies and the women's movement. Fifty percent of the women and 32 percent of the men felt that the relationship between women's/feminist studies and the women's movement is problematic. However, of these respondents, only 30 percent of the women and 13.3 percent of the men said that the relationship is worsening: only 20 respondents out of the 182 professors in the follow-up interviews explicitly supported Friedan's argument. The sentiment of this group is well summarized by one woman, who said:

Well, I think in the early days they were very close. And, in fact, women's studies and the women's movement were one and the same. They were the same people, in a way. I think it has gone, drifted apart. I think women's scholarship, feminist scholarship has developed its own agenda and is asking questions about the future and all kinds of other... issues that the women's movement, which is much more political, is not.

In contrast, approximately 41 percent of the women and 49 percent of the men felt that there was a

positive and close connection between women's/feminist studies and the women's movement. Of those respondents, almost 10 percent of the women and 4 percent of the men claimed that the relationship is actually improving. One man said:

in action, in practice, I have the impression that the women's movement finds women's studies too theoretical. But I think that they are becoming much closer together. Frankly I know that now. But five or ten years ago those who were actively involved in the metro area looked on women's studies as theories, words and no action.

The remaining 9 percent of the women described the relationship between the women's movement and women's/feminist studies in neutral terms, while 19.1 percent of the men answered "don't know" to our query on this subject.

Analysing the Rift

Clearly, then, there is considerable variation in the way feminist scholars teaching in Canadian universities perceive the relationship between women's/feminist studies and the feminist movement. In another paper dealing with these data, Eichler with Tite (1990) suggest that these variations simply reflect the respondents' levels of political involvement. Thus, those who see a rift between the feminist movement and the academy are likely to be less well-connected to the women's movement themselves, while better-connected people are more likely to see no rift. However, closer inspection of the data reveals that only 4 of the 20 respondents who thought that the relationship between the movement and the academy is weakening have low scores on our index of involvement in the women's movement. Most have scores in the top two categories of involvement. Our respondents' impressions are, therefore, based on something more than just their own levels of activism.

We need to be careful when talking about "the" women's movement since there is no one umbrella organization coordinating the movement's various factions. Adamson, Briskin and McPhail (1988) distinguish between liberal, organizationally based

women's groups and left-wing, community-based collectives. Similarly, according to one of our Phase Three respondents:

[The relationship between women's/feminist studies and the women's movement] depends on which program you're looking at, and how you define the women's movement. If you define the women's movement as essentially liberal and reformist, then I would think that women's studies would be seen as absolutely central in producing an educated core of people to work within that structure. If you take a left-wing, radical position... about the women's

movement, then... any... program could be seen as virtually reactionary, class-biased, racist, given the structure of the universities at present, and as having been coopted by patriarchal institutions... I think there was probably a closer and more obvious relationship in the seventies than there is now.

While the available data do not always distinguish between types of movement involvement (for example, grassroots versus government organizations), the responses to the mail questionnaire in Phase Two allow one to measure the overall level of political activism of scholars when they first

<i>MOTIVATION</i>	<i>WOMEN</i>				<i>MEN</i>			
	<i>Generation</i>				<i>Generation</i>			
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
1. Subject area of interest to me								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	39.1	48.9	48.1	51.1	45.5	52.0	54.5	50.0
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	11.3	11.5	11.4	4.3	18.2	4.0	4.5	6.7
<i>Median</i>	11.0	11.0	11.0	12.0	11.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
2. Political motivations aimed at improving conditions for women								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	28.7	15.5	15.2	11.2	18.2	16.0	4.5	13.3
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	25.2	36.8	30.3	36.7	54.5	48.0	52.3	50.0
<i>Median</i>	10.0	9.0	9.0	8.0	.0	8.0	.0	.0
3. Desire to improve mainstream theories								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	11.3	9.8	11.7	11.2	.0	4.0	6.8	10.0
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	40.0	43.1	29.9	30.9	63.6	56.0	45.5	36.7
<i>Median</i>	9.0	8.0	9.0	9.0	.0	.0	8.0	9.0
4. Develop area of women's studies								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	19.1	11.5	10.2	11.7	.0	8.0	6.8	10.0
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	25.2	33.9	32.2	29.3	72.7	52.0	43.2	50.0
<i>Median</i>	10.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	.0	.0	8.0	.0
<i>N</i>	115	174	264	188	11	25	44	30

began teaching in women's/feminist studies. This should not suggest that I am counterposing women's/feminist studies to political activism. In fact, I acknowledge that women's/feminist studies form a legitimate part of the feminist movement. I simply wish to determine whether or not the vital connection between feminist theorizing and feminist practice is at risk.

