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Feminism in Nova Scotia: Women's Groups, 1990-2004

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Abstract

This study compares audits of Nova Scotian women's groups in the years 1990 and 2004 to argue that such groups, which sustain feminism, have increased in number although there have been changes in structures and in respect to salient issues.

Résumé

Cette étude compare des vérifications faites sur des groupes de femmes néo-écossaises en 1990 et en 2004 pour prouver que de tels groupes, qui supportent le féminisme ont augmenté en nombre, quoiqu'il y ait eu des changements dans les structures et à l'égard des questions saillantes.

"Whatever happened to the ideals of feminism?" asked the *Globe and Mail's* television critic, John Doyle, in March 2005. "Today," he wrote, "most young women think about personal empowerment, not the politics of battles about abortion rights, equal pay and access to information about their own bodies." Older women, he suggested, put their energy into struggles with the continuing realities of a hostile and exclusionary corporate culture.¹ Written for International Women's Day, his article was part of the current and recurrent dirge for feminism. All that is left, we are told, is a new "third wave" of younger women who valorize "girly" styles and aggressive sexuality, turn for models to television superheroines like *Buffy the Vampire-Killer*, and find women's groups passé.²

We disagree, for we believe that feminism has definitely not receded into the depths whence it came. And this study of women's groups in Nova Scotia will show as much. In it, we provide a listing

of women's groups extant in this province in 2004, along with a comparison with 1990 that shows that such groups have, if anything, increased in number and variety over recent years.

"Women's groups" are not exactly the same as "feminism," of course, but the two are importantly related. Women's groups can be defined in a way that fits comfortably with ordinary usage: those associations whose organizers and members are women and whose goals and services are primarily related to women. Women's groups together add up to the "women's movement."³ As to the F-word, it is best thought of as representing a cluster of beliefs that women may or may not want to recognize in themselves and others. These beliefs are shared by all who consider themselves feminists as well as that larger group who support feminist goals while remarking deprecatingly, "I'm not a feminist, but..."

As a belief system, feminism begins with recognition that women as a group share and have historically shared different experiences than men. Second, feminism entails insistence that women not be judged inferior by comparison with men. Finally, feminism means, for public policy, that women should not be disadvantaged because they are women. The reasons attributed to the situation of women, the remedies, the theoretical apparatus developed to support these beliefs - these can all differ enormously, as will priorities for organization and action. But the core meaning is clear and widely shared.⁴

The linkage of feminism to women's groups is a meaningful one. Historically, goals specifically related to the situation of women have depended on women's groups of varying sorts, feminist or not, since such goals have seldom been supported with any consistency by mixed-gender or men-only groups.⁵ Accompanying those few organizations that are directly concerned with gender or status of women issues - the groups most obviously feminist, whatever their self-definition - there has always been a continuing presence or environment of less action-oriented, less self-aware women's groups. Such associations have sustained feminism as an attitude or belief system as well as sometimes providing support for explicitly feminist action.

Doom-laden judgments of feminism and, more broadly, of the women's movement, are nothing new. The term "second wave" was in part devised to

assert that feminism had not died when women were enfranchised. The project reported on here is one of many that refute such pessimistic analyses. Our goal is to describe changes over time in a specific place - Nova Scotia at the turn of the millennium - leaving explanations to another project.

Nova Scotia is a good location for a first look at Canadian women's groups, for here we find a useful scale and the necessary baseline data. Although small and largely rural, this province is not obviously atypical as a context for the women's movement. The region as a whole does not seem to have the pervasive conservatism or, particularly, the anti-feminist views often attributed to it.⁶ In Halifax, the anti-war movement is vocal and visible, mustering some five thousand protesters against the 2003 war in Iraq and then staunchly continuing protest vigils. The region and the province are also continuing a long, though imperfectly documented, history of women's activism. There's a connection: Voice of Women for Peace (VOW), founded in 1960 to oppose nuclearization, has been prominent here in relation to issues of racism as well as those of war and peace. Halifax is also one of the few places where VOW, a harbinger of the second wave of feminism, has continued to be active into the present.⁷

In respect to women's organizations, Nova Scotia provides manageable numbers that never amount to even a couple of hundred. Thus, a tally of women's groups in Halifax in 1975 found 156.⁸ A more recent study, Groups Dynamic, identified 153 Nova Scotian women's groups in 1990, 127 of them still in existence at the time of the study. Our more systematic follow-up in 2003-2004 produced a total of 178. Groups Dynamic itself provides the other necessary condition for a comparative study of women's groups in Nova Scotia: an adequately full and systematic audit of such organizations.

