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WOMEN AND SOCIAL WORK:
A STUDY OF FEMINIST
SOCIAL WORK STUDENT
PLACEMENTS

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in Social Work at Massey University.

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ABSTRACT

Women social workers and their clients are taking strength from the women's movement. They are redefining women's problems and looking for alternative solutions. This study of feminist social work student placements arises from the author's joint interests in feminism and social work education. It establishes the salient characteristics of such placements. The focus is on issues relating to placement administration and the articulation of fieldwork curriculum with academic curriculum.

The research was carried out late in 1986. All students (10) on the Massey University Bachelor of Social Work degree who regarded their final placements as feminist were interviewed and placement documents such as contracts, visitors' reports, supervisors assessments and written projects were also used as data. Interviews took place after placements were completed.

Four chapters relate to the data. There is a short description of each placement followed by a chapter on the administrative processes of these placements. The third chapter looks at respondents theoretical positions and what influenced their integration of theory into practice. The presentation of data concludes with a section on the nature of feminist social work and outlines five placement principles.

It is argued that the social work education curriculum should include feminist theory in relation to social work practice. Emphasis is placed on developing a common understanding of feminist placements so that their organisation may be compatible, as far as possible, with feminist principles. In addition there should be more mainstream feminist theory taught on social work courses to supplement a core paper on women's issues in social work.

The study makes it clear that it is essential that academic input is articulated with fieldwork practice.

The investigation of the truth is in one way hard, in another easy. An indication of this is found in the fact that no one is able to attain the truth adequately, while, on the other hand, no one fails entirely, but everyone says something true about the nature of things, and while individually they contribute little or nothing to the truth, by the union of all a considerable amount is amassed.

Aristotle. Metaphysics, Book IIa. (Barnes, 1984: 1569.)

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CHAPTER ONE

WOMEN WORKING WITH WOMEN FOR WOMEN: A STUDY OF FEMINIST SOCIAL WORK STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Introduction

The issue of feminist social work is gaining interest in New Zealand as elsewhere. Questions are now raised about women's issues in the social work curriculum and how to teach woman-centred material in both the academic and practice settings. My research looks at student feminist social work placements, and the importance of finding practicable answers to the questions they raise.

This research investigates ten self-styled feminist concurrent placements carried out by fourth year Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W.) students at Massey University in 1986. The placements were the third and last field experiences in the B.S.W. programme and they took place for two days a week over a period of four and a half months. Fifty other students were involved in the B.S.W. fourth year programme of whom thirteen were men. While it is accepted that the B.S.W. degree carries a proportion of student placements which will usually be feminist in character, the fact is that few systematic studies of such field experiences have been done. This means that we have had to rely largely on guesswork and imagination in relation to the planning and administration of feminist placements. It is nevertheless an important task to research feminist student placements:

Nowhere is the need greater than in social work...to avoid imposing stereotypic values and narrow circumscribed roles (Meisel and Freidman, 1974, quoted by Smith, 1985: 4).

Elsewhere the point has been made that sexism is a central issue for social work practice and social welfare policy making (Weekes, 1980, 1986a, 1986b). At a very deep level social work is concerned about social justice. When students ask to do feminist placements they express this concern in relation to women. Feminism is a term with a variety of interpretations, depending on one's analysis of why, according to statistics measuring wealth, employment, education and health, women have been consistently discriminated

against in relation to men. The main features of feminism, regardless of perspective, concentrate on institutional sexism, sex-role stereotyping and women's lack of power over resources compared to men. The nature of feminism is further discussed in Chapter Three.

As a woman social worker I have been particularly interested in the implications of the women's movement for social work. Are the consumers of social services now receiving different forms of help from their social workers? Are we educating social workers who can incorporate these new ideas about women into their practice? These are wide ranging questions which deserve further study. The scope of this thesis could not encompass them. However, they have served to fuel my interest in the relationship between social work education and feminist social work.

In social work women form the majority of workers and consumers, but men tend to be the policy makers, administrators and theoreticians in this sphere. This is one reason why there has been a significant time lag in social work between:

1. the development of woman-centred responses to women's oppression and sexual discrimination and
2. feminist theoretical criticisms of social and psychological theory and the development of women's studies in relation to the social work curriculum.

Nevertheless, the effects of the women's movement have slowly begun to reverberate through the social work scene. The growth of community work models and interest in radical practice have paved the way so that in the last few years women's issues have had a higher profile in the relevant academic journals ranging from social policy, administration, through curriculum development to innovatory practices (Finch, 1980, Croft, 1986 and Marchant and Wearing, 1986).

In 1976 the Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) in U.S.A. adopted accreditation guidelines which make it clear that programmes have to be able to demonstrate that efforts have been made in curriculum design to provide courses which will facilitate

the student's ability to provide sensitive and effective social work intervention (Council on Social Work Education, 1976: 1).

To date this has not featured explicitly in accreditation guidelines for New Zealand courses. It is worth considering how, in New Zealand, we can take note of and address the C.S.W.E. accreditation guidelines on women's issues. They are relevant to social work here as well because new approaches to social problems and social service delivery methodologies are developing in New Zealand. These include, Women's Refuges, Well-Women's Clinics, Women's Health Collectives, Rape Crisis Centres, Incest Survivors Groups, to mention but a few. Social Work Education is gradually responding but this is not yet reflected in any strongly voiced commitment to affirm the new attitudes towards social work which derive from the women's movement. One could rather argue that these women's organisations have sprung up from the grass roots in response to women's realisation that if we don't help ourselves no one else will. Women have had to formalise their experiences into a practical body of knowledge, in order to train volunteers, to make their work easier and more efficient, to handle the media and to further their own theoretical development. Some have been on training courses or gained professional qualifications. Their contacts with staff on such courses provides an opportunity for a rich exchange of ideas and mutual help in finding solutions to some of the problems being encountered by educators as well as practitioners.

For example Rape Crisis centres have not only served to assist victims of rape. They have also facilitated research into rape and shown up punitive social attitudes founded on prejudice concerning victims of rape, thereby giving us a new understanding of the subject.

Similarly, as more women go out to work for longer hours child-care becomes more socially accepted as a requirement for resourcing the family which is facing new stresses. Expectations as to who should do the caring for the young, aged or dependent are changing. Women are beginning to ask how, and why unpaid and stressful work both in the home and in the community is supposed to

be done by women. Feminist analysis of the power relations which determine that by and large it is women who carry out this work, describe them as oppressive. So they are. But the student working with a feminist perspective on placement in a services to the elderly team will almost certainly be confronted by the devotion, even after years of stress, of women carers to those dependent on them. A devotion which means that the person may suffer real distress at the prospect of handing over that caring role, even on an intermittent basis.

For many students and their supervisors, the link between theory and practice is problematic. Those in the field often regard the university as being an ivory tower churning out irrelevant ideas - either too avant garde or too out-dated, while those in the university find the field workers resistant or ignorant of changes in the social work education curriculum. Students may therefore be caught in a cross-fire which can be confusing, and/or demoralising. How, they ask, can we be expected to put into practice theories that our supervisors don't use or recognise, or how can we explain in acceptable academic terms what we were doing in placement?

It seems reasonable to suggest that those students who are engaged in feminist placements would, given the feminist motto 'the personal is political' find less of a gap between feminist theory and practice. They might, on the other hand, be presented with less theory that has been treated to feminist analysis in their course material than they would find useful out on placement. In planning my research it seemed to me that this could well be the case at Massey where the B.S.W students do not have a core paper which addresses women's issues and gender inequality. Access to feminist theories is made through papers offered in other courses, through passing references in core papers, and through one or two papers in the third and fourth year in which some contributing lecturers teach feminist material and introduce feminist teaching methods.

Fieldwork Curriculum

It has been pointed out (Deutsch, Platt and Senghaus, 1971: 450) that 'social science breakthroughs tend to come not in instantaneous flashes of pure genius, but in ten to fifteen year surges.' I think we

are in the midst of such a breakthrough with regard to the practice of social work and the way it is taught through fieldwork experience. There are variations between schools of social work, both philosophical and methodological, but there is an international acceptance that curriculum development is an essential and ongoing part of social work education. While schools of social work have been engaged in monitoring their academic curricula to keep pace with changes and developments in social service delivery, the development of the field curriculum has received less disciplined attention than it deserves. This is now changing as work by Sheafor and Jenkins (1982), Randall (1982) and Doel (1987) demonstrates.

The debate on the relationship between theories and practice in social work education ranges over a whole spectrum of concerns from the recognition that whatever the analysis addressed by theory, the concepts need to be translatable into action (Reay, 1986) to the requirements found in many minimum standards for course accreditation that students demonstrate their ability to put into practice models of intervention (macro or micro) taught them on a course (Pilalis, 1986). Much of the literature pertaining to fieldwork as published in the journals concentrates on supervision, evaluation, relationships between college and agency, use of student units, and similar issues each in isolation from the other. Recent publications, including Wilson (1981), Shaefer and Jenkins (1982), have helped to systematise and pull together these major concerns of field learning. As a result these authors give strength to the idea that the fieldwork curriculum should have a conceptual framework. This should use a syllabus incorporating areas of social work practice to be learnt, levels of competency to be achieved and should identify the placement processes and their significance.

It is not always easy to operationalise. Equally difficult is the attempt to articulate the placement with course material. Students should not, for example, find themselves doing research projects before taking their research paper or attempting intervention in an area or using a model for which they have not yet been prepared. They are however expected to demonstrate that they are developing a coherent relationship between their social work theory, values and

practice. Feminist students doing feminist placements will, for example, have extra work to do if they have not had the opportunity to study feminist aspects of social work practice before going on placement.

The links students (and staff) may make between their social and political analysis and its implication for place and style of intervention in social work take up a relatively small space in the journals. There are exciting exceptions (Galper, 1976 and Smith, 1985) but to what extent they influence practice is not easy to assess, because so far little research evaluating this has been published. In 1976 the necessity to articulate the fieldwork programme with academic course work was reinforced in America when the Council on Social Work Education passed a directive that the C.S.W.E. should further develop and refine guidelines for the provision of field experiences.

Fieldwork Experience and Feminist Principles

Although there has been a limited amount of research and discussion relating to the fieldwork curriculum as such, and even less involving women and the field curriculum, what there is shows a growing awareness of the relevance of this area for social work education. The field is developing and we need information which can only be acquired through research.

Although fieldwork has always been a part of social work education, its place has not been carefully developed and the failure to do this effectively undervalues and belittles it within the total social work curriculum (Hamilton, 1981). Margaret Hamilton argues that fieldwork should actually be at the core of the total social work curriculum. She would like to see all other course work taking placements as their central reference point, while at the same time fieldwork should be dependent on them for a major part of its infrastructure. In support of this Brennen (1978: 25) writes:

Studies buttress our daily observation that students are more interested in the applied rather than the scholarly aspects of social work education, and the Field Instruction is seen as the most useful segment in the curriculum.

Hamilton's paper is a resourceful contribution to the debate on how to articulate field with academic courses, why we should do it and how important it is that social work education make 'serious creative attempts to relate the form and structure of field instruction to educational objectives, to emerging social needs, and to new knowledge' (McGuire, 1969 quoted by Hamilton, 1981: 6). Hamilton also draws attention to the growing tension in schools of social work between those who would emphasise the academic and theoretical, policy oriented components of social work education and those (often staff with an ongoing relation to service delivery) for whom the practice or service emphasis is seen to be an essential but threatened aspect of social work education.

Hamilton's concerns are reflected in Sheafor and Jenkin's (1982) book which gathers under one cover in a systematic and illuminating way, many placement issues and many approaches to resolving them. In 1983 Sheafor visited New Zealand to research some of his ideas about articulating field instruction with course content. He facilitated a curriculum review at Massey University Social Work Unit and helped faculty to redesign coursework so that field instruction did not precede taught material but complemented it. At the same time he researched the major elements of the social work task as performed in New Zealand social work agencies to compare how these related to the learning goals of the B.S.W. degree (Sheafor, Teare and Hancock, 1986). His findings indicated quite a good match between the social work task and the B.S.W. graduates' preparation for it. Neither the social work scene nor the social work curriculum remain static for long however, with the result that curriculum needs constant updating.

In agreeing to undergo a curriculum review, the Massey Social Work Unit was acknowledging the importance of ensuring that the social work curriculum keeps pace with social developments. It is worth noting that since the Massey programme for B.S.W. students started in 1976 it has handled something in the region of 720 placements throughout New Zealand. As I have already remarked there is very little evaluative published work available on fieldwork placements overseas and virtually nothing in New Zealand. During

this period there have been far-reaching developments in New Zealand society which have deeply affected the social work scene. For example, the women's movement seeks to expose traditional sex-role stereotypes and draw attention to the way these serve to restrict women's chances of enjoying equality of opportunity that society would like to think exists. Other examples are: the rise of self-help women's groups such as Women's Refuge and Rape Crisis; the growing awareness of institutional racism and the energetic enthusiasm among the Maori community to do something about it; a drastic change in employment prospects for young people; and in social work itself a strong call for indigenous models. Within this context it would seem appropriate to begin a systematic evaluation of student learning through fieldwork practice.

For several years now the Massey B.S.W. programme has had students who describe their placements as feminist. They have worked in Women's Refuges, Abortion Clinics, and Emergency Housing Centres. Some students have researched policy issues with a view to writing submissions or securing additional resources in woman-related areas. There have even been placements where students have critiqued their social work curriculum and come up with recommendations. Craig and Gruys (1983), for example, presented their criticisms of their social work course at a curriculum review session open to staff and students. They raised issues about the structural restraints of a university setting on social work courses, in terms of content, accessibility and style of teaching. Their reception reinforced for them the power of the structure of the programme, it also brought us face to face with the reality of the vested interests of students and staff in maintaining the status quo.

Students who undertake feminist placements can put themselves outside the mainstream of their course. They face numerous tensions between their way of doing things and conventional practice, they challenge their peers, and constantly have to argue the logic of their position. Feminist students doing the B.S.W. degree may not recognise very much of its traditional content as relevant in the placement context. Fieldwork learning is seldom

articulated with feminist perspectives in social work courses. This is despite evidence that sexism is visible in all facets of the field-agency practice, social policy and education. Berkun (1984) who studied this area could find no model for building non-sexist field experiences into the curriculum and therefore set out to devise a model herself. She has drawn attention to the important role that faculty must play in introducing non-sexist models into the field curriculum, targeting both students and field instructors. She lists several good directions faculty can take, such as clear instruction to field instructors about the programme's goals regarding women's issues and sexism. This can be further emphasised by adding awareness of gender, sex-role stereotyping and women's issues to the fieldwork evaluation papers. She encourages faculty to teach students to recognise sexist practices in agencies, to note predominance of male senior staff, and whether male or female staff perform sex-stereotyped social work roles. Berkun lays the onus of responsibility firmly with faculty to be educated in these matters and in every way possible to foster awareness amongst field instructors and educate them in a supportive way.

An example of an exercise in field curriculum design is described by Rathbone-McCuan (1984). She looked at a school curriculum which interacted with Mental Health agencies. In this context a feminist perspective would usually be innovative and possibly therefore disruptive or at least disturbing for those who have not thought women's issues through.

Rathbone-McCuan discusses a training project that designed and offered a curriculum on the mental health of older women. This included both academic input and fieldwork, and was monitored over a five year period. The programme was directed at producing social work specialists in this area, and came into being because of the growing awareness of the numbers of older women needing appropriate help. As director of the programme Rathbone-McCuan (1984: 34) based her work on the premise that:

Education is an essential vehicle for helping the profession to effectively plan and implement strategies relevant to older women in their environment.

She describes what social work intervention should help women to do, analyses the sort of knowledge social workers need if they are to be competent to do this, and describes how material was included in curriculum, and how placements were designed to fit in with the teaching schedule. Evaluation of the programme showed that essential practices in this field entailed a knowledge and understanding of mental health, feminist practice and gerontology. It was also acknowledged that students experienced criticism from their supervisors and peers when they put their feminist theories into practice on placement. This was because such supervisors and fellow students did not have sufficient feminist theory to understand the difficulties older women face and the way that a feminist approach to their problem is appropriate. This could only be resolved through open discussion and support of all concerned.

A very different set of fieldwork experiences has been recorded and analysed by Melville (1984). Her aim was to document the experience of her department (Queensland) which has attempted to incorporate an awareness of sexism and gender inequality in the curriculum. The department runs a Women's Issues Unit which places students at Brisbane Women's House. Thus students learn in a sympathetic environment and do not have to first argue for the right to work from a feminist perspective. Her paper highlights some of the issues confronted by students, together with the frustrations encountered by those developing a feminist framework for social work practice, but also it demonstrates how valuable this kind of placement experience is for future practitioners.

Melville describes the placement setting as a 'Women's House which currently operates a refuge for women and children who come primarily from abusive (domestic violence, incest, rape) situations. It offers a 24 hour, seven day a week rape crisis referral service. The agency also undertakes community education, research and policy analysis. It operates as a collective and members job-share, with an equal participation in decision and policy-making.'

In this setting students can develop their feminist perspective in a positive way. They can integrate their perspective with their

practice and Melville lists the experiences which students cite as being particularly helpful. These include:

1. Working with women's positive characteristics which are perceived culturally as negative psychological characteristics.
2. Working against creating dependency inherent in the subordinate status and sex-roles of women in society, use of sex-role analysis as a therapeutic tool.
3. Emphasis on groups, education and community action as intervention techniques, as against individual counselling.

Useful lessons were also learned through awareness of the dilemmas felt by those working at the Women's House regarding their relationship with the University Social Work Department in facilitating the production of professional social workers. Factors such as the definition of social work, power relations, and the helping philosophy in a patriarchal context all combined to make students very quickly aware of the contradictory elements in their situations.