Two sets of data allow me to measure political activism—one concerning motivations for entering women's/feminist studies in the first place and the

other concerning level of political activism once in the area. We asked our 892 respondents to indicate in order of importance the factors that influenced their decision to teach their first course.¹⁰ Four major factors emerged, including: "the subject area was of interest to me," "political motivations aimed at improving the position of women," "the desire to improve/challenge mainstream theories in the discipline," and the "desire to develop the area of women's/feminist studies."¹¹ Table 1 shows the percentage of women and men who ranked each of these items as the most important factor, the percentage

TABLE 2
Motivations for Teaching Most Recent Women's/Feminist Studies Course
by Generation for Women and Men (percent)

MOTIVATION	WOMEN				MEN			
	Generation				Generation			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Subject area of interest to me								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	44.4	51.0	50.5	50.0	50.0	55.0	52.6	53.8
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	11.1	11.6	14.0	6.3	20.0	10.0	7.9	7.7
<i>Median</i>	11.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	11.5	12.0	12.0	12.0
2. Political motivations aimed at improving conditions for women								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	29.3	12.9	13.9	11.3	30.0	15.0	7.9	11.5
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	23.2	29.3	26.5	36.3	50.0	40.0	50.0	53.8
<i>Median</i>	10.0	10.0	10.0	8.0	4.5	8.5	3.0	.0
3. Desire to improve mainstream theories								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	23.2	15.0	15.2	10.6	.0	20.0	.0	3.8
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	25.3	32.0	23.3	28.8	70.0	50.0	50.0	38.5
<i>Median</i>	9.0	9.0	10.0	9.0	.0	4.5	2.0	9.0
4. Develop area of women's studies								
<i>Percent ranked first</i>	20.2	14.3	12.1	15.0	.0	10.0	7.9	15.4
<i>Percent did not rank</i>	19.2	27.9	30.0	28.1	80.0	45.0	39.5	50.0
<i>Median</i>	10.0	9.5	9.0	10.0	.0	7.0	8.0	.0
<i>N</i>	99	147	223	160	10	20	38	26

who did not rank the item at all, and the median rank.¹² Both male and female professors who taught their first course prior to 1975 were much more likely than members of later generations to rank political motivations as the most important reason for teaching in the area. The earlier generations of women were also more likely to give the highest rank to their desire to develop women's/feminist studies. Conversely, the later generations were more likely to rank highest "subject area was of interest to me" and "desire to improve/challenge mainstream theories." The men in these later generations were also more likely to give the highest rank to "desire to develop women's/feminist studies." Overall, then, the earlier generations appear to have been more highly motivated by political interests, including the desire to establish women's programs in universities.

Table 2 shows a very similar pattern regarding respondents' reasons for teaching their most *recent* course in women's/feminist studies; earlier generations were more politically motivated. Moreover, the women among the earlier generations (although not the men) also ranked "desire to develop area of women's studies" higher than professors teaching their first course in the 1980s. These findings suggest not simply that all cohorts of professors became more conservative over time, but that more complex generational differences exist between professors who entered women's/feminist studies at different stages of the field's development. The one exception to this pattern concerns "desire to improve/challenge mainstream theories." Women in the earlier generations were far more likely to rank this factor highly in the case of their most recent course as opposed to their first course. Thus there are very small percentage differences between the generations ranking this factor for their most recent course.

Earlier generations were also more likely than later generations to rank "desire to improve/challenge mainstream theories" as the *most important* reason for teaching their most recent course (i.e., 23.2 percent of the first generation women as compared to 10.6 percent of the fourth generation). These findings indicate that, over time, the earlier generations of women became increasingly likely to

address theoretical issues in the university while remaining highly politically motivated.¹³ Later generations of feminist intellectuals, on the other hand, continue to be less motivated by political interests. If Hooks (1990: 8) is correct to state that feminist studies must be connected to contextualize politics in order to lay the groundwork for the feminist movement, then these data suggest that later generations of feminist scholars are producing work that is less useful to the feminist movement.

In addition to finding that later generations are less politically motivated, I found that, prior to teaching their first courses, later generations of feminist scholars were more likely than earlier generations to have worked disproportionately with academic groups versus political groups or grassroots collectives. Thus, in the first generation, there is an even split between the percentage of women scholars who had worked with people or groups in academic versus political/grassroots organizations; in the fourth generation, 64.4 percent of all previous contacts were academic, compared to only 35.6 percent political/grassroots (see Table 3). Similar results are evident for the men, although, it should be noted, we are dealing with a smaller number of total contacts.