Groups Dynamic - GD from now on - is an attractive pamphlet prepared in 1990, with support from the Secretary of State, for the tenth anniversary of the local branch of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women. Fifty pages long, it consists of 62 short essays, illustrated by photographs, in which participants write about women's organizations in Nova Scotia; there is also a supplementary listing of the names of 70 more groups.⁹ We used the GD material as a starting point

for generating an inventory of groups active today. We then consulted all publicly available listings of women's groups as well as seeking the advice of knowledgeable activists and historians; draft lists were circulated widely and revised in response to comments.¹⁰

Looking for the larger picture of what happened to women's groups, we decided to compare kinds of organizations, using ad hoc categories initially derived from the GD essays and list.¹¹ We found this process a difficult one, for along with the obvious problems with distinctions among various forms of service and action and between explicit or implied or absent feminism, we were confronted by the (multiple) identities of participants. "Black" or "lesbian" in a group's title seems to dictate its placement, but surely there is something invidious in White heterosexual women being the default category? The "Grandmother club" on Middlebrook reserve is obviously a Native women's group, but it is also a group of older women. We did not include any such category, for in 2004 there were no groups with that identity - no Gray Owls in Nova Scotia. Still, since the time of the study a Red Hat group has emerged - and what about the Raging Grannies, older women singing together for peace, and the lesbians who call themselves Sappho Above Thirty?

We finally opted for a single placement for each group with a few cross-references in the final, 2004 list. No-one is truly satisfied with the results, but they do work for a cross-time comparison. A full list is included with this paper so that the reader can judge our classifications directly.

The most difficult groups to label were those eclectic organizations formed with a mandate of equality or opportunity for women, usually fairly early in the second wave of feminism. They tended towards uninformative geographical descriptions such as Cobequid Women Together. Typically they did not have a continuing office or other space where they could offer services to individual women, though they might operate a phone line and often organized public meetings, demonstrations, or conferences as well as carrying on other educational or lobbying activities. Such groups we initially simply labeled "feminist," since they are what is usually thought of as starting and fuelling the second wave of feminism. Their very wide range of activities, incidentally, would seem to

refute the later accusations that second-wave feminism was narrowly legalistic or mainstream in its goals. As we started circulating preliminary lists, however, we were repeatedly told that most of the groups we identified should be considered "feminist." And we agreed. In the end, we decided to keep the term "feminist" but to qualify it as referring to groups that had general or multiple feminist goals or were regional in self-definition.

Alongside such "feminist" groups, we generated a category we first simply labeled "places," referring to actual locales such as resource centres or refuges for battered or sexually abused women. But spokespersons for transition houses and women's centres were particularly vehement in their insistence that they were indeed feminist, with feminist goals. The label was then changed to indicate that these were "providers of services" to women in specific, physical locations. We were to find that the biggest difference between 1990 and 2004 was, precisely, the transformation of "feminist" groups into "providers of services."

We look here - with due care - at the numbers for each sort of group, and how they changed during the time span considered. Numbers do not tell the whole story, even when sorted into plausible categories; we use them merely as rough indicators of scope. GD did not pretend to be exhaustive. Nor do we. But we feel that some of the uncertainties cancel each other out. Thus, although we added some groups already extant in 1990 that GD chose not to include or overlooked (such as political auxiliaries) we have reason to believe that a good number of the groups listed in GD's supplementary list had already ceased activity at that time. Nova Scotia is small, contacts are multiple, and, finally, local activists gave us confidence that both GD and we ourselves achieved a coverage adequate for the sort of very broad generalizations we make here.