Melville points out that it is the field educator who can help students bridge the often considerable gap between placement and University. In most cases, it is easier to assist students to deal with dilemmas within the House than to deal with the contradictions they experience when they return to the university. On the one hand professional social work is said to be objective and neutral, while on the other hand students have begun to work on the principle that the personal is political and the subjective is real. Ambiguity and ambivalence occur when students get involved in doing feminist social work placements, yet of their kind these represent an increasingly common fieldwork experience.

Aims

It is important to establish workable and realistic criteria for feminist placements for several reasons. What may look like a feminist placement to the person co-ordinating the student fieldwork programme may not to a particular student. 'Feminist' is, after all, a label with many shades of meaning dependent on the

users' interpretation of women's oppression and how they feel about the changing role of women in society now that concerted attempts are being made in some areas to prevent women's exploitation. Students use a variety of feminist analyses, but generally a combination of radical, liberal and socialist analysis predominates.

Student fieldwork experience should be carried out in a setting where project, agency, and supervisor can accommodate (for a limited period) students who are trying to integrate their values, theory and social work models into practice. There is little if any documentation available that can tell us how best to combine these.

In a practical sense I seek in this thesis to examine the following questions.

1. What theoretical material are students finding useful as they do feminist placements?
2. What material could beneficially be introduced into the curriculum?
3. What administrative features can be introduced to facilitate feminist student placements?

The answers to these questions would help prepare students with feminist perspectives to appropriate placements. To summarise, my aims in doing this research are:

1. To develop a systematic description of the characteristics of a feminist placement. My approach to this involves an examination of self-styled feminist placements in which the following four features will come under scrutiny:
 - (i) types of placement and projects students worked at,
 - (ii) the process by which the placements were set up, with reference to student choice of project, agency and supervisor staff visitor, contract and assessment,
 - (iii) the development by students of their feminist perspectives, including what has influenced their perspectives and what material they would have found useful had it had been included in the B.S.W. curriculum,

(iv) how do the criteria implicit in self-styled feminist placements measure up to principles of feminist social work which I have developed and will describe in a subsequent chapter.

2. Make recommendations from the research for those involved in the administration of feminist social work placements.

3. To disseminate this information widely enough for it to benefit the client at the receiving end of social work.

Organisation of Chapters

The first chapter consists of an Introduction to the concerns of this thesis. Chapter Two is a brief account of the reasons why social work has for so long resisted the impact of feminist theory. My research is placed in its New Zealand context by providing an account of the role of the Social Work Training Council (S.W.T.C.) which has set minimum standards for accreditation. These guidelines have been followed by the academic institutions producing qualified social workers. It is argued that since the majority of consumers are women, they have a right to the services of practitioners who are sensitive to women's issues.

Chapter Three looks at principles of feminist social work practice. It is suggested that these principles will be the characteristic ingredients of feminist placements. Placement co-ordinators or administrators have at present few or no practice-based guidelines to follow when designing or allocating feminist placements. These feminist principles can be helpful in this context. The results of this study should therefore both guide the placement co-ordinator's administrative decisions and his/her input into curriculum design. Curriculum design affects the feminist student's preparation for and success in linking theory and practice in the field. The placement administrator is in a pivotal and therefore key position at the interface between the academic institution and the agency which hosts a student placement. He or she has therefore a responsibility to give relevant and up to date suggestions for curriculum improvement. Just as social work practice is always facing new issues, curriculum constantly needs

updating, taking on new styles and institutional reorganisations. How well a student succeeds in developing an integrated approach to theory and practice is, in the end, one of the key criteria for judging a successful placement.

Chapter Four discusses the methodology of my research. It is followed by the section on data analysis which for clarity has been divided into four chapters. Chapter Five presents a brief description of each placement project. Chapter Six looks at the administrative placement processes. Chapter Seven records the student's feminist theoretical perspectives and issues relating to their integration into social work practice, including what role the classroom curriculum could and should have had in this important fieldwork task. Chapter Eight looks at student feminist social work practice and the five principles of practice outlined in Chapter Three provide its framework. Chapter Nine, the concluding chapter, is concerned with implications for practice in the administration and conduct of feminist placements.

SOCIAL WORK AND FEMINISM: AN EMBATTLED PARTNERSHIP

As social workers become aware of institutionalised sexism and the effects of traditional sex-role stereotyping they will be in a better position to develop alternative insights into what lies behind their clients' presenting problems. Insights moreover which do not depend on deficit or pathologising theories about women per se. Instead, new frames of reference reveal that it is the oppression and exploitation of women (often of a subtle and disguised nature) which produces the depressed housewife with suburban neurosis and a poor self-image, so familiar to social workers. Feminist analysis is encouraging the discussion and study of these issues on professional training courses.

What social work and feminists want for humanity requires the reclamation of 'woman culture' – the traditions and experience of females in the private sphere and their re-integration into the public world. This ... is to suggest the model of society social workers seek requires the acceptance and valuing of aspects of our humanity that feminists argue have been labelled and assigned to the 'other' and thus relegated to the private sphere (Collins, 1986: 217).

Here is a crisp, clear summary of the potential for partnership between social work and feminism.

It was predictable that the partnership of feminism and social work practice would produce a creative setting for the development of modes of intervention that reflect both a new analysis and can respond to the changing role of women in the family and workforce. While social work values are retained in this new frame of reference there are implications concerning diagnosis and assessment that are at once exciting in their new relevance, but also challenging for those already using a comfortably established style of practice.

At bottom feminism is a mode of analysis, a method of approaching life and politics, rather than a set of political

conclusions about the oppression of women (Hartsock, 1981: 35).

Feminist analysis varies, according to what conclusions about women's oppression are drawn. There are three major feminist positions: Liberal Feminism; Radical Feminism and Socialist Feminism. According to which feminist analysis is used, different sites of women's oppression are identified, which indicate particular types of strategy for overthrowing oppression. A brief description of these positions follows.

The Liberal Feminist position places particular value on the freedom of the individual to make choices. The government is regarded as the guardian of the individual's rights to citizenship, the vote, democracy and equality of opportunity for minority or disadvantaged groups such as women. Eisenstein (1984) points out that it has received more support from women and the establishment than either of the other more overtly threatening positions.

The liberal position recognises aspects of women's inequality, but not its structural nature. It seeks to redress the balance through the law. Others believe that the sexual division of labour and the economic class system of capitalism combined oppress women in a complex structural way. The liberal feminist on the other hand believes that equality of opportunity is obtainable within the patriarchal capitalist society. In other words, liberal feminism

shares certain elements of the dominant ideology of our society, it, however, at the same time lays the basis for a real assault against present inequalities in terms of its feminism and as such must be understood as containing regressive and radical elements for the struggle for women's liberation (Eisenstein, 1984: 345).

Radical Feminist analysis of women's oppression accounts for women's subordinate relationship to men by referring to notions of biological destiny. The dialectic of sex (Firestone, 1979) is viewed as the dominant historical force. Patriarchy is the institution which most clearly expresses male and female power relationships.

Patriarchal power relations are such that men dominate women, and older men dominate younger men. Men are seen as the definers of reality. Masculine characteristics have become the norm, against which women are assessed and found wanting.

Strategies for overthrowing the domination of women through patriarchal institutions target the family and women's reproductive function and nurturing roles. These are areas where social workers are closely involved and where their goals and styles of work would be immediately affected by a feminist analysis. The overthrow of capitalism, it is argued by radical feminists, has not been seen to liberate women. Hence more radical measures are explored.

The Socialist Feminist position argues that there are two forces which ultimately determine the exploitation of women in the family and in society: the relations of production and the power of the patriarchal system (Barrett, 1980 and Eisenstein, 1981). The materialist account of history examines productive and reproductive activities to understand more closely the relationships of inequality, exploitation and oppression in society. The knowledge gained through this analysis reveals a variety of likely ways in which oppressive forms of social organisation can be transformed.

Capitalism is seen as harnessing the family as an institution which will both reproduce the labour force it depends on and consume its goods. It will replenish and care for that workforce too and women are the obvious sex to perform these domestic functions because of their reproductive role. Socialist feminism analyses the role of class as it affects women's lives - it acknowledges the ideology of the family maintained through the cultural hegemony of the powerful elite through the institutions of the civil state (church, law, education and the media).

In this respect the family's status quo is recognised as a formidable opponent. Strategies have to acknowledge the strengths and magnitude of what has to be changed. Feminists have now become sensitive to the way in which Marxist theory tends to be gender blind. Marxist theory conveys a general optimism that once capitalism is overthrown all forms of oppression will disappear - including women's oppression. This has not occurred historically.

Legal regulations in the U.S.S.R. convey a glowing picture of women's equality with men. Their daily lives do not, however, depict a corresponding domestic liberation.

In Western cultures where there are traditions of democracy and citizen rights, liberal feminism fits more easily on the social work setting than do other kinds of feminism. In New Zealand this has also been the case. Now, however, we are moving into a new political climate where the tangata whenua are claiming recognition for their own cultural traditions. These traditions centre on the tribal system, and their impact into the social work scene has been particularly strong in the area of whanau development. In Maori culture whanau is the extended family, present, past and future. The whanau supports, nurtures and guides its members. What is good for the whanau is good for its members, so there should not be a conflict of interest between the two.

The relationship between the women's movement and the development of bi-culturalism is a challenging one (Awatere, 1984; Guy, 1986 and Kelsey, 1987). Awatere puts this challenge in a nutshell when she writes:

White women hold onto their trivial goals, seemingly driven more by their individualistic philosophy and commitment to themselves than to a determination to rid this place and this culture of its injustice to all women. That must include Maori women. Justice for Maori women does not exist without Maori sovereignty (Awatere, 1984: 44).

If the institutions of pakeha New Zealand are to become bi-cultural they will have to change and to express through their structures and processes the ways and values of the Maori people just as clearly as they embody pakeha ways. How this is to come about and what effect it will have on the position of women in society remains to be seen.

As they stand neither the biological nor the class based theories of women's oppression appear to be in themselves sufficient. The strategies they indicate appear either to be utopian or inadequate in the light of history. Both accounts pay attention to structural

issues, unlike Liberal Feminism, yet it is the liberal strategies which have probably had the greatest amount of success. Feminists are now looking to minimise the dichotomising analyses of women's oppression. The real world is full of contradictions and in practice both the radical and the Marxist accounts of oppression tend to be used by women working for women. The majority of students in this study, while reluctant to be labelled at all, eventually identified themselves as socialist feminists.

The common factor in these positions is their recognition that women experience discrimination throughout their lives, which means that they do not enjoy equality of opportunity with men. Social workers work with women suffering from a variety of problems, many of which reflect this situation. It is relevant therefore to remember that social work is a profession with its own code of ethics. This calls upon its members to work for changes that will facilitate to the fullest the development of human potential and the well-being of the individual. The same code of ethics enjoins its members to work for the elimination of discrimination as it adversely affects clients.

When faced with battered women, abused children, with women suffering withdrawal symptoms after years of abuse through the prescription of tranquillisers, and in general with the increasing feminisation of poverty, it seems surprising that it took social workers so long to recognise that in feminism there is an analytic tool which can be used to their own and their client's advantage.

The majority of social workers who work at the interface of social policy and its service delivery are women (Healey, 1982 and Bolger, 1981). They take account of issues raised on the personal and the political level and have to translate their knowledge into action. This necessitates analytic tools - tools which have tended to be used more by those involved at the macro end of the social work spectrum - social policy - than by those working in the field. The latter in fact require these analytic means just as much as do those engaged in macro-level work if they are ever to get beyond crisis intervention. In this context feminist theory can direct social workers to more appropriate methods of intervention by suggesting

ways in which some policies should be changed in order to get rid of the sexist nature of so much that is taken for granted in our social organisation.

Here the liberal feminist will find herself in an environment where reform and change can be struggled for within a familiar institutional setting. What reforms, and what change is likely to occur or be demanded will depend on the degree of influence of the socialist and radical traditions developed above. These traditions represent ideals in the Platonic sense. In practice I found students combining and using elements from all the feminist positions outlined here.

The rest of this chapter is divided into two sections: (1) why has social work been so resistant to feminism? (2) the development of professional social work in New Zealand: bi-cultural and feminist issues.

Why Has Social Work Resisted the Impact of Feminism?

One can trace the beginnings of social work in nineteenth and twentieth century Britain through the activities of men and women whose

utilitarian philosophy of liberal reformism developed in response to the inefficient human costs of capitalist development and led directly to state financed and controlled welfare services (Nash, 1930: 4).

In New Zealand social welfare provisions reflect this same liberal ethic. The interests of capitalism have not been considered to be incompatible with the aspirations of the working class, provided always that rational solutions can be found to social problems thrown up by Western capitalist economic organisations.

Social work is situated in a position of tension between social control and social justice. This has meant that as a profession it adopted a conservative approach to social change. The following quotation provides a rather cruel illustration of this point, which I raise because it gives a historical background to the reluctance of social work generally to take feminist theory on board.

A certain degree of authority is proper to anyone in an advisory role, but the 'people professions' operate with a variety of paternalism that is quite incompatible with their claim to be 'helping people to lead better lives', and betrays the fact that their real duties lie elsewhere. If such were really their aim, then we should expect their voice to be the most insistent in articulating and attacking the ways in which the political system itself systematically limits the quality of their client's lives: moreover, it would be the latter to whom they would divulge their analyses of the situation, not to others in authority over them. In practice, they apply their energies to ways of dealing with problems that offer the minimum disruption to the existing order - on peril of their jobs. For if the human wreckage produced by the way society is organised can be discretely removed, processed, and returned in re-usable form by these social garbage-workers, then not only will the service avoid producing disruption itself: it will prevent the disturbance which might result if the evidence of the political system's failure to meet human needs were left in our midst (Ingleby, 1976: 155).

This scathing account of social work depicts a profession which explicitly operated to maintain the status quo. As such, social workers could be relied upon initially to resist radical change in favour of agency/statutory responsibilities. I would argue that this is much less likely to be the case today. As social work has tested the waters of radicalism it has recognised, particularly through the academic institutions, the tensions caused by its dual role of providing assistance to those unable to cope with daily living, and of social control. The international code of ethics explicitly calls social workers to maintain accountability to their profession. This results in clashes of loyalty for the social worker. Agency goals may conflict with his or her perceptions concerning a clients needs, right to resources or priorities. Social workers thus have to use their judgement in deciding how to act.

Until very recently radical social work literature has shown either a token interest in feminism, or has been gender-blind. Yet women have consistently outnumbered men as social workers. Some will have been involved in the Women's Liberation Movement of the '60s. Yet there was at that time little feminist impact on social work practice. Liberal goals aimed at equality of opportunity and individual freedom of choice were kept within the context of a status quo so far as the family was concerned. Such goals did not immediately threaten the traditional social work values centred on the preservation of the nuclear family. They did not rock the boat, nor challenge women's traditional role.

It has taken women social workers a long time to recognise institutional sexism even in their own career structures. Radical writers left it to the women to point out how organisational structures and career paths in the social services discriminate against women to such an extent that men outnumber women in the higher levels of management beyond all proportion to their actual numbers (Baskerville, 1983).

In this familiar landscape it becomes obvious that feminism, in so far as it is seen to be a threat to the status quo would be resisted by those exercising cultural hegemony through social work education and service delivery. For example, models of family pathology continue to be used widely to account for and treat child sexual abuse. Feminist models of explanation which in this context examine the effects of power relations between men and women incurred through our socialisation into patriarchal society, are much less acceptable to the establishment, though this is changing.

Women attempting to introduce women's studies or feminist theory into social work education face resistance for similar reasons. These stem from a variety of causes ranging from ignorance about institutional sexism with its discriminatory effects on women, to defensiveness and overt resistance by those who recognise that they have much to lose once they open their ranks to women. Even with statutory or institutional support the going is hard. Although we have a Ministry of Women's Affairs, and despite a well-presented report by an Advisory Committee of Women

Concerning Sexism in the Department of Social Welfare, the New Zealand Association of Social Workers has not yet seen fit to formally address sexism in the social service delivery system.

Social work is no different from other professions in its resistance to feminism. But within the terms of its code of ethics, I would suggest that it cannot resist without facing the charge of inconsistency. In addition to this, the patterns of family organisation are changing in response to education, modern technology and new patterns of fertility. These changes affect women's aspirations and opportunities. The social problems arising today, and our resources for dealing with them come under both feminist and social work scrutiny. Both suggest solutions and strategies depending on their analysis. These answers can be unusually informative. They can also suggest such radical changes that the social work profession as a part of the state apparatus will officially resist. Some members of the profession, however, do look for radical change and for this reason social work incorporates a wide and sometimes conflicting range of theoretical models and goals.

Social workers, in talking about the quality of life emphasise the importance of nurturing the development of trust and a positive self-image for each and every individual. Such attributes are normally developed in the family setting and where family interactions are failing to achieve such qualities in its members that family is considered dysfunctional. On the one hand, social workers act to promote and protect the good side of family life, but where this appears to be at the expense of one person - the mother - the feminist social worker is placed in a contradictory position. Somehow solutions need to be found on a wider level than within the microcosm of the nuclear family, which will safeguard the haven that the family can be, without doing so through the exploitation of women.

The Development of Professional Social Work in New Zealand:
Bi-cultural and Feminist Priorities

The Social Work Training Council was established in 1973 to advise on, co-ordinate and set standards for the training of social workers

in New Zealand. In so far as its terms of reference also included accreditation of courses whose graduates wish to apply for the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work it has held a position of influence. In November 1984 the S.W.T.C. produced its most recent revised 'Minimum Standards for Basic Education and Training Programmes for Social Workers' (New Zealand Social Work Training Council, 1984) to be applied from 1 January 1985. At the same time the Minister of Social Welfare had called for a review committee to report on the S.W.T.C. In 1985 the S.W.T.C. ceased to exist. Inevitably this left a question mark on the minimum standards.