Examining the actual number of ties, we see that the average number of political/grassroots ties for the four generations is quite similar—approximately 0.6 of a tie for each woman professor and 0.2 of a tie for each man with the exception of the fourth generation where there is actually a small increase. The major change is the increase in the average number of academic ties, from 0.6 for first generation women scholars to 1.1 ties for the fourth generation. In the case of men, academic ties have increased from 0.3 to an average of one tie per scholar.

These findings are somewhat difficult to interpret since the greater number of opportunities for political and especially academic ties in the 1980s probably influence the number of ties formed, independently of people's motivations to form them. It seems reasonable to argue, however, that later generations of feminist scholars have more ties in academia than they do in political/grassroots orga-

TABLE 3
Prior Involvement with Someone Actively Involved with Women's/Feminist Studies by Year Respondent Taught First Course (Generation) for Women and Men* (percent)

WOMEN <i>Type of Involvement</i>	Generation				Mar- ginals
	1	2	3	4	
Academic¹					
%	50.4	56.0	57.7	64.4	623
Mean	.6	.7	.9	1.1	
Political/Grassroots²					
%	49.6	44.0	42.3	35.6	441
Mean	.6	.5	.6	.6	
Marginals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
N of ties	(127)	(207)	(399)	(331)	1064
N of respondents	(116)	(174)	(269)	(189)	748
MEN <i>Type of involvement</i>	Generation				Mar- ginals
	1	2	3	4	
Academic¹					
%	60.0	64.3	79.2	72.5	79
Mean	.3	.4	.9	1.0	
Political/Grassroots²					
%	40.0	35.7	20.8	27.5	28
Mean	.2	.2	.2	.4	
Marginals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
N of ties	(5)	(14)	(48)	(40)	107
N of respondents	(11)	(25)	(44)	(30)	110

* Several responses were allowed for this question. The percentages are based on the number of ties, that is, the total number of responses in each column, which does not alter the interpretation.

1. Academic ties refer to any contacts specifically within the university including courses, professors, administration, research, teaching assistantships, etc.

2. Political ties refer to government-funded women's organizations such as the Council on the Status of Women, Royal Commission on the Status of Women, government women, politics, Women's Program Secretary of State, etc. Grassroots ties refer to community-based affiliations such as friends, relatives, unionists, volunteer sector, religious sector, consciousness-raising groups, etc. Political and grassroots ties were collapsed into one category because of some difficulty in distinguishing between them and the small cell frequencies in the case of men.

INDEX	WOMEN					MEN				
	Generation				Total	Generation				Total
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	
0	5.2	6.9	8.6	5.8	7.0	45.5	40.0	47.7	36.7	42.7
1	6.0	10.9	8.9	15.9	10.7	27.3	28.0	22.7	30.0	26.4
2	13.8	23.0	12.3	16.9	16.2	9.1	20.0	18.2	6.7	14.5
3	14.7	16.7	19.3	21.7	18.6	18.2	.0	4.5	16.7	8.2
4	21.6	17.2	24.2	15.9	20.1	.0	4.0	4.5	6.7	4.5
5	26.7	21.3	20.4	16.9	20.7	.0	8.0	2.3	3.3	3.6
6	12.1	4.0	6.3	6.9	6.8	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
TOTALS	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	116	174	269	189	748	11	25	44	30	110
	<i>chi-square=35.01, df=18, p<.009</i> <i>r=-.09, t=-2.47, p<.007</i>					<i>chi-square=12.89, df=15, not significant</i> <i>r=.06, t=.57, not significant</i>				

nizations and are therefore more likely to be influenced by the values, modes of thought and pressures of the university than are first generation scholars.

Let us now consider the activities of professors after they entered the field of women's/feminist studies. The two indices measuring the involvement of professors in the feminist movement and their subjective identification with feminism are useful here. Table 4 shows the movement scores for each generation. It is clear that women who began to teach women's/feminist studies in the earlier years are more likely to have a higher movement score than those who first taught in the 1980s. Over 60 percent of first generation women, compared to nearly 40 percent of the fourth generation, have movement index scores in the upper half of the scale (that is, scores of at least four). Thus the earlier generations appear to retain their political orientation, whereas women coming into the field more recently are less likely to be highly active in

the feminist movement outside of the academy. Notwithstanding the fact that most members of the fourth generation participate in at least three different types of movement activities, these findings suggest that the fourth generation of women scholars have fewer connections to the women's movement.