GD itself is worth attention. The "Her-Story Committee" that compiled GD was in many ways typical of the generation of the editors, women who had become active in the 1970s. The booklet's sub-title ("a collection of Nova Scotia her stories") and the editorial committee's name both reflect second-wave protests against sexist language. From the perspective of 2006 we can see that they had a primary interest in what are now called

"equality-seeking groups." This term grows out of employment equity and affirmative action legislation of the 1980s that identified women, Natives, those with disabilities, and members of visible minorities as belonging to groups entitled to legislative support and human rights protection. Thus, GD centred their own version of herstory on those groups that "promoted the equality of women - either directly or indirectly" and they identified groups in all the relevant governmental categories.¹²

In addition, reflecting the concern for diversity that the women's movement had arrived at by 1990, GD also included a number of lesbian groups. However, GD has no write-up of any lesbian group then in existence, although some are included in the unannotated list of "other" groups. When the editorial committee noted gaps in their listing, they singled out "groups which for political reasons must be silent." By this they clearly meant lesbians. The anonymous author of the commemorative essay "Atlantic Province Political Lesbians for Example (APPLE) - How it Flowered and Went to Seed" wrote, "I'm sad and outraged that I must remain nameless until sexual orientation is included in provincial and federal human rights legislation and I am protected against discrimination."¹³ Conditions had changed by the time we finished our study; in 2005 Canada legitimized same-sex marriage and completed the legal protection of gays and lesbians in Canada.¹⁴

The Her-Story Committee put considerable energy into defining their subjects: "When is a women's group not a women's group?" they asked. "Should we include only self-defined feminist groups?" They decided not to adopt any such limiting definition, since "there are many groups whose work helps the advancement of women - either directly or indirectly...." Groups that hurt or ignored "our fight" would not be included, but they would include those who, not calling themselves feminists, nevertheless "had worked to end women's oppression."¹⁵ There is a Marxist tinge in the reference to "women's oppression" but also a useful degree of vagueness and therefore inclusiveness in the discussion - all very Canadian. In addition, although the GD editors did not say so, they restricted their attention to groups made up entirely of women.

The GD editors made a few policy decisions that were very much of their time. Most conspicuously,

they did not include the women's groups in the provincial political parties. In 1970 the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) had been critical of such groups and recommended merging them into the central party structures. Feminist analysts, who initially agreed with this verdict, have now come to see considerable value in such auxiliaries; we accordingly included them.¹⁶

The Her-Story committee also made a conscious decision not to seek out organizations representing women in the smaller ethnic communities of Nova Scotia. When asked why they did not list any groups representing minority women other than those from the long-established Acadian, Black and Native communities, one of the editors told us that, in 1990, there were few recently arrived immigrant women and no groups representing them. The small, older immigrant populations, such as the Lebanese and Greek communities did not, they thought, have women's groups of any interest. "We would have had to go to, say, the Greek Orthodox Church," we were told, and they felt that groups such as Daughters of Penelope were not liberating to women. Again, there has been a change since 1990 in the interpretation of women's groups within conservative organizations, including ethnic or religious ones. More recent research has established the impact of such groups on their members, and often on their parent bodies and society at large.¹⁷ Indeed, our first awareness of the existence of the Daughters of Penelope was a poster in the window of a Greek restaurant advertising a session on the hardly conventional topic of menopause. But we were able to identify very few such groups.

GD did include on their lists the union committees and subsidiaries related to women, reflecting the union affiliation and the socialist-feminist ideology so common among Canadian feminists. They also included family and educational services in a way that was responsive to the traditions of feminist activity in Canada, however labeled. Some first wave groups were identified and the first essay in the booklet described the work of the community-oriented women's organizations of the early nineteenth century. GD thus responded to the discoveries of those working in women's history, who were astonished to learn of traditions that predated their own discovery of feminism. Table 1 summarizes the comparison between what GD reported and what we found for 2004 and

Appendix I lists the Women's Groups Active in Nova Scotia in 2004.