Amongst its principles for professional educational programmes the S.W.T.C. requires courses to reflect the indigenous issues and practice of social work in New Zealand (1.3.1.), to provide the opportunity for students to integrate course content or demonstrate its application in practice (1.3.2d.), and to address contemporary social issues in New Zealand (1.3.4.). Furthermore courses applying for accreditation must describe the philosophical orientation of the programme (2.1.1.) and demonstrate that all parties affected by social work training to be involved in the processes of programme development, review and evaluation (2.1.9.). There are stipulations on curriculum content, which include mention of issues of social deprivation, ethnicity, racism, sexism and the distribution of power (3.2.). Section 4 covers the requirements for fieldwork. A wide range of placement settings is called for, but there is no explicit call for experience relating to women's issues or feminism.

Overall the basic minimum standards allow for considerable interpretation and make space for innovative field experience. Educational institutions applying for accreditation clearly have to construct an ordered curriculum incorporating the usual range of social work material. However, I would argue that these minimum standards represent a lost opportunity for affirmative action, at a time when New Zealand society has been sensitised both to women's oppression and to racial discrimination and inequality. Unlike other international standards they have no prescriptive regulations regarding women's issues in a fieldwork context. In America, for example, the Council on Social Work Education proposed guidelines

relating to women in social work education which were adopted in 1974. Known as Accreditation Standard 1234, it explicitly stated that programmes must show that they are making efforts in the development of curriculum content so that in future students will be alerted to the effects of discrimination on their clients and therefore able to work more sensitively with them. A new curriculum policy statement became effective (upon adoption by the C.S.W.E.) in July 1983. Key sections of this refer to human diversity in social work practice education. Section 7 states that with respect to special populations:

7.3 The social work profession, by virtue of its system of ethics, its traditional value commitments, and its long history of work in the whole range of human services, is committed to preparing students to understand and appreciate cultural and social diversity. The profession has also been concerned about the consequences of oppression.

7.4 Programs of social work education must provide content related to oppression and to the experiences, needs, and responses of people who have been subjected to institutionalised forms of oppression. Both the professional foundation and the advanced concentration curricula must give explicit attention to the patterns and consequences of discrimination and oppression, providing both theoretical and practice content about groups that continue to be subjected to oppression and those that are emerging into new social roles with greater freedom and visibility.

7.5 The curriculum must provide content on ethnic minorities of color and women. It should include content on other special population groups relevant to the program's mission or location and, in particular, groups that have been consistently affected by social, economic and legal bias or oppression. Such groups include, but are not limited to, those distinguished by age, religion, disablement, sexual orientation and culture (Council for Social Work Education, 1983).

This section includes reference to a variety of oppressions, all of them important. In New Zealand the two most commonly accepted are racism and sexism. Social workers in New Zealand are dealing with these issues in a variety of ways and some with more enthusiasm than others.

The New Zealand Association of Social Workers (N.Z.A.S.W.) adheres to the International Code of Ethics for the Professional Social Worker, adopted by the International Federation of Social Workers General Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico, July 1976 where it is stated that the social worker is expected to:

Sustain ultimate responsibility to the client, initiating desirable alterations of policy, procedures, and practice through appropriate agency and organisational channels. If necessary remedies are not achieved after channels have been exhausted, initiate appropriate appeals to higher authorities or the wider community of interest.

Ensure professional accountability to the client and community for efficiency and effectiveness through periodic review of client, agency and organisational problems and self-performance.

Encourage new approaches and methodologies needed to meet new and existing needs (Social Work Unit, Massey University, 1986: 53).

These undertakings, given our acknowledgment of the new and existing needs New Zealand is facing and informed by the standards set by the C.S.W.E. point unambiguously, in my view, to a commitment to introduce women's studies and feminist concerns into both the academic and the fieldwork curriculum of our social work training courses.

These issues are addressed in the B.S.W. academic curriculum at Massey. Students are expected to apply not only their social work theories and models during their field experience. They are also expected to try out their value system. Unfortunately, the S.W.T.C. made no stipulation that schools of social work should articulate

course material and fieldwork so that they form an integrative experience. Since it is commonly recognised that students gain far more from their fieldwork placement when it is related to course material and to expectations of competency this was a shortsighted omission (Shaefer and Jenkins, 1982: 69).

1984 and 1985 saw New Zealand society confronting two major issues: bi-culturalism and feminism. I discuss bi-culturalism in this context because it is generally recognised that worthwhile, albeit limited, parallels can be drawn between racism and sexism.

One can pursue the analogy that Women and Blacks are victims of social control because they are given an ascribed status based on their physical characteristics, and they have been denied the fundamental rights of citizenship, including access to political, economic and educational opportunities (Hopkins, 1980).

The tangata whenua have begun a new phase in their struggle to overthrow the institutional oppression of the manuhiri. In their turn some of the manuhiri, the pakeha, have started to raise awareness of the nature of this oppression by their own kind as a first step to stopping it. Prescriptive statements are beginning to emerge relating to course requirements in social work education. It is relevant to look at these for they raise questions as to how women can gain support for women's issues in the social work curriculum.

There is a great deal of pressure on the B.S.W. curriculum to expand to the point where students become unmanageably overworked. Only so much can go into each paper. Understandably, Maori women confront their oppression as tangata whenua first and as women second. When deciding on course content social work educators have to be sensitive to the wishes of a variety of competing interests. Bi-culturalism raises questions as to how we can ratify the treaty of Waitangi and whether genuine recognition of the Maori people as tangata whenua in New Zealand can come about in time to undo the racist wrongs that have become institutionalised in our society. This area of concern has become

the frame of reference for several public documents and statements relevant to this discussion of social work education.

Puao-Te-Ata-Tu (Ministerial Advisory Committee Report on a Maori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare, 1986) and the Ministerial Review Committee Report on the Social Work Training Council (Ministerial Review Committee, 1985) are particularly concerned that social work students should be culturally acceptable to the Maori community they will work with. Puao-Te-Ata-Tu recommends that 'job descriptions for all staff acknowledges where appropriate the requirements necessary for the officer to relate to the community including the needs of Maori and Maori Community (Recommendation 9 (a)).

They further recommend that 'the State Services Commission assess the extent to which Tertiary Social Work Courses are meeting cultural needs for those public servants seconded as students to the courses' (Recommendation 10 (c)). These recommendations were endorsed by the Minister.

Prior to the publication of Puao-Te-Ata-Tu, the Ministerial Review Committee Report on the Social Work Training Council was published. It was clear that submissions showed support for the way the S.W.T.C. had facilitated curriculum development and provided minimum standards for tertiary education programmes. The review committee supports the continuation of this process, but for a wide range of different levels in the field (Section vi.5). Submissions also included support for the Council to adopt an initiating and educative role in the matter of policy and practice in social work and community work (Section vi.12). In the report no area for policy research or development was specified. Regarding membership, the committee recommended the selection of eleven council members to take place triannually at regional Hui Taumata, the chairperson to be appointed by the Minister of Social Welfare, in consultation with the Minister of Maori Affairs. It is recommended that the chairperson be Maori, fluent in Maori language and culturally strong. There is no provision regarding a balance of male and female members on the Council (36-7). It is recommended that selection should display a responsiveness to community need which

can be interpreted as meaning fair representation for women as dispensers and users of social work, community work, education and practice. There is no assurance of this, however. Section viii - containing second level recommendations - reports that the specific needs of Maori people in the field of training have been considered and that support in this area should be given to initiatives being taken in the provision of education and training (viii. 8). Nowhere is it stated that the special needs of women have been considered, nor that submissions have raised them. Perhaps, had the report of the Women's Advisory Group (1986) Women and Social Welfare been published sooner, that lack of recognition might not have occurred.

The S.W.T.C. prepared its own review (New Zealand Social Work Training Council, 1985) which was presented to the Minister in June 1985. Like the Ministerial Review it acknowledged the importance of bi-culturalism, but not nearly so strongly or coherently. There was no explicit encouragement for women's issues to be included in the curriculum at any level, nor for the development of a non-sexist curriculum.

Women's concerns have had some sort of public profile in New Zealand for many years. 1975-85 was the U.N. Decade for Women. During that time New Zealand examined the changing role of women. The Report of the Select Committee on Women's Rights (1975) reported that women should be prepared for equal opportunity in the workforce while value would continue to be placed on their homemaking role. There was even a section debating whether women should be paid for carrying out domestic duties. The Committee recommended that 'the choice to seek self-fulfilment and advancement in the home or in outside activities, or in a combination of the two, must be an individual one, and not unduly influenced by social or economic pressures' (Section, 1-13).

Ten years later, after heated debate, New Zealand signed the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. In 1984 a Labour government came into power and a Ministry of Women's Affairs was set up. To mark the end of the Women's Decade the Minister of Women's Affairs asked all government departments to assess progress made during the decade

and to prepare strategies for the advancement of women in the coming decade. A Women's Advisory Group investigated the situation of women employees and clients in the Department of Social Welfare (D.S.W.) and reported back to the Director General of Social Welfare in the report Women and Social Welfare (New Zealand Department of Social Welfare, 1986).

They found that women were seriously under-represented in intermediate and senior decision-making positions, despite comprising 70 percent of the staff. Institutionalised sexism and sexist practices and harassment were found to be affecting women staff and clients (3.13). The Advisory Group called for more and better training opportunities for women staff. This call was aimed at departmental training programmes but could as appropriately have targeted tertiary institutions (3.3). It was also suggested that research be carried out on women staff and clients, topics suggested included cancer-related issues, and 'the stigma of being identified as a recipient of Benefits, evaluation of services offered, and attitudes of D.S.W. staff to women clients' (7.4).

It is reasonable to expect that these Ministerial Reports, Puao-Te-Ata-Tu and Women and Social Welfare, would have influenced the S.W.T.C. basic minimum standards had they been available at the right time. In both cases, the Minister of Social Welfare has in principle approved their recommendations, with provisos about certain aspects which require interpretation, and the availability of resources. In any event social work practice and education should not ignore the call for change.

The N.Z.A.S.W. Annual Conference at Ngaruwhahia 1986 formally accepted the report Puao-Te-Ata-Tu in full and undertook that all members would work for its implementation in the D.S.W. and all social service agencies. In their statement the pakeha caucus at the conference committed itself to use every available resource to promote bi-culturalism and actively support those engaged in anti-racist activity (New Zealand Association of Social Workers, 1986). So far there has been no such affirmation regarding women's issues.

We have a long way to go before we understand the implications of bi-culturalism, and its relationship to the aspirations of the women's movement. One area where these implications are being lived and argued is the Women's Refuge Organisation where collectives throughout the country are trying out a system of separate development. This means, for example, that centres will have one refuge for Maori women and children and another for non-Maori women and children.

Maori language is a feminist issue, the land is a feminist issue, separate development is a feminist issue, the venomous hatred of the Maori by the pakeha is a feminist issue (Awatere, 1984: 43).

These are strong words, but they illustrate the connections between two movements which have arisen in response to oppression. It seems that while social work is committed to addressing racism and bi-culturalism, women's issues have not yet been formally espoused. This became clear at the first New Zealand Social Work Education Conference in Christchurch, August 1987 where the issue of bi-culturalism was emphasised. Women social workers have some hard work ahead before we can muster a similar level of support for women's issues in the curriculum.

My hope is that those who experience institutional and other forms of oppression will be able to negotiate their liberation in support of each other. This will not come about easily. The question as to what should make up the curriculum of a B.S.W. programme should be one at least addressed by some of the standard setting organisations in New Zealand. How we give first importance to the contents will depend on our wisdom and ability to reach agreement in understanding.

CHAPTER THREE

IMAGES OF FEMINIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

This chapter gives an account of feminist social work which is designed to draw out its distinguishing characteristics. The intention is to produce a paradigm which can be used in looking at the feminist characteristics of these placements.

There have been few detailed accounts of feminist social work until the last four or five years. Wilson's book (1977) is an obvious exception to this. It has stood alone for too long, but at last social work literature is picking up her areas of interest (Brook and Davis 1985; Lewis 1983 and Marchant and Wearing 1986).

It is convenient to separate policy from practice in social work theory, but I do so in this chapter only with the intention of emphasising their respective qualities, rather than depicting them as separate entities. Policy and practice go hand in hand, informing each other continually, to produce new and ever-changing configurations and contexts within which social work takes place.

The Scope of Feminist Social Policy

Feminist social policy questions those assumptions embedded in welfare provisions which assume that women should be regarded as both dependents and caregivers and as such not requiring the same opportunities for employment and self-development as men. It recognises oppression and exploitation. For these reasons it provides a critical analysis of the social impact of government policies. Take, for example, the move towards deinstitutionalisation where individuals previously living on a permanent basis in a large institution are reintroduced into the community. This frequently means that in reality people who are severely disabled are returned to the predominant care of their family. More often than not it is a woman who ends up bearing the brunt of this burden of caring.

I believe that with the move towards deinstitutionalisation there has to be a middle way. I cannot accept the either/or sentiments of Thatcher who is on record making the following statement:

We know the immense sacrifices which people will make for the sake of their own near and dear – elderly relatives, disabled children and so on, and the immense part which voluntary effort even outside the family has played in these fields. (...) Once you give people the idea that all this can be done by the state, and that it is somehow second best or even degrading to leave it to private people ... then you will begin to deprive human beings of one of the essential ingredients of humanity – personal moral responsibility (Croft, 1986: 23).

Croft uses this quote to illustrate the false choice between state and personal caring that is so often found in conventional welfare policies. Her article provides a sensitive account of the tension that feminists encounter when attempting to find a way around such dichotomising situations. On the one hand women caregivers can be seen as victims of social and economic exploitation:

We should not be embarrassed to say it is on women's sweat and tears and frequently dashed hopes and plans that the gentlemanly and distanced official and managerial debates and prescriptions about caring and welfare rely (Croft, 1986: 24).

On the other hand Croft points out that women may prefer to be cared for by other women for all sorts of reasons. Women also want to care for their dependents – a preference which 'cannot be dismissed simply as the consequence of false consciousness or the dominance of male values (ibid.)

Feminist social policy points up the way women caregivers subsidise welfare expenditure, albeit in the name of innovative social service delivery methods such as deinstitutionalisation (Finch and Groves, 1980; Land, 1978). This opens up for discussion the assumption that it is the personal moral responsibilities of women as mothers, wives or daughters, to sacrifice themselves in these roles, rather than develop non-exploitative social organisations for this work. In fairness, I should say that there are men, who look after relatives in the same isolation as do women.

However, they tend to attract more support from community services than do their female counterparts (Finch and Groves, 1980). These ideas have been perceived to be sufficiently threatening of traditional western society that groups such as the New Right have sprung up to defend the family as the cornerstone of society.

The arguments of New Right organisations favour strengthening traditional family values. In contrast, feminists would

prefer a "renegotiation" of both work and family life, with men sharing equally with women the responsibilities of conceiving and caring for children as well as paid work. The working day would have to allow for family commitments for all workers, regardless of sex and social status, including extending family leave for care (Lady Howe quoted by David, 1986: 41).

Feminist social policy is characterised by several functions:

1. It aims to expose measures which are founded on negative or sex-stereotyped images of women thereby exploiting us.
2. Through campaigns, research and publicity it can raise important women's issues and confront the public with these.
3. It displays commitment to bring about change, in accordance with woman-identified needs - change that is predictable and feasible.
4. For some there are opportunities to rise above the constraints of every-day thinking, and to jolt our consciousness through putting forward utopian scenarios which can exercise the imagination and open up unimagined possibilities.

Students engaged in feminist social work placements could therefore be expected to seek experience in doing research, submission-writing, community education, media and communication skills for the development of resources in the community.

The Shape of Feminist Social Work Practice

Social workers can choose to work on many levels using a variety of social work models. Feminist social work practice is no exception. It can operate on a macro or a micro scale, it is informed by a variety of feminist theories, which provide different strategies by which women can seek to liberate themselves. Feminist social work occurs in statutory and voluntary agencies alike. There are feminist family therapists, caseworkers, groupworkers, community workers and policy makers. This is not to say that all feminist social workers will be comfortable working in any social work setting, but that it is possible for women to find a setting that suits their style of social work practice. Some feminists will be comfortable working in a statutory setting which confers professional status on them, whilst for others this would be construed as a contradiction in terms. There are those for whom casework with its individualistic style of intervention is unacceptable as far as their feminist interpretation of social work is concerned. Yet it can be argued that:

We must not allow work with individuals to be undervalued and relegated to the bottom of the pile ... rather we need to incorporate into casework theories a recognition and articulation of the contribution of the "female dimension" ... then we can develop a practice aimed at changing individual consciousness to elevate women and the female dimension to be truly representative of half the human experience (Brown, 1986: 232).

Social workers vary in the degree to which they are prepared to stand up and be counted as political animals. Feminist social workers are no exception. Convention dictates that social workers leave their politics out of the office. However the development of community workers and radical traditions of social work have called these conventions into question. This has created the space in which feminists can work not only in voluntary but also in statutory agencies. It has not, unfortunately, gone so far as to clear away the tensions most experience between their value system and that of their employers.

These tensions cannot be overlooked. They represent a difficult area. Professional social workers of whatever persuasion can find themselves in disagreement with agency policy. This can be in relation to the allocation of resources, and what this reveals about priorities. It can be associated with agency goals and objectives and the balance between social control and meeting an expressed need. For feminists, tensions also arise when women employees perceive how they are discriminated against. Predominantly male appointments to higher level positions reflect the basis of unbroken work records and other criteria which exclude most women. In the literature there are constant references, by those who have begun to put their feminist principles into social work practice, to the importance of support groups or networks and regular peer supervision in order to achieve some measure of solidarity. If these tensions are to be coped with this is crucial.

In social work questions beg to be asked: In whose interests is this action, these decisions, being made? Who will benefit from this type of intervention? Will this provide either a material or an emotional improvement for women? If yes, then for which women, for how many women? These questions provide a critical focus and contribute a quality of good sense to practice. They could be subsumed into one main question: Who benefits? They highlight the analytic function of feminism in social work practice and policy.