The situation with men is quite different. Although none of the men receives a score as high as six, those with the highest scores are men who taught their first courses after 1975. It is important to note, however, that we are talking about only nine men in total. The majority of men in all four generations has scores of one or less.

Overall, these findings have important implications for the feminist movement. As Friedan and others suggest, women who have entered the field of women's/feminist studies most recently are less politically active. Although a few men in the later generations are better connected to the women's

TABLE 5
Feminist Index by Generation for Women and Men (percent)

INDEX	WOMEN					MEN				
	Generation				Total	Generation				Total
	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	
0	.0	.6	.0	.0	.1	.0	4.0	9.1	6.7	6.4
1	1.7	1.1	2.2	1.6	1.7	.0	20.0	4.5	13.0	10.0
2	3.4	5.7	4.8	3.7	4.5	27.3	12.0	22.7	13.3	18.2
3	8.6	14.9	14.5	15.3	13.9	36.4	20.0	38.6	20.0	29.1
4	37.9	38.5	48.0	52.9	45.5	27.3	40.0	20.5	43.3	31.8
5	48.3	39.1	30.5	26.5	34.2	9.1	4.0	4.5	3.3	4.5
TOTALS	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	116	174	269	189	748	11	25	44	30	110
Missing cases=34	Somers' $d = -.10$ $r = -.10$, $t = -2.62$, $p < .004$					Somers' $d = -.009$ $r = -.044$, $t = -.46$, not significant				

movement, men tend not to be highly active. If these trends continue, we might expect to see an increasing rift between feminist scholarship and political activism. There are also implications for men teaching women's/feminist studies. Short of keeping the proportion of men to women in women's/feminist studies low,¹⁴ the only reasonable way to maintain a strong connection between women's/feminist studies and the feminist movement is to encourage men who teach women's/feminist studies to be more active in the feminist movement.

Fourth generation scholars are also less likely to receive the highest score on the feminist index (see Table 5). Just over a quarter of the fourth generation female faculty define themselves as feminists, read feminist journals on a somewhat regular basis, currently describe women's/feminist studies as a primary interest, use feminist literature in their work, and maintain an on-going involvement in women's concerns and/or research; the corresponding figure for the first generation of women is 48.3 percent. Although first generation men are also

more likely than fourth generation men to receive the highest score on the feminist index, it is difficult to make any definitive statements about them, since only five men out of 110 obtained a score greater than four. Nevertheless, if we consider the entire population of professors teaching women's/feminist studies, we see that the earlier generations are far more likely to obtain the highest score on the feminist index.

How can we explain these findings? The creative ideas and allegiances of intellectuals are always influenced by their social contexts (Brym, 1987), and feminist intellectuals in the 1970s clearly faced a very different set of circumstances in academia than did the scholars who first taught women's/feminist studies in the 1980s. Prior to 1970, there were no feminist courses or resources for curriculum development in Canadian universities and few colleagues could share the burden of course development. The women's movement provided invaluable support and was a source of power for feminist intellectuals. Student activists demanded courses on women. In many cases, it was intellec-

tuals involved in grassroots activities who offered those first courses. Now, however, resources are available for feminist intellectuals in the university: women's studies programs and centres, Women's Studies Chairs to promote research, government funds for studies on women. To a degree, women's/feminist studies has been institutionalized. One consequence appears to be that feminist scholars have to some extent shifted their attention to strengthening their academic foothold.

Conclusion

Does all this mean that younger generations of feminist intellectuals no longer feel the need or desire to participate actively in the feminist movement? Is Friedan's assessment of the development of the women's movement correct?

Only in part. Even though many feminist scholars view the relationship between women's/feminist studies and the feminist movement as troubled, virtually all of our telephone respondents felt that the relationship was an important one. Later generations of feminist scholars continue overwhelmingly to be strongly committed to the feminist movement; they just define the movement somewhat differently than do members of older generations. Nearly 91 percent of the women and 58 percent of the men among the 892 questionnaire respondents defined themselves as feminists, indicating that most intellectuals teaching in this area do not consider feminism to be the new "f-word." What seems to be happening is a change in how political activism is expressed. Many respondents outlined the work that still needs to be done to secure women's/feminist studies in the university, the problems associated with intellectual ghettoization, the conflicting pressures of administrative and intellectual labour, and other issues whose solutions were seen to require political activism. There was a popular sentiment that they viewed their work in women's/feminist studies as one component of the feminist movement and they were concentrating their efforts on that component.