Over all, GD's audit presents an unsurprising picture, remarkable mainly in what it shows about flourishing activity and about a degree of diversity and a range of goals that is certainly a credit to the second wave of feminism. When we compare GD's results with ours in 2004, we can get a useful rough estimate of change and of relative levels. The resulting generalizations will serve as hypotheses to be tested at the national level in a study looking at the changing membership of the national coalition, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

To begin with, then, we can report, conservatively, that there are at least as many women's groups active now in Nova Scotia as in 1990, although it is difficult to chart the pattern of change. As noted, the specific numbers we generated were 127 for 1990 and 178 for 2004. GD also recorded the history and extinction of 26 earlier groups in Nova Scotia. These included, understandably, Halifax's "first women's liberation group." They also included a number of health and arts groups. We found that those last two types of groups were particularly prone to turn-over. At the same time, about half of the groups extant in GD (65) were still certifiably in existence in 2004 while at least as many more had appeared in the interim. So the numbers are sizeable at both times, and they are larger now.

Our second observation would be that women's groups that can be classified as "feminist" in the sense of general, all-purpose activism were characteristic of 1990 but not of 2004. GD identified no fewer than 20 live organizations of this sort, of which only one has survived as such. For 2004 we have a total of only three. However, a surprisingly large number of those earlier "feminist" groups have turned into providers of services at established locations. Furthermore, service facilities - usually funded service facilities - have increased substantially in number, even more than such transformations would predict. These changes were visible already in GD and crystal clear by 2004. Of the 18 service providers listed in GD, 13 have survived, and we found more, with a 2004 total of 34. Among these, although women's centres are fewer than in 1990, transition houses have multiplied. Society at large is, it seems, more aware of the women at risk, and if

public funding is often curtailed and threatened, still, the organizations stagger on and increase in number. This is a form of institutionalization but it also seems that, against the odds, the groups running these places have retained the ideologies of former days; their boards often include earlier activists.

It seems, in addition, that focuses of women's association and activism have changed - as indeed is to be expected. On the basis of GD entries, we set up an initial classification of "abortion," but by 2004 there was virtually no activism focusing on this issue here. We accordingly created the wider category of "reproduction," including the expanding range of concerns related to childbirth and mothering. In relation to health in general terms, we also see some major changes. AIDS (including HIV-positive women) and breast cancer as well as eating disorders have appeared as problems; they were not high in feminist consciousness in 1990. In addition, although GD groups organized in response to violence against women mostly transformed themselves into service-providers (so that we dropped their category from the analysis), there is still major attention to that topic. There is even a new occasion for feminist organizing, V-Day, set on Valentine's Day and focusing on violence against women. This is now the time for local versions of Eve Ensler's "Vagina Monologues," three of them in Halifax in February 2004. The shift in relation to religion is somewhat different. In 1990, GD was able to identify two feminist groups that were working to reform the churches from within and particularly concerned to promote women's role as ministers. By 2004 those mainstream churches who had not flatly rejected women in the ministry were showing off women priests and even a bishop and there were no more groups of feminist religious reformers. There are also currently no publications by community-based women's groups in Nova Scotia: between 1990 and 2004 Pandora went under and the resource guide Connections came and went, while the on-line journal Women'space is no longer based here.

On the other hand, over the period of this study, minority women's groups increased in number. We had expected to find fewer groups run by and for Black, Native, and other minority women as such, since many of the general-service minority organizations now have sub-sections or projects for women. Instead, older, established minority women's

groups survive and have been joined by newer ones. Thus, GD had found one group related to Native women; in 2004, we found another one and we also cross-listed three service providers with a Native clientele. They found one group of Acadian women; this has become a provincial federation with five member groups (six by 2005) and we identified another group. In 2004 we also noted two immigrant women's organizations that reflect the changing population of Halifax.

In general, older women's organizations show remarkable staying power. In Nova Scotia, these include the Local Council of Women of Halifax, the YWCA, and the Women's Institutes, all founded in the nineteenth century. The Women's Institutes of the African United Baptist Church, the Girl Guides, the Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the Junior League all pre-date the second world war. Long-lived second-wave groups include the Voice of Women, L'Association (now La Fédération) des Acadiennes de la Nouvelle Ecosse, the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association, and the Congress of Black Women.