A review of feminist literature shows that there is a generally accepted set of principles which constitute a baseline for the practice of feminist social work. These complement and in some ways differ from the standard social work ethical principles because of their underlying feminist analysis with its assumptions about the strength and rationality of women despite oppression and exploitation. They acknowledge the conflict and unequal power relations that exist between men and women. Feminism is about recognising that women, by virtue of our sex, are discriminated against and thereby oppressed. Once conceded, this point entails action on the part of every social worker who acknowledges their professional code of ethics. The sort of action likely to be considered appropriate will be in keeping with the feminist analysis

being used. Theory informs strategy. In this way, social policy and social work are intertwined.

I have identified five principles for feminist social work: 1. Analysis, 2. Integration, 3. Affirmation, 4. Empowerment, 5. Supervision/Support. In identifying feminist social work practice principles, I am indebted to Wood-Wetzel (1987) who in a recent article develops a conceptual framework for relating feminism and social work programmes and policy.

Analysis

Analysis is concerned with developing a theoretical framework for critical thought. Feminist analysis provides the guidelines from which strategy evolves. The assumption behind the question of 'who benefits?' is a simple one - exploitation. For example it may seem obvious that a woman caring for an elderly and frail relative at home will be helped if she can use the intermittent care scheme. What is not immediately so obvious but equally correct is the fact that by keeping that aged and frail relative out of permanent institutional care the state benefits as well. In fact, as things stand now, it gains a higher financial benefit than is paid to the woman carer. It is likely that adequate community support in the form of home help, nursing care, meals on wheels, and child care, were this supplied, would end up as the more expensive option for the state. However this is not supplied. Moreover the costs to the caregiver in, say, lost employment prospects, or health through impairment by tiredness, stress or heavy lifting duties can never be fully accounted for.

A feminist social worker can be expected to raise questions of this sort which perceive the exploitation of women. The answers will inform practice and help to order priorities.

Integration

Contextual understandings of people, events and organisations is essential for good social work practice and has long been acknowledged as such (Pincus and Minahan, 1973). Social work tends to draw upon many different academic disciplines and fields of knowledge from which it has developed. The phrase 'the personal is

the political' invites us to make links between individual experiences of life and the political or public systems that affect women. By doing this our understanding of women's position in society can be focussed for action. We begin to stand alongside our clients to experience solidarity with them in mutually experienced oppression. This principle draws together the themes and concerns of the other four principles, through its emphasis on the importance of an integrated approach to practice.

Affirmation

There is a traditional division of labour between men and women both in the home and in employment. At home women are expected to cook, care for and bring up the children whilst maintaining a clean and organised household. Men are expected to do the more apparently energetic, out of doors, handyman types of work. They do not usually take responsibility for running the family; instead our culture still officially regards them as the 'breadwinner'.

A brief look at the distribution of men and women in the labour force shows that in many respects the same sorts of division of labour are being maintained. Women can be found employed predominantly in non-executive positions, doing the same type of tasks they do at home - cooking, cleaning, nursing, teaching, childcare, making clothes and unobtrusively running offices from behind their secretarial desks.

Men on the other hand hold most of the executive and senior management positions, do most of the physical labouring jobs, the building, plumbing and electrical work. Generally speaking they have a more active role to play while women appear to have a more passive role. Men's work gains a higher rate of remuneration than so-called women's work in the market place.

The women's liberation movement debates furiously about how to change things so that women could in a more egalitarian way partake of job opportunities and have access to a wider range of occupations. For a while the only choice open to women seemed to be either the family or a career. Women had to be, as it were, better men than men in order to get as far. They had to play down their feminine qualities, or suppress them, in order to succeed. It has

now been recognised by some that the medical models of normality have been based on male qualities in such a way as to disadvantage women. While it is 'normal' for a man to be assertive, demanding or authoritarian, a woman can meet with disapproval for manifesting such qualities - she would be a 'nag', as opposed to showing a 'sense of responsibility'.

Androgyny - the best qualities of both male and female in one person - is talked about now as a means by which this dilemma can be solved. But some radical feminists would prefer to develop the traditional nurturing co-operative 'womanly qualities' and by doing so to affirm these and give them more public value than they have hitherto been given. Clearly there is now a broader spectrum of attitudes and qualities that women can aim to develop and express without fearing social condemnation. Feminist social workers are aware of this increased range of appropriate characteristics and try to make it more available and accessible both to clients and to themselves.

Affirmation as a feminist social work principle involves helping women to make sense of their personal experiences and where these have been oppressive to help them understand how. Social workers spend a great deal of time with women who have a poor self-image and little self-confidence. Many think they are failures whereas in reality they have been surviving against all the odds. By helping them to recognise their own self-worth, and by increasing their self-respect, these women can be affirmed.

Empowerment

Empowerment as a feminist principle for action entails the recognition that women are oppressed by virtue of our sex and that it suits the western patriarchal capitalist system to continue this oppression. 'Empowerment' is intended to convey a commitment to lift this oppression from women; to restore our power by increasing our opportunities to participate in the public sphere; and to educate women to understand our individual oppression so we can organise fruitfully against them.

Peer Supervision

Social work is a stressful occupation. It often involves the practitioner in decisions that have a long-lasting effect on their client's lives. The more social workers act as agents of social control the more careful they must be about their use of this delegated power. Supervision is a much written about aspect of social work practice and it is built into professional job descriptions as a matter of course. The International Code of Ethics adopted in 1976 refers obliquely to it where it states that the social worker will:

Ensure professional accountability to client and community for efficiency and effectiveness through periodic review of client, agency and organisational problems and self-performance (Social Work Unit, Massey University, 1986: 55).

Supervision in social work can be described as a process in which one social worker enables another social worker who is in some way accountable to him/her to practise to the best of their ability. In a feminist context there is an explicit element of support built into this practice in recognition of the controversial nature of feminist social work practice. The power component in supervision is addressed by using peer group supervision where possible, to establish equality amongst those involved and through the group carefully contracting how they propose to handle power issues. The Birmingham group of women (Brook and Davis, 1985) for example, record their resolution, after gaining their Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (C.Q.S.W.), to maintain regular contact and peer support which would strengthen them in their efforts to put their feminist principles into practice. In New Zealand, Travers (1985: 61) has outlined the aims for feminist peer group supervision to include:

The development of strategies for collectively responding to women's issues [action-oriented] and to link individual women/groups in relation to their common

problems/struggles [the personal is political] community involvement.

Feminism essentially involves women in a co-operative approach to action. Feminist supervision reflects this and aims at mutual support - whether practiced between students and their supervisors, fellow social workers or mixed-level groups of women practitioners.

Several examples from recent Australian publications illustrate these principles at work, and at various levels of intervention. The first example is drawn from the report of New South Wales Women and Prescribed Drugs Working Party, 1986. This Working Party of the Women's Co-ordination Unit of the Premier's Department was established by the Premier of New South Wales and conducted the N.S.W. Women and Tranquillisers Community Education Project. Their report documents a state-wide community education project concerning the benzodiazepine group of drugs. It involved contact with thousands of women who responded to the campaign and has led to suggestions concerning health campaigns and service delivery to women.

This campaign encapsulates work by and for women on macro and micro levels - from recommendations for change in social policy at the highest level down to the smallest detail regarding counselling style towards individual women. It raises time and time again the question of 'who benefits?' - the drug campaigner, the G.P. ('putting him out of her misery'), the patient? Empowerment is an explicit goal of the project and is discussed in the training programme. Women's experiences and feelings are taken seriously and this is pointed up by the campaign slogan: 'Give your feelings a chance'. Because of the comprehensive nature of this campaign it also provides an excellent example of the principles of integration of understanding in context and making links.

Different examples of feminist styles of social work practice have also been collected and published together by Marchant and Wearing (1986). These authors have edited a selection of, amongst

other things, micro level social work examples of feminists at work in a variety of settings.

There is a chapter by Fook (1986) who reaffirms the value of working with individuals. Using principles of equality and sharing she operates in such a way as to demystify the process of casework and thereby empower and give credit to her clients. Variations in the interview settings, such as going for a walk, shopping excursions or sharing some household chore have all been tried with the result of restoring to the client some of her own power.

Assessment is broadened from the conventional clinical model to take into account factors such as sex-role stereotype, degree of acceptance of and satisfaction with this role, insight into the effects of a patriarchal system on the choices available to a woman, and so on. Questions asked aim to heighten political awareness by challenging hitherto accepted situations of an oppressive nature. Therapeutic methods include consciousness-raising, focussing on action, taking control of one's own destiny, decreasing self-blame and feelings of guilt by helping clients to perceive how they have been affected by their own oppression. Once the woman has developed an altered consciousness in this respect, she can be encouraged to remedy her situation not through readjustment to the status quo, but by changing her relationship styles and altering the balance of power within these.

In the same book Beecher (1986) describes a project for women involved in foster care in which both natural mother and foster mothers play active roles. Natural mothers are encouraged to plan and discuss the foster care arrangements with foster mothers who, in turn, are given a more professional role. The foster mothers are paid a higher wage than is customary, which indicates the value of their work and gives it recognised status. Natural mothers are aware of this and the whole approach towards placement and planning which now involves them means that foster mothers are more obviously offering a service, not just to the Welfare Department, but also to the natural mothers. By according status to childcare, both foster and natural mothers are encouraged to feel

positive about what is happening. The examples cited illustrate this in practice.

In this type of approach the question 'who benefits?' includes the natural mother more easily than in the conventional fostering programmes. Moreover the foster mother is less likely to be taken advantage of as 'only doing women's work', so she too benefits more from this style of approach. Beecher's case studies show how by taking into account the wider context in which a natural mother is struggling but failing in nurturing her child a positive interpretation can be found and worked with. Thus, against all the odds the natural mother's actions can be construed to show that there are positive elements which can be built upon to eventually construct a working mother-child relationship.

Conclusion

Feminist social work, in its widest sense, involves the use of many familiar social work styles of practice. It is characterised through its particular analysis of why things are as they are. Social workers plan their interventions according to their understanding of the particular situation they are confronted with. Accordingly, feminist social workers take into account the effects of sex-role stereotyping, and structural discrimination which their woman clients have encountered. They seek solutions and models of intervention which reflect their principles of practice.

Student feminist placements would be expected to display some of the key features described in this chapter which will vary according to the student's analysis - as essential ingredients. Following on from that are the various combinations of putting theory into practice.

Students on placements set out to clarify these issues and to test out what social work models they feel comfortable using. They also have to establish their priorities and take into account women's stated needs, which require consideration. All these things can be done on many levels. On the macro level the theoretical input becomes particularly visible in the area of social policy development. On the micro level the five principles described above as analysis, integration, affirmation, empowerment and supervision

are identifiable. While the emphasis may vary, all these ingredients, I would suggest, can be found in feminist social work practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

My particular interest in this research arose because of my involvement with placements and because of my interest in feminism and how it relates to social work. One of my aims is therefore that the findings of the research will be made available to facilitate changes and improvements in the B.S.W. fieldwork curriculum. It is important to increase our understanding of feminist student placements as a feminist approach to social work is beneficial particularly to women clients. Teaching of it should therefore be promoted.

I have been involved with the B.S.W. student placements for more than six years. During this time I have supervised students; hunted out and organised placements; edited the Massey University Student Handbook on social work placements; matched students, projects, agencies and supervisors and, in addition, have myself undertaken a social work placement as part of my masters degree. This high level of familiarity with placements has been accompanied by the knowledge that there is little systematic information available about how and what students learn on placement, and how placement administration can facilitate or hinder the learning process.

This study is an exploratory one. It looks at feminist social work placements with the intention of describing their characteristic features and exploring the administrative and curriculum issues of particular concern to those involved so that some criteria for facilitating the administration of feminist placements can be developed. Administering placements is widely defined here to include the issue of how placements can be articulated with the academic curriculum in order to facilitate the integration of theory and practice. Emphasis has been placed on depicting principles of feminist social work practice in order to provide external criteria when looking at self-styled feminist placements.

The Research Question

The research question asked is: What are feminist social work placements and what are the administrative and curricular issues which should particularly concern those involved with them?

This can be broken up into several elementary questions.

1. What feminist social work placements took place at the time of this study?
2. How did the administrative procedures involved in student placements work for students involved in this research?
3. What feminist social work principles emerge from a study of self-styled feminist placements?
4. How did students link course and fieldwork and what suggestions did they have for facilitating the making of such links?

Research Design

The research design describes the logical process by which the criteria for providing answers to a particular question are made explicit. It lays bare the steps between choosing data relevant to the research question and analysing it systematically in order to arrive at conclusions which address the initial question. Because this research is about feminist placements and because I am a woman involved in a woman-centred issue, it has been my priority to conduct this study using a methodology which was either feminist or at least compatible with feminist ideas about research. Certain considerations had to be taken into account because of this, in order that the methodology should be as compatible as possible with both the research topic and the values embedded in it. In particular I was concerned to avoid misusing the power of the researcher over the researched.

Enough criticism of research methods has by now been made by feminist researchers to get the point across that gender-blind research is no longer acceptable. Furthermore as a feminist setting out to interview a number of articulate feminist social work students and supervisors it has been important for me to work

within a feminist methodology as far as I could. I am in agreement with Oakley where she writes:

A feminist methodology of social science requires ... that the mythology of "hygienic" research with its accompanying mystification of the researcher and the researched as objective instruments of data production to be replaced by the recognition that personal involvement is more than dangerous bias - it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives (Oakley, 1981: 58).

There was no way that the women I interviewed would have given time to this project had they felt I had a hidden agenda or was exercising my power to their disadvantage.

Certain constraints such as time and resources meant that an egalitarian relationship between researcher and researched was not easily achieved. For example, I would have preferred it if the students involved in this research could have met with me during the beginning stages of their placements so that together we could have defined what questions to ask. Similarly, it would have been preferable to have used the interview format in groups instead of, with one exception, individuals, as this would have given respondents a more equal part to play in this study.

However the development of my research project lagged behind the schedule for concurrent placements. In fact, had I attempted to pick out the feminist placements at such an early stage it is possible that very few students would have identified themselves as doing feminist placements. In several cases students only realised that they were doing feminist placements after they had met and got to know their supervisor and begun to develop their project.

I was able to gather together a small group of students prior to developing my interview schedule. At this session I talked about my intended research and encouraged students to ask questions and share ideas. These students were a small proportion of those who

had, by that time, identified themselves as doing feminist placements and wanting to take part in my research.

In terms of the power relationship between interviewer and interviewed, several factors are important here. In the first place I had no hidden agenda and had discussed the research in a group session prior to any interviewing. Secondly, those being interviewed were themselves experienced interviewers, and with few exceptions assertive and capable of criticising the whole process. These factors reduced, in my opinion significantly, the power imbalance between researcher and researched.

This research has been conducted from a feminist perspective. It is unlikely that respondents would have been motivated to give of their time and themselves otherwise. Also of importance in conducting research from a feminist perspective is the question of who will benefit from it.

This research aims to provide information that can be used to improve an area of training. It has sought out the experiences and impressions of people involved in that particular area. This data has been interpreted and used to construct a series of comments and recommendations. In accordance with my stated intention of working within a feminist framework I would have liked to get some feedback from those involved in the research, which could have been incorporated in my conclusion. But there are logistical problems in such an endeavour. Many of the students involved in this research will by the time it has been completed have left the immediate area, some will have left the country and it is therefore hard to gather their responses. My intention is therefore to send each respondent a copy of my concluding chapter for their information. My hope is that the findings will be useful to all those wishing to do feminist placements as well as to their clients and to that end I will seek publication of the results.

The Case Study Approach

When choosing a research strategy it is important to match the question being asked with an appropriate form of enquiry. As a

research method, the case-study lends itself to the kind of exploratory research I have undertaken.

I use the term 'case study' to describe the research method employed in this work. However I do not intend to convey the impression that this research claims to have ethnographic features nor that the data were gathered through the technique of participant observation. These two elements of research methodology, while frequently associated with the case-study, are not intrinsic features of it (Yin, 1984). Rather the choice of a case study approach for my research methodology was prompted by its ability to respect the wholistic nature of feminist social work placements in which the integrated nature of the enterprise - women working with women for women - is paramount. The case study method caters for situations where the researcher is asking questions about ongoing or very recent events where those involved are available and willing to be interviewed, and where other sources of information such as documents, artifacts and other records can be used.

A case study is an empirical enquiry that (1) investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when (2) the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident; and in which (3) multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984: 23).

The case studies gathered for this research consisted of social work student placements from their earliest planning stages through to their conclusion with assessments. Material for the case studies included first and foremost interviews with the students and supervisors involved. In addition all respondents gave me access to their placement documents: contracts, visitor's reports, assessments and written project material.

For this study the students doing feminist placements were very willing to be interviewed and so were their supervisors. There were also no problems about access to the placement documents, and research reports or project folders prepared by students. My involvement with the placements at their inception and my

familiarity with the agencies and people concerned gave me a good basis from which to operate. However I was aware that it could have introduced an element of awkwardness and bias into the first stages of my interview, in which respondents were asked to describe how their placements were arranged. Perhaps the length of time between placement planning and my collection of the data, accounts for the fact that no one displayed the least embarrassment in responding critically to questions on this topic.

Social work placements cover a variety of activities and methods depending on the student's learning needs and the supervisor's resources. Once the placement has begun it is not accessible in any legitimate way to external manipulation by an observer. Work on my research commenced after the placements had begun and in fact there were good reasons for waiting until placements had been completed and assessed before systematic study of them began. For these reasons I had no control over the phenomena I investigated and the case-study approach was indicated.