This shift in emphasis may still be problematic, however. Feminist intellectuals may lose some of their independence and ability to mobilize opposi-

tional publics if they rely on the university and government-funded research for most of their resources (cf. Brym and Myles, 1989). This scenario is even more likely if feminist scholars continue to have disproportionately fewer contacts with groups outside academia. There is greater risk of fragmentation in the women's movement and less potential for a radical theoretical agenda. Feminists inside and outside academia may begin to work at cross-purposes. The role of men teaching women's/feminist studies needs further consideration in light of the "rocky" relationship between women's/feminist studies and the feminist movement (Eichler, in press).

In summary, the intellectual arm of the women's movement may have become somewhat more conservative in that women's/feminist studies has become institutionalized in the university system. If feminist scholars are to retain a critical position towards the discipline and if they are to provide leadership in the feminist movement, they will need to maintain ties with political activists outside of academia. Opportunities for social change inside educational institutions are limited. The bridge between feminist research and political activism is a crucial one. The data suggest that there may be some weakening of the bridge that needs our attention now.

NOTES

1. There are of course intellectuals outside the university system who are active in the women's movement. However, my data set is limited to intellectuals who have taught at a university at some time. See the methodology section for further details.
2. Various aspects of the project have been financially supported by the following grants: SSHRCC grants #482-86-0007 and #482-82-0016 (M. Eichler and R. Lenton), OISE SSHRCC #0920 (M. Eichler), grant #234.02 of the Ontario Women's Directorate (M. Eichler), a McMaster Arts and Research Board grant (R. Lenton), and a grant from PAFACC UQAM (L. Vandellac).
3. See Tite with Malone (1990) for a description and discussion of this phase of the study.
4. See Eichler with Tite (1990) for further details on data collection.
5. There were actually 112 men in the population of 892 but 30 of these could not be reached.
6. One anonymous reviewer objected that the generational distinction may be based on the development of Women's Studies courses at various institutions rather than the desire

to teach such courses. However, while some professors may have been interested in teaching women's/feminist studies prior to the date that their university permitted them to do so, I want to distinguish the professors on the basis of the conditions that they faced when they actually taught their first course. For example, has the degree of institutionalization of women's/feminist studies influenced the level of radicalism on the part of feminist academics teaching in the area?

7. Theoretically, one might argue that some of these items should have been given more weight than others. I did, in fact, construct a weighted scale based on factor score coefficients. The percentage point differences between the generations were somewhat greater, lending more support to my arguments, but not so much so that I felt it was necessary to use the more complex scale. I also ran separate bivariate tables for each item by generation. Each table produced very similar results so that it seemed redundant to provide all six bivariate tables. The total index, based on equal weights, resulted in the same conclusions as the alternatives, and did so in a more efficient and intuitive manner. Therefore, the index scores range from 0 to 6. The alpha reliability coefficient is 0.67.
8. Factor analysis and reliability tests were performed on these items to ensure that they were, indeed, measuring one dimension—namely, identification with feminism. I wanted to be sure, for example, that "reading feminist journals on a regular basis" indicated some level of identification with the field and not simply a desire to stay informed. As predicted, only one factor emerged with high loadings (above 0.4) on all five items. The correlation matrix and factor analysis results indicate that "reading feminist journals on a regular basis" and "using feminist literature in your work" are in fact *somewhat* more highly associated with identification with feminism than "centrality of area to your work" and "on-going involvement in women's concerns and/or research." The alpha reliability coefficient for all five items was 0.71. Excluding any item tended to reduce the coefficient by approximately 0.1.
9. I do not identify the influential authors because we have not yet received all of the consent forms giving us permission to do so.
10. The exact wording of the question was "Please indicate in order of their importance which of the following factors influenced your decision to teach your first course(s) in women's/feminist studies." Respondents were provided with a list of factors including "Other, please specify."
11. Only these four factors had a median greater than zero—that is, the remaining factors were ranked by less than 50 percent of the respondents.
12. Medians were used instead of means primarily because the distributions were skewed.
13. It is problematic to consider the members of the fourth generation in this connection because, for 46.7 percent of them, their first course concerning women was also their most recent course. The third generation is much more similar to faculty teaching in the 1970s, with 91.8 percent of all respondents having taught courses about women for more than one year. The corresponding figures for third generation men are 4.5 percent for first course and 7.9 percent for most recent course.
14. There has in fact been a slight increase in the proportion of men in women's/feminist studies since the early 1970s. The proportion of men prior to 1975 was 8.7 percent while, in the 1985–88 period, it rose to 13.7 percent.

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