Which brings us to a final, important generalization: women's organizations here have long been more diverse than might be expected from the criticisms leveled against the first and second waves of feminism. Nova Scotia is not multicultural; it has a very low rate of immigration and its Black, Acadian, and Native populations, though long established, are small and relatively isolated. But if we look only at women's groups, we find a responsiveness to minorities. Judith Fingard charts, beginning in the 1950s, the opening up to minority concerns of the older, predominantly white and Protestant groups.¹⁸ Our study makes the important additional point that women who are not mainstream have long had their own organizations. Even groups differently located in class terms have had some representation. Fingard describes a very early second-wave group in Halifax that was organized by impoverished women, the Dartmouth City Mothers' Club, while both Mothers United for Metro Shelter and the Low Income Network Committee were active in the 1980s.¹⁹ And, as our research demonstrates, women of minority sexual orientation definitely have an associational history.

Knowing about women's groups matters. In civil society there is a sort of shadow world where

women get together, not so much excluding men, as around activities that are "women's" issues or concerns. Men may indeed encourage such associations, but they are more likely to ignore or at best tolerate them. This is where women compare notes and learn to act outside the household. In some places - not Canada - these may be their only access to public life. But even here, where women have formally acquired equal access to every form of public activity, women do not play anything like an equal role in the places where policy is made and enforced. Women's associations, sometimes consciously and sometimes less so, serve as training and staging posts, at the least as part of the mechanisms that develop attitudes and abilities in the majority of the population. This is the women's movement. It is the support system for feminism.

It is therefore encouraging to be able to say that women's groups in Nova Scotia continue to be active, responding in nature and function to changing times.

Acknowledgements

Mary Anne Finlayson carried out a preliminary census in 1995-1996, beginning with an attempt to trace all the groups that Groups Dynamaic indicated as extant. Elizabeth Hutchinson carried out the more detailed and demanding work for the 2004 compilation. I am grateful to both and also to the many, many other individuals and group representatives who so kindly and cheerfully assisted us in this study.

Endnotes

1. Doyle, 2005, R2.
2. For the third wave in Canada, see Mitchell, Rundle and Karaian 2001 and Pohl-Weary 2004.
3. This is a more inclusive term than the 19th century "woman movement" and the unhelpful current "feminist movement." By "women" we mean here those who consider themselves and are considered women.
4. This definition draws on Black 1989.
5. The necessary activism of women's groups can be traced in Canada to the time of the first North American legislation supporting women's property rights; see Prentice et al. 1996.
6. See O'Neill and Erickson 2003.
7. Early 2005, 265-6.

8. Christiansen-Ruffman 1995a, 256.
9. GD drew on a conference and a survey distributed in Nova Scotia, amplified by solicited articles and consultation with knowledgeable individuals.
10. For 2004 we consulted the following public resources: the newsletter *Connections*; Halifax Regional Library, "Clubs and Organizations," 2002; the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, "Women's Organizations and Services in Nova Scotia," January 2003, and *Making Changes: A Book for Women in Abusive Relationships*, third edition, 2001; FemJEP (Feminists for Just and Equitable Public Policy), "Community-Based Equality Seeking Groups Currently Involved in Public Policy Initiatives that Affect Women, Nova Scotia," March 2000; Women's Employment Outreach, "Where to Get Help," spring 2002; "Women's Organisations — Nova Scotia," <http://www.euronet.nl/-fullmoon/womlist.countries.canada/novascotia.html>, November 12, 2002; membership lists of the Halifax Local Council of Women, Women's Inter-Church Council, Women's Centres CONNECT! and Transition House Association of Nova Scotia. We also consulted knowledgeable individuals about groups that we thought existed but might not be fully represented in public lists: francophone groups, Native women's groups, Black women's groups, lesbian groups, and arts and musical groups. Ethnic associations were contacted directly. We did not attempt a complete tally of auxiliaries, recreational groups, or religious-affiliated ones but used sub-groupings to get comparability.
11. GD had not classified their subjects although they had summary essays on older groups, religious groups, and transition houses.
12. The federal Employment Equity Act (1985) listed as its subjects "women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities;" cf. the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act (first passed 1989).
13. GD, "Introduction," iii; 9.
14. Bill C-38 (2005) legalized same-sex marriage in Canada.
15. GD, iii.
16. Royal Commission on the Status of Women 1970, 348; Young 2003; Praud 2003. Adding new categories is the less problematic because there are certainly some among GD's "other" groups that were not in fact still active even in 1990. Although some of the fund-raising and other auxiliaries as well as ethnic and

church-related groups included in the 2004 lists but not in GD were already in existence in 1990, as were the first wave groups we identified though GD did not, none of these amount to large numbers.