Unit of Analysis

I invited all those doing concurrent social work placements to let me know if they were doing feminist placements and would be willing to take part in this research. Twelve students came forward and agreed to be interviewed. Two of these students were subsequently not included in the data; one because she decided that her placement was not really a feminist one after all, and the other because the taped interview was lost and she had moved out of the area by the time this was discovered. All those students taking part in the study gave me permission to contact their supervisors and involve them in the study, which I did.

This study investigated ten student placements, all self-styled feminist social work experiences. Two students were engaged in the same project, so the ten placements involved nine projects. There were only four supervisors involved as two supervisors were supervising groups in which several of those engaged in feminist social work were involved.

The Data

Data came from a variety of sources, the most important of which was the taped interview using an open-ended questionnaire. This was developed in conjunction with several people all closely involved in student placements. There was difficulty in piloting it, in that numbers involved in this study were very small and all those engaged in doing feminist social work in the geographical area concerned were to be involved in my research. I therefore checked out the questionnaire in a group situation and carefully monitored the first interview making one or two minor changes in the schedule to which I adhered in future sessions.

Other data included the placement documents, which are: 1. The contract; 2. The visitor's report; 3. The assessment document; 4. Relevant research reports, portfolios or pamphlets which arose out of the placement. Finally, in assessing which papers the students had found particularly useful or relevant it became necessary to look at student academic records which were available at the university.

Data Collection

The data were collected after students had completed their placements. At that time I was still employed at the university in a position where I had some involvement in placement assessment and administration. I felt it was therefore more appropriate to wait until all placement procedures were complete before proceeding with interviews. In this way it was possible to reduce the likelihood of role confusion. By carrying out interviews after the placements were finished there was a risk that some aspects could have been forgotten or interpreted and rationalised by respondents. The placement documents have helped to provide a check on this. Students were interviewed individually, except the two students engaged in the same project. Students either gave me their placement papers at the time of the interview or gave me permission to collect them at the university.

Supervisors were also interviewed separately, and those who had supervised several students involved in the research gave their answers in general terms, drawing on particular examples in order to substantiate what they were saying.

All interviews were recorded on tape and lasted approximately one and a half hours. A small background sheet of information detailing name of respondent, placement project and which papers had been found helpful in developing a feminist social work approach was also given to each student respondent to complete.

The Interview Schedule

There were separate but related interview schedules for students and supervisors. Both followed the same format. The interview began with a brief discussion of what the research was about. Respondents were assured that no one would have access to the taped interviews. The students filled in the small background sheet of information and then the interview began.

The interview was divided into three broad sections. In the first section questions were asked about the respondent's feminist social work perspective and how this had developed. It was important to establish that the student had indeed taken a feminist approach to her placement. As already mentioned one student decided at this point of the interview to withdraw from the study on the grounds that she did not, in retrospect, regard her placement as a feminist one. She is not included in the data.

The second section covered the placement processes, from the initial matching process, through the negotiations for the contract, the staff visit, supervision and the assessment.

The third section covered questions about the links made between feminist theory, social work practice and their own personal understanding about these. It included questions about which papers had been particularly useful to students, and what material they would like to have had presented in the classroom to help with their placements.

This section concluded with a brief set of questions relating to strategies for continuing to practise social work as a feminist.

The schedule for supervisors followed the same pattern. This worked marginally better for the two women supervisors than for the two men supervisors. The two men described their relationship to feminist theory, making no claims to be feminist themselves. They said they were in sympathy with feminist concerns. Both male supervisors felt their students would have had more completely feminist placements had they been supervised by feminists. In spite of these drawbacks they responded well to the interview and made some thoughtful contributions to the data.

Data Analysis

A familiar problem with tape-recorded material is how to access the data. I decided to edit the tapes before transcribing them and to keep the tapes until completing my thesis. Because the interviews were carried out using a schedule my edited transcripts followed a set pattern which facilitated the process of grouping responses in relation to the research questions defined above.

All respondents had given me access to the documents relating to their placement. I used these in two ways. Firstly, the written material was interesting in itself in that it supplemented the data collected during the interview. The contract and the assessment gave detailed accounts of placement expectations and achievements, both from the student and from the supervisor's point of view. Secondly, placement documents were contemporaneous with the placement and therefore could be expected to provide an accurate account of how events were perceived at the time of their occurrence. In this sense the documents could be used to check out impressions and opinions expressed in the interviews. As I became familiar with both sets of data - interviews and placement documents - I found that students and supervisors had talked and written about the placements quite consistently. There were no discrepancies noted between the various sets of data.

Data has been analysed to address the four elementary questions presented above which together provide the ingredients for devising improvements in the administration of feminist social work placements. I have tried to let respondents speak for themselves by quoting their written and taped accounts of what was

important for them about these placements and their relationship to the Massey B.S.W. curriculum.

The placement projects were described by students in their assessment documents as well as on tape. It was a simple matter to present a short summary of the nine projects against which to set the rest of the discussion about placements.

When looking at placement processes I used material from the taped interviews. Taking each process (matching, contracts, staff visits, etc.) in turn I sorted out the range of comments first that students and then supervisors had made. It was straightforward enough to group these together in order of incidence mentioned. Criticisms were also noted and have been recorded. The number of times an issue was raised is used to indicate its importance. Students reported a similar range of experiences despite the variety of placement projects. This may well reflect the fact that apart from the two students being supervised individually the other respondents were being supervised in two separate groups.

The section on feminist social work principles uses a more artistic approach. It incorporates material from the assessment documents, as written by both students and supervisors, and uses this material to illustrate how the activities and priorities of the respondents reflect the five principles of feminist social work practice outlined in Chapter Three. Some students were more eloquent than others, and some respondents had developed a more sophisticated approach to their task than others. But all were moving in the same general direction and can be expected to recognise their point of view in this section.

The final section is on linking up course material with fieldwork experience and asking respondents to suggest ways of facilitating this process. It was important to find out what influences had led students to develop a feminist perspective and responses to this open-ended question fell neatly into four clusters. One cluster concerned academic papers at Massey. It was necessary to ascertain which papers students felt had been most influential and useful to them in their efforts to develop a feminist social work perspective. My aim here was to check which papers had been found helpful and it

was necessary to check out all the papers the students had done in order to interpret this meaningfully. Students and supervisors had some interesting ideas as to what could be added to the curriculum, what could be changed and how to improve administrative processes. These were noted and have been recorded in order of priority using number of mentions to gauge this (Appendix Three contains the schedule of papers for the B.S.W. degree).

The data analysed in these four sections addresses the component parts of my research question. The results point the way to the conclusions drawn in the final chapter. Here the discussion takes place on two levels. On the practical level, certain procedural administrative issues are looked at and recommendations made. On the theoretical level, the question of how to articulate feminist fieldwork experience with the B.S.W. course material is explored and the value of a coherent fieldwork curriculum is stressed.

This study is aimed at describing and understanding self-styled feminist placements; it does not make claims from the findings, about other types of student placements, nor how these might compare with other feminist ones.

Case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a "sample" and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalise theories (analytic representations) and not to enumerate frequencies, (statistical generalisations) (Yin, 1984: 21).

Experience suggests that it is likely that many of the characteristics of these placements (but not all) are shared in common with other placements which do not claim to be feminist. It is likely that some of the recommendations which arise out of the study and which suggest ways of improving the administration and articulation of placements vis-a-vis course work, could, if applied to other placements, also make effective improvements. Further research would however be needed before systematic evidence for this would be available.

CHAPTER FIVE

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACEMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY STUDENTS

To set the scene for the following three chapters it is important to contextualise the respondents in terms of their work and agency settings. This chapter is intended to provide that backdrop. It is not easy to convey the richness and the variety of tasks and experiences that students are exposed to on placements. However in what follows I have outlined the feminist placements carried out by the students in my sample. The aim has been to describe the range of woman-centred social work placement tasks. In all, I studied ten students doing nine placements (two students shared a project). Four students were involved in research projects. Four students were engaged in community work (one of these was involved in a certain amount of one to one intervention). Two students did casework placements, both supplemented by some action-oriented research.

Placement No. 1

A general social work placement focussing on the theme of women's health in hospital and community settings. In this placement the student stated a preference for referrals relating to women in the middle years. Some case work was involved, with an emphasis on longer-term intervention with clients. The student also developed resources for the Women's Health Services Development Committee by compiling an up-to-date Directory of Women's Health Services in the Hospital Board catchment area.

This student consciously developed her feminist analysis, exploring in practical terms how this could be used in a casework setting. The student developed a working relationship with several agencies in town, including District Nurses, Home Help services and the Department of Social Welfare. She also worked with hospital staff, including Social Workers, Nurses, Doctors, Clerical staff and Administrators. In addition to this she was expected to learn the hospital social service delivery protocol, such as report writing, sharing the carpool, form filling, case files, etc.

In the course of this placement she was confronted by one of the more intransigent dilemmas faced by feminist social workers. She was working with an unpartnered woman client whose standards of childcare had been called into question. She wanted to enable her client to improve the quality of her parenting skills. Her client saw her as threatening her rights as a mother. In the student's own words:

I found this relationship difficult as X would not view me as someone that wanted to help her. Thus I was unable to achieve an equal relationship both in power and knowledge.

Placement No. 2

A counselling and education project looking at incest procedures at the Department of Social Welfare, identifying unmet client needs through liaison with community resources. This student was officially supervised by a male social worker at the Department of Social Welfare. The student was clear from the beginning that she would be doing a feminist placement but she accepted this arrangement, supplementing supervision with peer supervision arranged by herself. In their contract her supervisor stated as one of his expectations that there would be

willingness to discuss and work through any gender issues that might arise in my being a male, involved in supervising the project. I would support any need the student expresses for outside support and co-supervision.

On this basis my understanding is that the placement worked well.

There were four main goals for this placement, and looking back both student and supervisor saw these as having been achieved. The student set out to:

1. Become familiar with D.S.W. procedures, both legal and helping, for handling incest cases.
2. Develop counselling skills in this area by working intensively with one particular woman.
3. Produce a pamphlet (and circulate it widely) on the subject of incest and sexual abuse of children.

4. Liaise with other workers in this area both for peer supervision and support.

In order to develop her counselling skills the student conducted an extensive review of the literature on incest. She encountered (and recorded being shocked by) the Freudian analysis whereby much reported incest is deemed to have taken place only in the mind, being regarded as symptomatic of passage through the oedipal stage. The student repudiated this explanatory framework. In its place she referred to feminist theory which uses an analysis of power relations between men and women for coming to grips with this painful side of family life.

Placement No. 3

In this placement the student worked at a Women's Refuge. She describes this placement in her contract as being with

a voluntary organisation community work focus, and a total dedication to women.

In the course of her placement the student worked with the women staying at the Refuge and suffering from mental, physical and/or sexual abuse. She stated her goals as being:

to improve her communication skills and interactions with individual women or groups (client or other). To have a placement with a focus on women, women's issues and placing them in an everyday context.

The student also stated that she wanted to provide the women in the refuge with an information folio on all about how to leave a man, go through the legal moves correctly, get accommodation and money, and regain some self-respect. She achieved all of these things. In the course of her placement she recorded:

I provided listening time, talking with the women, transport, phone-duty, pick-ups, and went to agencies such as D.S.W., Housing Corporation, Police, Lawyers, Courthouses (Family Court) Hospital or "just" to town.

This student had group supervision with a number of other women students and together they worked through some critical issues in relation to feminist social work and student assessment. Women's Refuge is an ideal setting for any student wanting to check out or develop her feminist perspective and this student makes this point in her assessment.

Because I worked in a feminist agency it was not difficult to apply my feminist perspective. There was no dilemma in constantly having to explain my beliefs, or why I was a feminist, because everyone I worked with believed the same thing which was extremely helpful. I was able to really develop my own perspective which was constantly reinforced by the people around me.

Placement No. 4

This placement was at a Women's Health Collective. The project focussed on setting up training programmes for volunteers, helping to run these, and generally doing miscellaneous office duties. In the student's contract she states that one of her main aims was

to learn a community self-help model that is based within a voluntary feminist agency.

She was expected

to work in an informal unstructured setting, to be able to initiate tasks herself without instruction, and to participate in the collective on the same level as other collective members.

This student records her recognition of the secondary position that women occupy in our society. For her this was illustrated by the limited resources both of funds and of time that set limits to the work of the collective. The women involved had family responsibilities that set constraints on their activities.

During this placement the student learned about women's issues such as sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy testing, menopause, contraception, abortion services and, in her words, 'the fallibility of the present health care system.'

She also felt the difficulties and tensions of working in an apparently unstructured leaderless setting where, in fact, leadership and direction actually occurred but were not necessarily recognised for what they were. Her peer supervision group was clearly challenging on this issue. The student acknowledged that this was a learning area for her and that she needed to build up her confidence in challenging and dealing with conflict.

Placements Nos. 5 and 6

There were two students involved in this placement. They were based at a Women's Resource Room in a Teachers College. Their brief was to develop this facility so that the women student teachers could find some support in exploring women's issues in education.

In their contract they undertook to spend time:

politicking for funds, encouraging and assisting in setting-up a women-in-teaching group; arranging noon-time activities such as videos and speakers centred around women's issues; create and "publish" a womyn's broadsheet with brief news items, cartoons, quotations, references to material in the resource room, announcements, etc. Overall aim is to motivate women students to take-over the running and maintenance of the above responsibilities! (Contract Document)

These students very quickly assessed their environment in terms of a male-dominated hierarchy of by and large hostile, or at best neutral, staff. They pinpointed key sympathisers who could best be approached for support, despite the fact that these women were not necessarily the instigators of the placement. It was essential that they pace themselves for their target group, for had they appeared too radical this would have been threatening and resulted in being ignored. It was important that there were two students assigned to this project as they were frequently challenged as to its viability and had to justify themselves and their spheres of activity all too frequently. On several occasions such discussions were concluded by

dismissive observations to the effect that, 'I don't know why you bother, you'll be married in a few years anyway.'

Placement No. 7

This placement was predominantly a research project designed to identify agencies/helpers in the local community working with the victims of sexual abuse and incest. The student also did some intake work for the Hospital Social Work Department, which was her host agency.

The most tangible result of this project was the publication of a Directory of agencies which indicated that they worked directly with clients in the area of incest and on other forms of sexual abuse. This Directory included reference to 14 agencies, and some school guidance counsellors, as working in this area. In all the student had contacted 54 agencies. Inevitably some of those not included in the final Directory felt they should have been. The student had, however, set certain criteria for inclusion, depending on the type of work done for clients. Those agencies which tended simply to refer on were therefore not included. Others were excluded for a variety of reasons.

The student was aware that the agencies selected should not be seen as the total of social service agencies in the area. The Directory is not therefore regarded as complete.

In her conclusion to her assessment document the student identified five main issues:

1. There are some very dedicated and competent workers in this area. They are, however, stressed partly because they receive inadequate support for what they do.
2. Services in this area tend to be poorly co-ordinated.
3. There appears to be little or no work being done with perpetrators.
4. Safe accommodation for victims is an urgent priority.
5. Services in this area would benefit from access to a well-developed education programme for both workers and the public.

Placement No. 8

This placement involved a research project on stress in social work. It was conducted under the auspices of the Hospital Social Work Student Unit. The student's goals were to gain experience in research methodology, to develop strategies for change, to provide information that would benefit social workers, and where appropriate to practise her group work skills. An action-research approach was used, and according to her assessment report the student

achieved a high level of congruence between her theoretical perspective and her method of carrying out social research.

What this meant in practice was that the student's methodology had, in her own words,

the dual aim of contributing to the existing body of information/knowledge relating to stress and at the same time engaging participants in a collaborative process to help them identify and address their own concerns/issues endemic to their social work practice.

Those involved in the research were basic grade social workers from Department of Maori Affairs, Probation, Department of Social Welfare and Hospital Boards for both Palmerston North and Hawkes Bay.

This research was conducted in a feminist way, giving power by constructing and sharing the research agenda with those being researched. Time was made for consultation after the data had been analysed to allow the groups who had contributed that data the chance to give some feedback. Only one group took this opportunity, but at least it was available to all. This placement involved cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary work which tested out the student's skills of administration and co-ordination.

A variety of factors were seen to be causing stress. In her report the student writes:

These factors were most often connected to issues involving the organisation and its structures, e.g. supervision and management, training, demarcation of duties, etc.

Although no special emphasis was laid on stress experienced by women social workers amongst 'other causes of stress' it was noted:

That women are still very often doing two jobs, at work and at home. There is little support or credence (at an organisational or a social/personal level) given to their dual roles (i.e. child care facilities etc.).

Placement No. 9

This placement took place in the maternity area of the Hospital, involving some casework, assistance with research projects, and resource development for the Maori community. The bulk of the student's work revolved around her research into father's attitudes to pregnancy and birth. This was requested by the Working Party on Parenthood Education and focussed on three main areas:

1. The need for parent education and fathering skills
2. Visiting problems
3. Father's responsibilities

Because this student was determined to work in a manner consistent with her feminist theoretical perspective, there were times when she and the working party could not agree with each other. The student claimed she managed to retain the integrity of her approach while continuing to work on the project. However, she did not elaborate on the exact nature of the issues over which there was conflict.

According to her supervisor the student took 'large steps forward to clarifying and further developing her theoretical base and her analysis of society.' She also gained confidence in her ability to do social research, and she was consulted by nursing staff who recognised her ability in developing questionnaires.

The research report which came out of this placement was not available at the time of writing.

Placement No. 10

This was another research placement and it took place with support from a Teachers College. The student was supervised in a group setting where the supervising social worker was male. Had there been an available feminist supervisor, this student would have had access to her. The supervisor was clear that had he realised from the start that this was intended to be a feminist placement, he would not have agreed to become involved. His reason being that men cannot be feminist and however sympathetic he might be he did not feel sufficiently qualified.

As a feminist the student wanted to do some feminist research. She took a pilot approach to her enquiry in order to keep it within manageable limits. She interviewed women primary school teachers, including one Principal. She produced a bibliography and developed some useful strategies for change. The women involved in this research were particularly interested in bettering career structures for women in the education system. The student indicated that for effective change to occur it would also need to involve teacher training. The research report which came out of this placement has not yet become available.

Concluding Remarks

Ten students, working in nine projects, took part in research into self-styled feminist placements. Four did research, four did community work of various types and two students did casework placements, one of which involved some research and the production of an educative pamphlet. Two placements were supervised by men. In both cases the students supplemented this through their own support systems.

All the placements are characterised by a concern with women's issues, women's ways of working and with producing something women can make use of. These themes are further developed in Chapters Seven and Eight; firstly, by looking at the student's theoretical framework from which they were developing their styles of feminist social work practice, secondly by examining the data to see what it reveals about feminist principles of social work held by students and their supervisors. The next chapter looks in detail at placement processes.

CHAPTER SIX

PLACEMENT PROCESSES

Introduction

This chapter describes the various stages of the fieldwork experience. This description is preceded by an initial section which identifies the four supervision models that respondents used. My aim has been to present the stages from the students' point of view, drawing upon documentary material, and using supervisors' comments to corroborate or elaborate on this. There is a marked consistency of perceptions and recorded experience between student and supervisor accounts. The documentary evidence (contracts, visitor reports, assessment forms) is presented for the most part within the B.S.W. placement conventions. Where students and supervisors adapted forms, this was explained and justified in advance. The chapter concludes with recommendations made by those interviewed as to ways of improving the administration of feminist placements.

Students produced written reports, pamphlets and manuals as part of their placement. These show imagination, innovation and a sound integration between their feminist stance and their social work education.

The ten students involved in this research had four supervisors between them. All placements share the same framework (contract, staff visit, supervision and assessment), but all display interesting variations on this theme. In a sense, four models for feminist placements and supervision have emerged. These range from the placement where a male supervisor supervised the student on a one-to-one basis through to the explicitly feminist group of students.

Section One: Models of Supervision

Model I involved a male supervisor supervising a feminist student on a one to one basis. The arrangement was made on the understanding that this student wanted to work in a feminist way on a woman-centred area. It was agreed that she would supplement her supervision as required and assessment was a conventional

arrangement where each discussed the placement and student performance and wrote the assessment in the light of this discussion.

Model II involved another male supervisor, this time however, the supervisor stated, during our interview, that

arrangements for X's placement were not made on the basis that she was doing a feminist placement ... rather that she was doing a placement in an educational setting ... with/about women teachers and a research project associated with that. It was only after undertaking to supervise her that it became clear to me that she was doing a placement with a full-scale feminist perspective. At that stage I began to be a little concerned.

This supervisor maintained that he would have declined supervision had he realised from the start that this was a feminist placement.

When asked about supervision, the student herself said:

I would have preferred a feminist supervisor, or just a straight woman.

Also:

An all woman group would have been good.

She went on to say that:

There were also advantages in the supervision I had. Having Y - the person he is - having access to a lot of knowledge and experience through him was extremely valuable and getting feedback from the other three students was valuable.

An arrangement was made for group supervision in which two other women students and one male student were also involved. These students were not involved in doing feminist placements.

In many ways this model bears a close structural resemblance to Model IV. Students had to assess one another. This was done in a group situation, each student taking a turn at being the centre of attention for a proportion of the group's time, and being assessed

in their input to the group. This is an interesting way of getting round the often mentioned and troublesome problem faced by supervisors who feel they can't assess their student because they didn't see everything they did on placement.

Model III

The four students using this model contracted on a one to one basis for individual feminist supervision, with a woman social worker who is a feminist. They also contracted to alternate their one to one supervision sessions with peer group sessions, at which the supervisor was also present. However, it was clearly stated that students would not be assessed on what took place during these group sessions. The idea for this is that students could relax in the group setting and try out their ideas, no matter what these were, in a supportive, receptive environment. These students were a little different from the rest of the respondents in that they were placed in a statutory, institutional setting.

Model IV

When asked about how the placements had been organised, the supervisor using this model answered:

We developed things as we went along, rather than using any set format, because there is no model.

This group arranged to meet regularly, to take turns facilitating sessions on their own placement territory or wherever, and that they would pass or fail each other, taking responsibility as a group for assessment. As this supervisor put it:

If you believe that change occurs through the pressure and activity of groups, it is contradictory to go for individual supervision.

The method of assessment was an interesting example of putting theory into practice.

Each woman had a set time where the whole group gave feedback to the student - we taped this - and before we did

that we sat down and worked out an assessment procedure of eight areas we felt we should assess.

This is described in a later section.

Section Two: The Matching Process

How did students get their placements? The literature is clear that successful field experience is closely linked to a good match between expectations and actuality.

I was closely involved with arranging the sixty student concurrent placements, of which ten subsequently became my respondents. This does not appear to have been an issue for respondents, however I have discussed this matter in Chapter Four.

In the space of three weeks the placement director and I endeavoured to match students with projects and supervisors which were both appropriate for their learning needs and what they wanted. 'Learning needs' were identified by students and placement organisers together. Later, when I interviewed students for this research, it transpired that there had been considerable discrepancies between some student's expectations and actual placements. Fortunately this did not appear to have detracted from the quality of placements.

It turned out that two students got exactly the placement and supervisor they had asked for, two had not made clear placement choices but wanted to work with women, and were satisfied by their placement arrangements once they had met their supervisors. Six students stated that they had no choice of supervisor. They felt they had had more success in choosing their placement projects. This reflects the difficulty of finding feminist supervisors. The supervisors did not feel they had much choice about selecting students. In the words of the one supervisor using Model IV:

They were all a little bit shocked to find that they were having feminist supervision and that it was going to be in a group, that took a wee while to sort out. Massey assumed, logically, that since they were doing woman-focussed placements, they wanted feminist supervision. This wasn't

necessarily the case - where they stood on their own perspectives varied a lot.

It does not follow that those who wish to work with women have a feminist perspective. The assumption that all the students wanting to work in this area were seeking feminist input was incorrect and resulted in some supervisors and students embarking on their placements at cross purposes.

In retrospect, these students all felt they had learned a great deal through their placements. They were quite frank about the value for them of the feminist supervision they had had, and the opportunity to develop their feminist perspective. Only one student who had put her name forward as a respondent withdrew. She had begun to question the place of feminist analysis in her practice.

Section Three: Contracts

The B.S.W. fieldwork curriculum goes through a number of distinct stages of which the first, the matching process, sets the scene. During the first three weeks of placement students and supervisors negotiate their contracts. My particular interests in this area have been to find out what types of contracts came out of feminist placements, what areas they covered, how they differed from contracts students had used on previous placements, and whether they were found to be useful.

One student had an individual contract. Other students had a combination of individual and group contracts. Those students using the Model III approach had individual contracts with their supervisor, in which they undertook attendance at the feminist peer group sessions on the understanding that they would not be assessed on these. Students using the Model IV approach had their contract with the group and this was, for assessment purposes, the official contract for the university. They also drew up working contracts with their agencies. For one student this agency contract, endorsed by the supervisor appointed for her by the university, was sent to the university as her official contract.

The students were unanimous that there were no difficulties in drawing up their contracts. They tended to refer to them when the

time came for assessment, in order to compare original goals with achievements. Some students had to review their contracts when it was felt that their workload was too heavy.

Differences students noted between the feminist contracts and previous contracts had to do with distribution of power, ease with which contracts were negotiated and the concentration on women working with women. Some students also remarked that this time round they felt they were doing primarily what they wanted to do, rather than merely fulfilling course requirements.

Students were unanimous in reporting that they had had no problems negotiating mutually acceptable contracts between themselves, their supervisors, and where relevant, their peer groups. Both the process and the product had empowering qualities. All had confronted, with their supervisors, the difficult issue of power and authority in a supervisory relationship where education and grading take place. Some chose to vest this power in the group, but remained mindful of the fact that even so, individual group members - either the official supervisor or a forceful fellow student - could wield power in this supposedly equal situation.

Several contracts refer to expectations that if one party wanted to challenge the other(s) they should feel able to do so.

Discussion of feminist issues, and feminist social work practice figured in most contracts. This shows that students very rapidly assessed their opportunities to do a feminist placement and to try out (in a safe environment) what feminism meant for them.

Only the student doing a research placement with a male supervisor in a peer group setting had a contract which made no mention of her feminist interests. All the other contracts made reference to the fact that the placement was one where the student wanted to work with women as women.

Section Four: Staff Visits

It is customary for all placements to have a visit from a member of the staff involved with the B.S.W. programme. This is timed to take place after the contracts have been handed in. The purpose of the

visit is to check that all is going well in the placement and that agency, student and supervisor are working together satisfactorily.

Most students were visited by a female staff member but four were scheduled to have male staff visitors. In the event one of these students was visited by a woman staff member, who called in unexpectedly. When interviewed, the student concerned said it would not have been acceptable for her to have had a male visitor, because of the sensitive nature of her project, which was about incest survival.

Of the three students who did have a male staff visitor, two said that the visit had been acceptable but only because of the personality of that particular visitor. For the other student, having a male visitor was not acceptable, and not considered useful. It was felt that, as a matter of principle, feminist placements should have, if not feminist visitors, then at least female ones on the grounds that it is likely to be easier for young women students to discuss sensitive matters relating to women with other women.

Section Five: Supervision

Supervision is an essential ingredient of social work practice. It has always been one of the central methods by which social work was taught to new recruits. All social workers expect supervision as part and parcel of their work.

Two main goals can be identified by those involved in supervision. On the one hand, that supervision enables social workers to develop their professional practice and, on the other hand, to support them in maintaining a balanced and effective approach to clients.

Traditionally, supervision takes place between individuals, one of whom is accountable for their work to the other. There is, therefore, a power relationship in supervision, because of the evaluative functions that supervisors fulfill vis a vis those accountable to them. This is so whether supervision occurs between student and field instructor or between practitioner and senior social worker.

Status will, to some extent, determine the nature of the power relationship, but this is invariably coloured by other factors such

as age differences, male/female combinations, religious beliefs, experience or lack of it, ethnicity, values, etc. Social workers tend to use their personality as a tool as they develop working relationships with clients. Sensitivity and respect for the supervisee are, therefore, necessary when areas such as use of personal resources, skills, values, political involvement and case-studies are shared. Supervision is usually as good as the relationship that the parties involved in it can negotiate and sustain.

In the New Zealand Social Work Training Council Supervision Resource Package (New Zealand Social Work Training Council, 1985: 4) the main functions of supervision are identified as:

1. Administrative.
2. Teaching.
3. Enabling/supportive.
4. Reconstructive (use of innovative practice ideas aimed at bringing about a just society).
5. Consultative.

The role of the supervisor is described as 'crucial to the quality of the service offered in social work practice. If the supervisors have an impoverished vision of the service which could be offered, have become detached from direct practice, and have not used opportunities for ongoing training, their experience will become obsolete and client service will be affected markedly (N.Z.S.W.T.C., 1985: 4).

The supervisor is Janus-like; he/she interprets agency goals and philosophy for implementation by staff, but at the same time should feed back to policy makers how those goals are working and address problem areas arising out of this two-way communication.

There tends to be a hierarchy of supervisory arrangements according to levels of experience and status, for example: individual, tandem, group, team, peer, and consultative.

The students and supervisors contributing to this study had previously experienced and practiced a variety of supervisory styles and models. They had thought through the power related

issues central to supervision in the field setting, and all confronted the dilemma of supervisory power in a feminist context. As a result the supervisors, to a greater or lesser extent, laid aside their power or shared it with the group. This meant each group member taking on further responsibility for their placement and for the achievement of their learning goals.

When asked what strategies were used to diffuse the power of the supervisor one student responded:

We all decided things collectively. There wasn't one person who would say right we're going to do this, it was a collective decision - what we were going to do - that was the first thing. Secondly, we swapped the facilitating roles every week - so that everyone could lead - or whatever they wanted to do they could do it - their own style, their own way - raise issues. That was really, really effective 'cos it takes the power away from one particular person, also calling each other facilitators, nobody was the supervisor.

This student identified the sharing quality of supervisory knowledge and power as one of the essential ingredients of feminist supervision. Her comments indicate that for her the strategy adopted worked:

Sharing of knowledge, sharing of power, get rid of power one of main things, not feeling that you're the little student, 'cos I didn't feel that way, none of us did, we didn't feel like that at all, we turned up all friendly - we had a really good group, lots of laughs, went to the pub together - one of us had a session in the pub - we really looked forward to going there after a while ... sharing things.

She was one of the four students who contracted for feminist peer group supervision; as described in Model IV. The supervisor in this group said that:

One of the most useful sessions early on was analysing who had the power in our group - that was good - we talked about feminism being about everyone having some form of equality, and trying to

link it with their placements – some of which were women's collectives. Collective power is the ideal. Reality is that power comes from various sources – we talked about my power. There was no liberal denial of that, my power came in terms of my experience, skills and knowledge – it wasn't a question of whether I could pass or fail (I told them they'd have to pass or fail each other). The power was more in terms of my knowledge and experience. There is no point in analysing the power abstractly. I took a leadership role – each session rotated the facilitator to begin with – when everyone had had a turn I took it over.

Aims

Students and supervisors showed agreement as to their aims in supervision; these involved: 1. Support; 2. Learning; 3. Assessment and evaluation; 4. The development of feminist perspectives and the discussion of feminist issues during supervision time. Thus, students worked at trying out their feminism in practical ways, through their research methodology, their client contacts, by reflection on their host agencies and what these told them about women's status in society. A clear comment on how important it is to try and operate with integrity of practice and philosophy was made by one supervisor who identified the essential ingredient of supervision:

Supervision – it is to do with goals: it's tied up with feminist social work practice and that's tied up with the liberation of women and so the facets of supervision stem from that major goal. So hopefully within the supervisory relationship and within the helping relationships that stem from there, it's all to do with the liberation of women, the empowering of women ... Having means consistent with ends so that the supervisory relationship must be a liberating relationship for the supervisee in the same way that the helping relationship must be for the clients.

Section Six: Assessment

This has been described already in the Models I to IV, and in the previous section reference has been made to it, for supervision and

assessment are intricately involved. It is generally said that there should be no surprises with assessment if supervision has been successful. Assessment as a process represents the culmination of the placement – it is the last but one stage in the supervisor/supervisee relationship. It is the stage where, if there were any negative factors in the relationship these show up – sometimes through overt disagreement between assessments, or with a disputed grade, resulting in an appeal, or sometimes just with a vague feeling of dissatisfaction.

None of the students I spoke to had had such experiences during their concurrent placements. All felt that the approach they had taken to assessment had been fruitful. Often, taking the time to stand back and evaluate what they had done proved an integrative exercise. Moreover, by taking the risks of accepting the responsibility to pass or fail, and be passed or failed by their peers, they genuinely practiced the power-sharing they were seeking.

The assessment documents are diverse, in that several students and supervisors had drawn up their own scheme, instead of using the guidelines sent out by the university.

The group using Model II had contracted to monitor each other's work throughout the group supervision experience. However, for the final assessment they developed a procedure in which one of them provided a 1000 word review of the placement and subsequently defended it in a critique from the other members of the group. They then took personal feedback and discussed the final evaluation.

The criteria used to determine a pass or failure were: 1. Attendance; 2. Participation in the group; 3. Ability to deal with feedback; 4. Defending the final personal review; 5. Group evaluation. The supervisor in this situation was concerned to look more at the processes this student was using, rather than actual content. He was clear that consistency with her feminist viewpoint was what he wanted to see her achieve.

The Model IV students developed their assessment structure by consensual discussion. They wrote a description of their form of supervision, because it was new and experimental for all six women

who participated. They identified the reference points for the group as being women oriented placements, reflecting wide ranging feminist beliefs and a university expectation for supervision.

The nine areas to assess were:

1. Application of feminist perspective.
2. Awareness of dilemmas in applying feminist perspective.
3. Personal achievement, i.e. what was done.
4. Skill/strategies, i.e. what are you good at.
5. Group facilitator; 6. Feminist group supervision.
7. Power/politics - including, who is the placement for (student, client, agency).
8. Context.
9. Summary.

Some of the group assessments were quite challenging for the individual students, but all passed their placements.

Models II and IV illustrate how peer group supervision functions. One group was distinctively feminist by virtue of its orientation towards women, yet shared the processes and structures of the other group to quite an extent.

By contrast, the five other students using Models I and III did individual assessments in conjunction with their supervisors. This was the conventional approach within the B.S.W. programme. The feminist content and the trust built up between supervisor and supervisee throughout the placement processes was such as to satisfy the parties involved as to the feminist character of their work.

Section Seven: Recommendations

Ten basic recommendations designed to facilitate and improve the administration of feminist placements have emerged from the students' interviews:

1. Seek a versatile feminist supervisor.
2. Expect difficulties.
3. Be prepared to meet contradictions.
4. Don't expect university regulations to 'fit'.

5. Get support.
6. Once on placement find your allies.
7. Feel confident about taking the initiative.
8. Have patience with collectives.
9. Be able to justify yourself.
10. Believe that feminist placements are worthwhile.

When asked what advice the student would give another student wondering about doing a feminist placement, the majority of students said 'go for it' and all were encouraging.

Supervisors' recommendations were slightly different, reflecting their relationship to management. They raised the following points:

1. The placement can be feminist regardless of the project - even one with an all male clientele, provided the analysis is feminist.
2. Levels of feminist awareness in student's theoretical development should be matched if possible, when allocating students to a group.
3. There should be a balance between structural requirements and imaginative projects, so that feminist placements obtain the legitimisation they want.
4. Call a conference for feminist supervisors and develop guidelines.
5. Be quite clear that students involved in woman-centred placements actually want feminist supervision before assigning them to it.
6. Match female staff visitors to feminist placements.