17. See Katzenstein 1998.

18. Fingard 34-36.

19. Fingard 38-39; Christiansen-Ruffman 1995b, 375-77; GD 33.

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TABLE I
Women's Groups in Nova Scotia, 1990-2004

	1990	1990	1990	2004	2004
	GD past	GD live	GD total	GD survivors	total
1) Arts/media	7	3	10	0	7
2) Auxiliaries	0	1	1	0	14
3) Black women	0	5	5	1	6
4) Coalitions	0	2	2	1	4
5) Disabled	0	1	1	1	1
6) Economic	0	12	12	4	8
7) Education	5	5	10	2	3
8) Ethnic/immigrant	—	—	--	--	6
9) Events	2	2	4	2	6
10) Feminist/general	4	20	24	1	3
11) First wave	0	5	5	5	9
12) Francophone	0	1	1	1	2

13) Health	0	3	3	0	11
14) Justice	1	3	4	3	4
15) Lesbians	1	4	5	0	6
16) Native women	0	1	1	1	2
17) Peace	2	1	3	1	4
18) Politics	--	--	--	--	3
19) Providers of services	2	16	18	13	34
20) Publications	0	1	1	0	0
21) Religious/church-related	0	8	8	6	16
22) Reproduction	1	12	13	4	10
23) Sex trade	0	2	2	1	1
24) Unions	0	6	6	6	8
25) University-related	0	3	3	2	10
26) Violence (against women)	1	10	11	10	--
TOTALS	26	127	153	65	178

GD = Groups Dynamic, 1990.

"GD past" means identified as such in a GD essay. "GD live" means (1) described or referred to in a GD essay as still existing in 1990 or (2) included in the list at the end of the booklet. Groups on the "GD survivors" and "2004 total" lists were identified directly as still in existence in 2004. Multi-branch groups are counted only once.

Appendix I

Women's Groups Active in Nova Scotia, 2004

Groups are located in Halifax unless otherwise indicated. Multi-branch groups with membership in more than one location are listed only once. Groups included in Groups Dynamic are marked with an asterisk (*).

1) ARTS/MEDIA¹

Aeolian Singers
Canadian Women in Communications
Halifax Ladies' Musical Club
Scotianaires Ladies Barbershop Chorus (women's music education)
Women for Music
Women's Theatre and Creativity Centre of Nova Scotia
Women of Wolfville
See also: Lesbians: The Women Next Door

2) AUXILIARIES (volunteers, fund-raisers)

2a) Conventional auxiliaries
Brookvale Ladies Aid
Friends of the IWK Grace Centre - Volunteer Association
Halifax Dartmouth and Area (Overseas) War Brides
Halifax Regional Newcomers' Club
Halifax Women of Rotary
Lioness Clubs
Mayflower Curling Club - Ladies Division
RCMP Veterans Association, NS Division - Women's Auxiliary
Volunteer Fire Departments, Ladies' Auxiliaries:
Beaverbank-Kinsac; Chezzetcook; Musquodoboit Harbour Fire; Oyster Pond and area

2b) Fund-raisers for women's organizations or groups²
Bedford Ringette Association
Daughters of Isabella (fund raiser for Home of the Guardian Angel and others)
Futura Club (fund raiser for Alice Housing)
Friends of Transition House (supports Cape Breton Transition House)
Trefoil Guild (supports Guides)

3) BLACK WOMEN

African Canadian Women's Association
Black Women Empowerment Association
Black Women Enhancing Cultural Pride (part of Women's Employment Outreach)
Black Women in Business

Black Women on the Move

*Congress of Black Women
See also: Religious/church-affiliated: African United Baptist Association -Women's Institutes

4) COALITIONS/NETWORKS

Feminists for Just and Equitable Public Policy
Transition House Association of Nova Scotia
Women's Centres CONNECT!
See also: First Wave: Local Councils of Women