The placement data so far presented displays explicit effort on the part of supervisors and students to match placement processes with feminist styles, or at least to keep them as compatible as possible with feminist methodology.

One theme which dominates the student learning goals is that they should have the opportunity to develop their feminist perspective. One of the key criteria by which a final placement is assessed is the degree to which the student demonstrates the

integration of personal philosophy/theory, with practice. The next chapter covers issues in this area.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INTEGRATING FEMINIST THEORY AND PRACTICE

This chapter looks at the feminist theoretical perspectives held by the students in the study, and explores the relationship between these perspectives, classroom curriculum and social work practice. The more we know about what helps and hinders students to integrate course work and practice the more likely we are to find ways of facilitating that process.

The placement co-ordinator has the task of assigning students to placements where they can most appropriately integrate classroom and fieldwork content. He or she stands at the interface between agencies and practitioners on the one hand and the college or university running the social work course on the other hand. One of the roles of the co-ordinator is to contribute information and advice not only to agencies, supervisors and students, but also to colleagues, particularly in the area of classroom curriculum content which constantly requires altering and updating. The B.S.W. degree at Massey evaluates students on their ability to make links between curriculum and practice. If the curriculum lacks content in an area the student is keen to explore, there will inevitably be difficulties in achieving the 'fit' between curriculum and practice.

Section One: Feminist Perspectives

When asked about their feminist perspectives students were reluctant to label themselves. They tended to feel that labels are in some ways misleading and experience had taught them to avoid them. It is easy enough to distinguish between the various versions of feminist theory. The real world is full of contradictions. Theoretical distinctions quickly become blurred when you are working in crisis intervention where a woman's class position, race and sex have resulted in the experience of personal and institutional oppression. However, the majority of students (7) felt they could accurately be described as socialist feminists, while one described herself as Marxist feminist, another as radical feminist and one as a radical Christian socialist feminist.

In agreeing to the label 'socialist feminist' these students identified capitalism and patriarchy as the dual oppressors of women in Western society. They found the individual situations of so many women reflected their structural oppression. For instance one student on placement in a women's collective found that women's issues were not seen as important by those running services which affect our health. She described women as second class citizens. Another student cited the Department of Social Welfare approach to incest as oppressive towards women. Because acceptable evidence is difficult to obtain she was aware that men get off with excuses, while women suffer the anxiety and disruption of being taken away - to a 'safe' place. Another student put it like this:

women have come a long way and still have far to go. Women are going to push for change. Because men have got so much to lose they aren't going to give up anything. We have to keep fighting at it.

One student in this category also described herself as an eco-feminist by which she meant she was involved in the peace movement and would also struggle for conservation issues. Three other students described themselves differently. The student with the label radical feminist explained that her position was based on the understanding that:

I'm oppressed because I'm a woman and therefore as a woman I have to work to change that. I can't just sit there and accept things anymore. I'm working to end the oppression of women in the workforce, at home, fighting issues such as rape and pornography.

This student remarked of women's position in society that:

We're oppressed even in hospitals - no-one talked to me on the staff round - they talked at women not to them!

This student's analysis of women's oppression entailed action. She had integrated her intellectual and emotional understanding so that

for her there was only one response - action. For her the class-based oppression that comes from the ownership of the means of production by a privileged few did not figure in her analysis, whereas it did for the others.

The Marxist feminist student described herself as a Marxist first, a feminist second. She explained that she has a woman-oriented focus on what she does, but identified capitalist structures as the oppressor. For her an understanding of class, and the power held by those who own the means of production had to figure in her analysis of social problems.

The student who identified herself as a radical Christian socialist feminist really hadn't wanted to label herself. She felt that her brand of feminism contained elements of all these perspectives and that she was still working things through. It was important to her that notice be taken of the way in which our society has a

predominantly male way of organising society which affects women and men unequally.

Her placement focussed on the development of strategies for change that could be used by women in the workforce.

Section Two: Factors Influencing Feminist Development

While some students appeared to have a more developed feminist analysis than others all were aware that there are many examples of structural inequality between men and women today. All but one included either a socialist or a Marxist interpretation for such inequality when describing their feminism. What led them to develop such definite ideas about their perceived oppression? I asked this question because it seemed important to locate the factors influencing their political development, and find out whether the students felt they had had the curriculum input they wanted to facilitate their development. My question was open-ended with prompts referring to 'personal' life experiences, previous placements, women's groups, input from Massey papers and others.

Four main areas of influence were identified, as can be seen in the chart below.

Factors Influencing Feminist Development

Students	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Totals
Massey Courses	1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	10
Women's Groups	1	x					x				3
Life Experiences	1		x		x			x	x	x	5
Mother's Influence	1			x		x			x		3

The numbers 1-10 refer to individual students who took part in this research.

All the students had found some of the papers they studied had influenced their developing feminist perspectives. This will be looked at in the next section. In addition to their Massey courses all students identified at least one of the above listed areas of influence as particularly important to them.

Life Experiences

Five students drew attention to life experiences as alerting them to the fact that, as women, they were discriminated against. One student put it this way:

Right from early on, as far as I can remember, I've always rebelled against the fact that I should have to do the dishes while my brother races off ... those sorts of things.

Another student said she became a feminist through:

My personal experience as a woman with a disability. It's been a growing thing, starting with understanding my position and relating it to a wider political context.

A third student mentioned that she had a friend who had been raped:

I think a lot of anger pushed me, I read more and decided for myself how I saw the world, and men and women's place in that world.

Another significant experience for one of the students was being in a group which was dominated by the male members:

I felt ... where are we coming from? The women in the group all left the group and I started to ask questions about why

that was happening and how it would be run different if we had been in control of it.

Women's Groups

The two students who did their placement together both felt that being in groups had helped them. As they put it:

Going to women's things - on sexual harrassment - or feminist group supervision, being round - particularly groups of women at Massey - going to the women's health collective occasionally - things like that all started to make sense. That your way of thinking wasn't wrong, that it actually was what you were experiencing.

The other student for whom this was important had a similar response. These three students all made the point that their feminism was an integral part of themselves that they couldn't separate feminism from their ways of seeing things, nor from their kind of social work. For them it was 'just common sense, it feels right.'

Mother's Influence

Three students said their mothers had had a particularly strong and positive influence on their developing feminist perspective. All three gave rather different reasons for this and each is worth noting.

One student described her upbringing as different from that of other children in that it was non-sex-stereotypic. She was aware at the time that it was different:

My mother would be a major influence she would also describe herself as a feminist and through her I became aware of a lot of things. Also I grew up in a family where there was a strong emphasis on ... not anti-sex-stereotyping but not doing things in a traditional way ...

Here we find someone who is at least a second-generation feminist. Her family experience was one which set no limits on her aspirations on account of her sex. Instead she felt encouraged by,

and was in tune with her mother in developing a feminist perspective.

The second student told me that she would have to say her background had helped her to become a feminist.

I was raised by a solo-mother and I guess I've always had a woman's point of view at home. My grandmother was there a lot. My mother was into feminism herself. I was brought up with that viewpoint that it was okay for women to work, that women were as strong as men, just as capable ... when I came to university it just got stronger.

While the first student grew up in a household with equal numbers of both sexes, this student experienced an all female environment. It is important for her to work with women in order to empower them. This meant not doing things for them that they could do themselves. Her reason was that this would inhibit the development of their confidence.

The third student in this category described herself as a radical feminist. She said

My mother influenced me a lot ... like she's very liberal and assertive - she's always pushed me to change - she doesn't change herself but she's always made me aware of things - I started to get a feminist analysis coming to varsity.

In this case the mother provided a congenial environment in which the student could explore feminist issues and develop her perspective. Unlike the student who had to do the dishes, and whose parents had clearly had a negative influence on her feminist development, these students had all experienced positive support from home. They had strong women on whom to model themselves. Their mothers' influence was the first thing they referred to in talking about becoming a feminist. Their course at Massey had reinforced and given theoretical underpinning to their views.

Section Three: Helpful Papers

All the students found at least one paper helpful to them in developing their feminist perspective. It is important, when

devising a curriculum for social work education to articulate course work with fieldwork. Social work students need to integrate the two if they are ever going to demonstrate that they know what they are doing with clients. I therefore asked the students which papers they had found particularly helpful in developing their feminist social work theories. The chart below illustrates their answers to this question.

Papers Considered Helpful in the B.S.W. Curriculum

Papers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
C 76 462		x			x	x			x	x	5
O 76 211	x		x	x	x						4
O 76 212		x						x	x		3
C 76 351	x					x				x	3
C 76 362					x	x				x	3
C 76 101			x				x				2
C 76 102			x								1
C 76 251						x					1
O 76 303								x			1
C 76 358					x						1
C 76 458		x									1
C 76 455		x								x	2
O 36 310		x									1

KEY: C Core Paper; O Optional; S Sociology; SW Social Work; E Education

76 101 S Introductory Sociology

76 102 S New Zealand Society

76 211 S Women in Society

76 212 S Structural Inequality

76 251 SW Social Work in a Multi-Cultural Society

76 303 S Social Change and Politics in New Zealand Society

76 351 SW Integrated Practice in Welfare and Development

76 358 SW Intervention, Assessment and Change

76 362 SW Social Policy

76 458 SW Social Service Management

76 462 SW Social Development and Social Planning

76 455 SW Fieldwork

36 310 E Advanced Human Development

It appears to be the policy and macro-level input which attracted these students. Some of these papers were core papers, which means that all the students had taken them. Others were optional, so that some students had not taken them. The discussion distinguishes between core and optional papers.

Core Papers

76.462, the 400 level paper Social Development and Social Planning was the most popular paper, with fifty percent of the students referring to it as particularly helpful. 76 351 Integrated Practice in Welfare and Development was mentioned by three students. They all

felt that this paper had given them the time to work out their perspective. It had also faced them with this difficult task and they recognised how important this had been for them. 76 362 Social Policy was the other paper mentioned by these students as particularly useful. Six other core papers were mentioned by one or two students as having been particularly useful. It appears to be the policy and macro-level input which attracted these students. They appreciated the discipline of writing essays and thinking their position through.

Optional Papers

76 211 Women in Society was taken by four student respondents, and all four referred to it as being especially useful. One other respondent said she would have taken it, but doing the first part of her B.S.W. degree extramurally, she had not had her attention drawn to it. 76 212 Structural Inequality was taken by five respondents, three of whom described it as having particularly influenced them. 76 303 Social Change and Politics in New Zealand was taken by three respondents, one of whom referred to it as coming in useful for her placement. This student had been able to do a group project with three other women for this paper and had found this especially valuable. 36 310 Advanced Human Development was taken by one respondent who found it of particular relevance as it gave her the opportunity to study the life and works of Sylvia Ashton-Warner. She had found her an excellent role model. (This student had been placed in the Women's Resouce Room at the Teachers College.) Other course input from Massey that students referred to as being especially welcome and useful was having visiting women lecturers from the community, and an optional assertiveness training course. This information suggests that relevant feminist input from optional papers was of a haphazard nature. Student time is too precious for it to be left to chance as to whether these optional papers give them the feminist input they require. If a core paper was available that allowed flexibility for those special areas of individual interest this might be the more valuable direction to pursue.

Students answered the questions thoughtfully, having been asked at the beginning of the interview to write down which papers they had drawn on in developing their feminist ideas. The question was asked a second time towards the end of the interview and answers showed consistency. However, in terms of pacing the social work curriculum with placements it can be noted that apart from 76 251 referred to by one student all the papers mentioned prior to the first block placement were sociology papers and the two most popular of these were optional.

Social work students are notorious for having difficulty in tracking back to theoretical input when asked about how they integrate theory and practice (Syson and Baginsky, 1981; Stevenson and Parsloe, 1979). However, these students were very clear about which papers stood out for them as helpful in developing their feminist ideas, their way of looking at things.

Section Four: Criticisms of the Curriculum

Criticism of the B.S.W. curriculum focussed on several areas:

1. There was not enough information on women's issues.
2. Women and sexuality were not addressed sufficiently. There was nothing about incest, which was particularly noted by the student working in that area. Similarly the woman placed with the Health Collective felt that what she learned on placement could have been validly included in the curriculum.
3. Community work was not addressed until late in the B.S.W. degree. The student working in the women's refuge felt quite unprepared by the course for what she had to do. She realised that future students will be better equipped in this area because this gap has now been filled in the curriculum.
4. Fieldwork would be improved if students had more information on women's issues.
5. One student felt the research paper was sexist.
6. Other unspecified papers were regarded as sexist - either because of style of teaching or content.

7. The competitive nature of most of the B.S.W. papers was felt to diminish them in the eyes of a few students. Here students were referring to marking systems where they are graded against one another.

These results indicate that what students found more helpful was the sociological, analytic material in the B.S.W. degree. They tended not to identify a great deal of the taught social work theory as related to styles of intervention or fields of practice as being relevant or applicable to their placement tasks. However, they had plenty of ideas as to what could have been included in the course to prepare them for service delivery in a feminist mode. They would have liked input on women and sexuality, including menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, parenting and sexually transmitted diseases. Lesbianism and an understanding of the way a woman's point of view may differ from those of men were also areas that would have helped. Assertiveness training, self-defense and consciousness-raising would have been helpful. Content on ways in which women work with women would have helped those students in collectives or doing one to one or group work.

The message came over loud and clear that students required course content that would help their intervention skills. They believed this material was available and felt the B.S.W. curriculum needed to accommodate it. Some students voiced their awareness that the curriculum is changing to meet these needs and regretted that they had missed out.

Section Five: Supervisors' Comments About the B.S.W. Curriculum and its Preparation of Feminist Social Work Students for Fieldwork

Supervisors felt that there was support for feminist perspectives in the B.S.W. curriculum but they were not clear as to how far this went. What they were aware of was the fact that they had students doing feminist placements, and that this entailed support in principle for such an approach to social work. One male supervisor queried how clearly the Department was encouraging students in this area because his student

had a sense that what she did for a placement somehow needed to be legitimised through me in order to be acceptable to Massey. There wasn't as it were a perception that there was a clear blessing for a professional feminist social worker – not sure where this feeling comes from, but it was quite clear.

Supervisors were not as definite as the students concerning curriculum content with regard to women's issues. They were under the impression that students found the analytic theoretical material which enabled them to use a class analysis and recognise racism and sexism, most helpful. This ties up with what the students themselves have reported. Much of this material is taught through the Sociology Department and a significant proportion of it is contained in optional papers.

Supervisors' Critical Recommendations

Teaching Style: One supervisor felt that this was of an isolating and competitive nature, to judge from the hesitation students displayed over trusting each other in group supervision. She felt this would have to change if the B.S.W. programme was genuinely to include feminist content in the classroom.

Mainstreaming: The supervisor raising this point wanted to see women's issues integrated into the curriculum so that they achieved the same academic recognition as other theoretical positions. Discussions of neo-Marxist theory take up part of a core paper in the degree, without reference to feminist materialism, for example the work of Michele Barrett or Christine Delphy. Feminist research appears to have been another area that students needed to be taught. At present it is not mentioned in the core research paper. One supervisor had

a feeling that the course does as good as it can. University placements are what tries to bridge the gaps ... provided students are encouraged to do feminist assignments and these aren't peripheral.

Skills Labs: From a feminist perspective these would be quite different, according to the two women supervisors. For example, one supervisor told me her students had been adamant that they had been taught to interview sitting with their legs neatly crossed. This supervisor felt the agenda in teaching interviewing skills to students had been such as to turn them into respectable middle-class pakeha. Both she and her student at the Women's Refuge had told me how quick the women at the refuge are to pick up and query language. Learning to speak in the vernacular was very much a placement task. Students could well look at such issues during interviewing labs.

Interviewing for Male Students: Male students, it was felt could be encouraged to look at their dominant role in society, with a view to coming to terms with doing something about it. They can be helped to recognise sexism, and to take on responsibility for working against male violence. The better informed they are about women's issues the more likely it is that they will work appropriately with clients where women's issues are a concern. As one supervisor pointed out,

I work with men indirectly because all the women I work with are involved in some way with men: fathers, boyfriends, husbands, employers. Its impossible, I've found, to be separatist - that's not my way of working.'

Woman-Oriented Material: One supervisor would have liked to see a more conscious and explicit approach to women in the curriculum. Women's roles and women's sexuality were specifically referred to as lacking emphasis in the degree. This corresponds with student statements on the same subject.

Section Six: Becoming a Feminist Social Social Work Supervisor

In terms of their development as feminist social work supervisors, one woman found that it was only during her last year of the the B.S.W. degree that she

began to live feminism. I felt similar things happening to my feminist students this time.

The other woman supervisor recorded that for her this process occurred after graduation. As she explained, at the time there was very little on feminism in the curriculum. For her:

Starting back to work, I saw everywhere the result of oppression of women. It wasn't just affecting women, it was affecting everybody - so I just started to see things a lot clearer and work out that if I was going to have any impact anywhere it was going to be with women.

In support of this observation, one of the male supervisors emphasised the importance of feminist analysis for present day social work. He made the point:

Nothing has altered in terms of major structures of sexism - that is pervasive. Very difficult at times for people to be aware of how pervasive it is.

He went on in support of feminist placements, saying:

This [feminist social work placement] is an enduring phenomenon - its got a fifty year life in it- for anything to change, so that therefore the young women that get into placements now - that will last them a lifetime, its not something that's just for now it'll last them in their professional lifetime, it'll last them in their personal lifetime, it gives them a permanent mind set that enables them to deal with the environment, so I think there are immense advantages and I'd like to see more done.

There are two points to be made from what these supervisors are saying:

1. Learning to apply a feminist analysis as a social worker takes time and can be facilitated by experience on placements.
2. Supervisors perceived this learning as very worthwhile.

The supervisors had some useful comments on the processes by which students came to make the links between theoretical and applied knowledge which are explored in the next section.