5) DISABLED WOMEN

*DisAbled Women's Network

6) ECONOMIC

*Ann Terry Women's Employment Outreach
Dress for Success Halifax
*Halifax Women's Network
National Association of Women in Construction - Bluenose Chapter
Women for Economic Equality Society/Women's CED Network
*Women in Trades and Technology
*Women's Employment Outreach
*Women's Housing Cooperative

7) EDUCATION

*Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, Nova Scotia
*Eastern Shore Learning Opportunities for Women
Women's Reading Group - Ketch Harbour³

8) ETHNIC/IMMIGRANT

Daughters of Penelope
Immigrant Women's Network of Nova Scotia
Immigrant Women Project, Newcomers' Club, YMCA
Immigrant Women's Support Association
Spanish Ladies
Women of India Auxiliary

9) EVENTS (recurring)

*International Women's Day
National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence
Against Women (Purple Ribbon Advisory
Committee)
Rebels with a Cause (Elizabeth Fry; honours women
activists)
*Reclaim the Night/Take Back the Night
V-Day
Women's Recognition Event (YWCA)

10) FEMINIST (general or multiple purposes; regional)
Nova Scotia Women's FishNets
Western Area Women's Coalition (Lawrencetown)
*Women Unlimited Feminist Association (Cape Breton)

11) FIRST WAVE
Beta Sigma Phi Sorority
*Business and Professional Women's Clubs
Canadian Federation of University Women
Girl Guides of Canada
Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire
*Junior League
*Local Councils of Women
*Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia
*Young Women's Christian Association

12) FRANCOPHONE
*La Fédération des Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Ecosse
Les Dames de Ste-Anne

13) HEALTH
AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia women's groups (Positive
Women's Group, Women's Education and
Prevention Group, Women's Reference Group)
Breast Cancer Action
Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation
Ease into Fitness (exercise group for middle-aged to
older women, osteoporosis)
Eating Disorders Action Group
Matrix Women's Services (c/o Addiction Prevention and
Treatment Service)
Reach for Recovery (breast cancer patients)
Self Help Connection (mental health)
St Ann's Bay Community Health Centre - Rural Women
in Policy Development
Women for Wellness (Wolfville)
Women in Transition (drug dependency recovery)

14) JUSTICE
*Association of Women and the Law
*Coverdale Foundation
* Elizabeth Fry (Unison) Society

15) LESBIANS
"The Dance," every 6-8 weeks
Lesbian Mothers' support group
Lesbian sports leagues (softball, basketball)
Lesbian youth group
Sappho Above 30
The Women Next Door

16) NATIVE WOMEN
Grandmother club (Millbrook)
*Nova Scotia Native Women's Association
See also: Providers: Millbrook Family Healing
Centre, Waycobah Family Healing Centre;
Welkaqanik Next Step Shelter (Truro)

17) PEACE
Amnesty International - Women's Action Network
Raging Grannies - Halifax Region
Teachers for Peace and Justice
*Voice of Women - Nova Scotia Chapter

18) POLITICS⁴
New Democratic Party Women's Rights Committee
Nova Scotia Women's Liberal Commission
Progressive Conservative Women's Association of Nova
Scotia

19) PROVIDERS OF RESOURCES OR SERVICES
Adsum House
Alice Housing
*Antigonish Women's Resource Centre (and Antigonish
Women's Association)
Autumn House (Amherst)
*Avalon Sexual Assault Centre
Barnett House
Barry House
*Bryony House
*Cape Breton Transition House (Sydney)
Central Nova Women's Resource Centre (Truro)
*Chrysalis House (Kentville)
Citizens Against Spousal Abuse (Digby)
Colchester Sexual Assault Centre
Every Woman's Centre (Sydney)

*Harbour House (Bridgewater)
 *Juniper House (Yarmouth)
 *LEA Place Women's Centre
 *Leeside Transition House (Port Hawkesbury)
 Marguerite Centre (Lakeside - Zonta)
 Memory Lane Family Place (Lr. Sackville)
 Millbrook Family Healing Centre
 Nahum Centre
 Naomi Society for Victims of Family Violence
 (Antigonish)
 Nova Institution for Women (Truro)
 *Pictou County Women's Centre (New Glasgow)
 *Second Story Women's Centre (Bridgewater)
 *Tearmann House (New Glasgow)
 The Women's Place (Cornwallis Park)
 *Third Place Transition House (Truro)
 Tri-County Women's Centre (Yarmouth)
 Veith House
 Venite Court
 Waycobah Family Healing Centre
 Welkaqanik Next Step Shelter (Truro)

20) PUBLICATIONS
 none

21) RELIGIOUS/CHURCH-AFFILIATED
 21a) Christian
 *Catholic Women's League
 Christian Women's Club (Dartmouth)
 Metro Area Christian Women's After 5
 Sackville Christian Women's Club
 Salvation Army - Women's Organizations (Maritime
 Division)
 Women's Interchurch Council of Halifax

21b) Jewish
 Hadassah-WIZO
 Halifax Organization for Educational Rehabilitation
 and Training (ORT)

21c) Related to institutions
 AFRICAN BAPTIST
 *African United Baptist Association - Women's Institutes
 for Nova Scotia

*ANGLICAN
 Anglican Church Women of St. Thomas Anglican Church
 (Musquodobit Harbour) (also Mothers' Union);
 St. George's Guild - Anglican Church;

Cathedral Church of All Saints - Anglican
 Church Women; St Barnabas Willing Workers;
 St James Anglican Church - women's groups;
 St Thomas Anglican Church, Mothers' Union

*BAPTIST
 Cobequid Road Baptist Church - Ladies Auxiliary;
 Cornwallis Street Baptist Church - women's
 groups; First Baptist Church (Oxford St) -
 women's auxiliaries

CHRIST CHURCH
 Ladies Guild, Lower East Chezzetcook

GREEK ORTHODOX
 Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church - Philoptochos
 Society

JEWISH
 Beth Israel Sisterhood

PRESBYTERIAN
 Iona Presbyterian Mary Martha Guild; Presbyterian
 Church of St David - Women's Groups

*UNITED CHURCH
 Fort Massey United Church - United Church Women
 (UCW); Middleton UCW Group (Shubenacadie);
 Oxford Street United Church - UCW; St John's
 United Church, Social Action Committee; St
 Matthew's United Church - UCW; UCW of
 Bethany United

22) REPRODUCTION (abortion, children, mothers)
 Birthright
 *Breastfeeding Support Group
 *Canadian Abortion Rights Action League
 Home of the Guardian Angel
 Infertility Awareness Association of Canada
 La Leche League
 Metro Pregnancy Centre
 *Midwifery Coalition of Nova Scotia
 Planned Parenthood
 Single Parents Centre

23) SEX TRADE WORKERS
 *Stepping Stone Association

24) UNIONS
 Canadian Labour Congress - Women and Human Rights
 Department
 *Canadian Union of Public Employees Nova Scotia -
 Provincial Women's Committee
 *Canadian Union of Postal Workers - Regional Women's

Committee
*Halifax Dartmouth District Labour Council - Women's
Committee
*Nova Scotia Federation of Labour - Women's
Committee
*Nova Scotia Government Employees Union - Women's
Committee
*Public Service Alliance of Canada - Regional Women's
Committee
Women in Education (Nova Scotia Teachers' Union)

25) UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED

*Acadia University Women's Centre
CKDU (Dalhousie radio) - Women's Collective
Dalhousie University Alumni - Women's Division
Dalhousie Women's Centre
*Dalhousie Women's Faculty Association
GEMS Group (Dalhousie)
Saint Mary's University Women's Centre
Student Union Collective (Nova Scotia College of Arts
and Design University) - Women's File
Students' Union of Nova Scotia - Women's Issues
Committee
University College of Cape Breton Women's Centre

NOTES

1. We have not included women's performance groups (e.g. Blue Engine Quartet, Rose Vaughan Trio).
2. A number of other groups - including first-wave as well as ethnic and church-affiliated - also raise money for women's organizations or groups such as Bryony House, Adsum House, and the Coverdale Foundation, but that is not their primary purpose.
3. There are many women's reading groups; this was the only one to emerge from our sources.
4. Ongoing groups related to political parties. In addition, ad hoc groups regularly mobilize around elections, e.g. Ad Hoc Advisory Committee for Women's Election Campaign 2003. Many groups not so listed, particularly those listed as Coalitions or Peace groups, carry out political activities including lobbying and protesting.