Section Six: Making Links Between Theory and Practice

Linking theory and practice is a difficult task in Social Work education. It is generally recognised as essential that successful students shall succeed in integrating course work and placements. Somehow students have to translate theoretical knowledge into action. My experience, when asking students what course material they had used on placement was to meet with something of a blank - a reference to some of the more theoretical papers discussed earlier, or downright rejection of papers that would have been practice oriented.

Supervisors recorded similar experiences:

The students didn't seem to find these [the social work models they had been introduced to on the course] terribly useful. They seemed to have a very theoretical understanding of them. We decided to dump these and go for their own skills, intuitions, and get in touch with their own theoretical perspectives. Dump everyone else's perspectives and get in touch with their own - which I think at fourth year they should be doing. That seemed to work fairly well.

This supervisor was not iconoclastic about social work models; she was prepared to use some, and adapt them. She was not prepared to work with others which had underlying theoretical implications which would militate against feminist principles. She talked about the limitations of the task-centred system when working with women, but recognised that it did help to formulate strategy and monitor progress. Her concern was to help the students develop models that were useable, drawing on what theory they had been taught, without being restricted by it. She worked at this in group supervision. Five considerations were of particular importance here:

1. Pacing – working at the clients' level and speed.
2. Consciousness-raising: both for the students and as a technique they could use with clients. For example, one student came to realise that it was more important to show the woman she was working with that she did not have to put up with some minor thing, than to talk to her about 'stopping the violence in her life.' Big abstract concepts are overwhelming – where, after all, do you begin? But refusing to phone your partner once you get to Women's Refuge is feasible, and empowering.
3. Directive talk was an acceptable way of passing on expertise and needed to be seen and used for that purpose, but not as a power trip.
4. Somehow ways of coping with the frustration of seeing women daily oppressed had to be explored.
5. The group needed to agree to disagree, rather than to try to work from a consensus basis that became burdensome or inhibiting.

Another supervisor agreed that a lot of students have difficulty answering questions about what theories they may be drawing on in relation to a particular case. She recommended a practical approach in which questions about relevant models or theories are asked to help the student recognise the theoretical basis for her work.

One thoughtful point was raised by a supervisor and deserves mention here:

Its put forward as an ideal that there should be this wonderful unity or joining of theory and practice. I've read somewhere that the only place you get that is in a totalitarian state where everything is lived according to theory and there is something about the kind of society we've got – there's a necessary disjunction between theory and practice so that we can actually keep spinning off each other, critiquing each other in terms of non-fit in order that we keep the whole thing moving.

This is very relevant to what we have been discussing here. Students do not assume that their feminist theory will 'fit' social work practice. There is some argument, some shaping, some reworking and experimentation to be done before this is possible.

Other researchers have found students similarly elusive as to the extent to which their practice is informed by theory. Regarding the integration of course content Syson and Baginsky (1981) make the following points:

In this research we tended to assume that any theory being used by students would 'emerge' in answer to our questions about, for example, the expectations of placements, the rationale for student's workload, the content of supervision sessions, tutorials and other formal teaching sessions or even when talking about assessment.(...) In practice we found, as did Stevenson and Parsloe (1979) before us, that explicit references to theories used in practice or the way in which placement experience contributed to the student's understanding of theory were rare and imprecise. We could not distinguish between those who were not using theory at all and those who might have been using a theory but could not express it. The most easily identifiable links between placement and course work were references to skills or techniques learned on the course and being tried out on placement and to essays, case-studies and seminar papers which put placement experience in a theoretical framework (Syson and Baginsky, 1981: 170).

These points bring us back to student comments about the core papers, which imply that these did not sufficiently address practice issues that students would have found useful. The question arises as to whether other, non-feminist, students would have shown a similar lack of enthusiasm towards the core papers. Should these student responses be interpreted as an indication of serious weaknesses in the core papers of the B.S.W. curriculum, or do they represent a similar phenomenon to that which Syson and Baginsky (1981) refer? These questions can only be answered by further

research. At the very least, however, it appears that there is feminist student dissatisfaction in relation to the practice papers. This in turn indicates that there would be merit in reviewing those papers to augment their woman-centred content.

It appears that students doing feminist placements are faced with the difficult task of working in very practical way using sign posts that have not yet been completed. In some instances theory tries to fill in the missing letters or even switch the direction in which the signs were pointing. Their pathway is sometimes fairly clear, as in the case of placements with health collectives and refuges. At least here they do not have to argue for the premises upon which their work is based. In statutory agencies such as hospitals the situation is more like an orienteering course where some of the clues have been removed!

Despite these difficulties, the students were supervised by committed, resourceful supervisors. Together their efforts ensured the success of their projects. They did make links between theory and practice. They also felt they had to work extra hard on the theory side to supplement their knowledge in areas concerning women, while other students could make use of the mainstream conventional social work models of the B.S.W. curriculum.

As I write this, I am aware that changes in the B.S.W. curriculum are taking place which should redress the balance in favour of both women's issues and bi-cultural practice. This will have the effect of further confirming the value of feminist social work. If the burden of consensus can be avoided when teaching this new course material, the phenomenon of 'disabling professionalism' may be avoided. (By the term 'disabling professionalism' I refer not to the valued skills and knowledge of the professional but to the mystificatory elitism, and its companion phenomenon of operating from an unassailable position of power that some professions manifest.) To go back to my metaphor, there are several pathways through the landscape of feminist social work - they should not be lost by erecting only one signpost to a main road.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FEMINIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Social workers give priority to idealistic personal and social values, particularly to the values of altruism and social welfare. There is an emphasis on 'both - and' values, as of autonomy and social responsibility, along with an effort to strike a balance between their conflicting claims and to reconcile their paradoxes. The ethical practice principles, rather than being rules for observance, are aids and standards in complex processes of choice and decision-making for clients and social workers (Siporin, 1975: 89).

These ethical practice principles inform the intervention methods adopted by social workers. Values and practice are intimately related. Social work students are expected to take time to recognise and understand their own personal values and how these fit in with professional social work values. For feminist social workers this is important. Feminist theory is critical of the status quo. Yet this is what social work theory tends to be grounded in. Intervention, in other words, tends to support the culturally acceptable attitudes of the prevailing class.

A recent article 'How the Supervisor and and the Student Set Out to Help Molly' illustrates this (O'Hagan, 1987: 8). Molly's student, Paul, sees her as

the symbol of a suffering oppressed Motherhood for whom an establishment agency like ourselves, would easily list any number of plausible excuses for our own inaction. ...such excuses were merely an effective component of the stereotyping process...

The student helps Molly to leave her husband. Away from him Molly blossomed. The supervisor is ambivalent throughout concerning Molly's ability to manage without the husband and once the student has left the agency Molly returns to her former home. The reader is left with many questions, the supervisor is proved right - this time.

From a feminist point of view it could be argued that Molly has begun the learning process, not given up, as the supervisor implies.

Whatever the outcome, both supervisor and student worked from a common base of social work values. It is in combination that they add up to the professional philosophy recognisable as social work. Similarly, the feminist social work practice principles discussed in this chapter are not owned exclusively by feminist social workers. In combination they serve to characterise the motivating values which inform feminist social work intervention. They supplement the conventional social work practice principles of the International Code of Ethics.

To focus discussion of this material I quote from the Handbook on Social Work Practice which is issued to students doing B.S.W. placements and which uses a wide definition of social work and acknowledges its ethical foundations:

Social work is broadly concerned with the elimination of social injustice and inequality and the creation of a social environment for the wellbeing of all. Social work thus has a significant ethical basis for its practice. Within this, social work is the direct application of personal skills in assisting people to achieve satisfactory lives. The social worker engages in a working relationship with clients, many of whom are disadvantaged and oppressed. This relationship between these parties is the fundamental process by which change is effected in individuals, in the institutions and organisations of society, and in the socio-economic and political structure of society itself (Social Work Unit, Massey University, 1986: 10).

The same Handbook carries the Mission Statement developed by the social work unit in 1982. It describes the goals for the practice orientation of the B.S.W. course as follows:

PRACTICE ORIENTATION: These programmes are guided by a broad conception of social and community work practice and are intended to prepare graduates to:

- (a) practice in a variety of welfare organisations;
- (b) engage in direct and indirect social and community work practice;
- (c) use a range of helping approaches to engage individuals, families, groups organisations, and communities in resolving problems or improving functioning.

(Social Work Unit, Massey University, 1986: 71).

This definition of social work practice is wide enough to accommodate feminist social work on all points of a spectrum ranging from one to one work with individuals right through to research and policy making.

The student projects described in the previous chapters made full use of this latitude for practice. Students and their feminist supervisors had well-defined ideas about feminist social work and intervention skills. Their feminist principles were an important and often explicit element in what they were doing and how they were going about it. For example, the student at Women's Refuge was committed to helping women to see that if they felt sure enough about leaving their partner, they could successfully go it alone and achieve independence. The student doing research on men's attitudes to becoming a father stood up and argued for conducting her research in a way that was consonant with her feminist approach to research.

Chapter Three describes feminist social work principles as derived from the literature and from my own personal experiences in the area of social work practice. Five principles have been identified as: Analysis; Integration; Affirmation; Empowerment; and Supervision.

These principles serve as categories for the data in this chapter, as I will illustrate. The data has been extracted from the information arising out of the interviews and documents in a personal way. Four questions were of particular relevance:

Please describe what being a feminist social worker means to you?

What sort of things about your placement make it feminist to you?

What do you see as the essential ingredients of feminist supervision?

In the context of your development as a feminist social worker, what sorts of links have you been making between theory and practice?

Analysis

When talking about analysis in terms of feminist social work practice it is helpful to distinguish two elements, or stages of analysis. The first stage is usually the theoretical or sociological level of understanding women's oppression in terms of structural inequalities and sex-stereotyping which result in discrimination against women. The second stage is characterised by the way a social worker uses her feminist analysis when working with an individual or client group. The social work assessment and plan of action will reflect her theoretical position but through action. One student supervisor put it this way:

There are principles that underpin helping relationships so that you might as well be using an orthodox model or approach, but a lot of these are taught in a vacuum, it's the analysis that makes the difference - a growing self-consciousness of oneself as a woman in relation to that field of practice - these kinds of things seem to make the difference...

Three points arise out of this.

First, feminist social work looks for explanations which relate to both macro and micro levels and which shed light on structural and power relations as these affect women. It seeks to understand the individual in her or his social, as well as psychological context.

Second, this analytical work did not remain on an intellectual level for the students. As practitioners they made links between their theoretical understanding of women's oppression and the way they were themselves affected by being women. The political was

entwined in their own personal lives. Thus, one student described how her perspective fitted into her placement as:

Very good – because I worked in a feminist agency it was not difficult to apply. There was no dilemma in constantly having to explain my belief, or why I was a feminist, because everyone I worked with believed the same thing which was extremely helpful. I was able to really develop my own perspective which was constantly reinforced by the people around me.

Some students were working through sensitive personal issues and were conscious of their need for support and the importance of developing strategies to ensure that they continued to deepen their understanding of these matters. Other students, and the two feminist supervisors had already integrated their macro and micro level analysis so that for them it was a part of their personal identity which they used in doing social work.

The third point about feminist analysis in social work is that it calls for action. As one student put it: 'You can't not change things.' With comprehension comes an altered view of the world. The social workers I interviewed wanted to change things – for women. They wanted to work with women, to raise women's level of consciousness and encourage them in getting together to help themselves, and get rid of oppressive living conditions. Students were aware of the practical difficulties faced by those who aim at change; for example one student said that:

Because of limited resources and funding, there was often not much time left to work on submissions, or doing any sort of education and conscientisation. I guess they were some of the goals of the refuge.

Integration

This concept incorporates several elements. It has to do with seeing the client as a whole person – affected by class, gender, race, disablement, etc. It also relates to the social worker's recognition of the similarities between her own situation as a woman and her

client's position. For example, at Women's Refuge the student had been just as frightened by the violence of a woman's male partner as the woman herself, and with reason. In the same way, the student at the Women's Health Collective had learnt a great deal about health issues which affected her as a woman - as much as had those making their enquiries. For many students the key ingredient of a feminist placement was the fact that they, as women, were working with women for women. This is in contrast to the experience of many students on courses in the U.K. According to Hanmer and Statham (1987: 13):

We come across areas of shared experience with our clients as if by accident, with shock, surprise, even shame. Often we fail to identify experiences and life events such as serial monogamy or becoming a one parent family as social and demographic trends. We pathologise where we should be recognising gendered experience and patterns of living.

Increasingly on qualifying courses there is teaching about women in social policy, sociology and psychology. There is much less emphasis on gender in teaching and learning to practise. Here the lives of women seem to take place as if in a vacuum, set apart in a world of methods and skills.

Unlike the state of affairs described by Hanmer and Statham, students doing these feminist placements were recognising gendered experience, and they refused to look at the lives of women as if in a vacuum. Those students working in a woman-centred environment appreciated the fact that they were not constantly having to defend their decision to work in a feminist way, and that they could hold onto their present position and develop their practice. One of the students wrote:

Working in a Women's Resource Room with another feminist student and having a feminist supervisor, attending feminist group supervision has given me a unique opportunity to develop and apply my feminist beliefs. We were given the opportunity to develop and construct the placement as we felt appropriate, We integrated our placement from the

beginning as being to develop and expand the functioning of the Women's Resource Room so as to meet the needs and wishes of the students.

Thus what they were doing for the Teachers College students was precisely what they had set out to achieve for themselves - namely a deepening of their understanding of feminism. At the same time their goal was broken down into tasks, the successful performance of which involved many skills associated with social work: communication, locating resources, gaining access to these, finding allies, group work, organisation of workshops, educating a community and talking to women in a goal directed fashion to help them understand gender-related questions, and the possibilities for doing something about them.

Self awareness is a valued attribute in social work.

Understanding ourselves, our values and attitudes, the impact of our style of work and behaviour on others, is regarded as an important part of our training and professional development. But the conscious use of self most frequently does not mean a conscious use of a gendered self. We think it should.

One way forward is through recognising commonalities. But to do so is thought to raise the danger of over-identification or over-emotional involvement. Treating gender as invisible, however, is not the way to eliminate this danger. While it may appear paradoxical, knowing and naming commonalities gives the necessary distance to see the client in her own setting (Hanmer and Statham, 1987: 13).

For these students, the conscious use of self did mean a conscious use of a gendered self. In fact this was an important ingredient in all the placements in this study. Acknowledgment of their sex and gender identity as a particularly important common attribute between them and their clients was what motivated and directed the students and their supervisors. For them the whole experience of doing social work was integrated around that consciousness.

Affirmation

Affirmation has to do with the validation of women's experience of life as important and deserving of attention in the helping processes. For many women it can be an enormous relief to discover that their personal problem, which they had thought unique, is in fact a difficulty commonly experienced. Affirmation has at least two important functions. It names a problem - a situation. The understanding this brings gives women the power that accompanies knowledge. They can then confront their situation with the confidence that it need not mean they are failures, but rather potential survivors and one of many. In this way affirmation leads to empowerment. For this reason it is at times difficult to distinguish between the two when looking at types of intervention.

Consciousness raising is an example of this. As a technique whereby women are helped to understand their position in society and why they so predictably get the dirty end of the stick, it is affirmative. The effect, however, is empowering.

In describing her own social work practice one of the feminist student supervisors told me:

I use consciousness raising as a basic approach. I've got basic principles that I work from. They are: working at the client's level - this is very important because so many women have been bullied and bossed around, victimised, used to being dealt with by an authority figure. Starting with the basis that there is some equality, working towards that with the women. Explaining what I'm doing - why I'm doing it, how I'm doing it, and encouraging questions. Drawing together impressions from group members about what is happening in a general sense so as to get a general idea of what is needed overall. Never to work very long with an individual, one to one, pretty quickly along the piece I involve them with a group - therapeutic, social - so as not to keep them isolated. Bringing in race awareness - caring for Maori women.

Using these principles, the worker allows time and opportunity for the client to work in an atmosphere which is not pathologising but

rather sympathetic and encouraging. Two of the students supervised by this worker wrote about their approach using similar principles:

Thus I applied my feminist perspective on placement by giving affirmation to women for their experiences and view of the world which is seen as trivial and unimportant by society in general, we gave the women the opportunity to engage in dialogue with each other in workshops and after videos. This gave the women an opportunity to discover things that were happening to their lives in an environment where their experience was not denied or trivialised.

This is a very clear description of how social workers can use intervention affirmatively. Women tend to blame themselves for being in situations which put them down. Sometimes we ignore or underestimate our needs as much as the helping professionals have done. There is a neat illustration of this process:

If a woman is in distress and she has the privileges that the culture decides is enough for her, she may tend to assume that the distress is her fault, that there is something wrong with her. One metaphor I use frequently is that when one has a pain in one's foot, one has to look at the size of the shoe one may be wearing. There may be nothing wrong with the foot in itself. If the trouble is that the shoe is a size too small for it. In fact, after wearing shoes that are too small, not only will you have a pain in your foot (so something would be wrong with your foot), but also your foot may become deformed, inclining you to believe that it is a problem of your foot alone
(Bernadez, 1984: 19).

One student worked with a woman client who had been referred to the hospital Social Work Department because the quality of her child-care practices was in doubt. The student felt that here was a woman who, given her personal and social resources, was striving to do her best for her small infant. There was a dilemma in that her ability was borderline, and she was very suspicious of any help

offered in case it lead to removal of the child. The student's plan of action involved getting alongside this woman and providing her with the support she needed in order to succeed. A balance clearly had to be maintained between the mother's needs and the child's needs.

The student felt it was crucial to affirm this mother's efforts - to give her recognition and encouragement. She was aware that in taking such a line she was risking being misunderstood by other professionals involved. Their approach could well have tended toward removal of the child to a safer environment.

The placements described in Chapter Five demonstrate the principle of affirmation both through their stated objectives and their styles of intervention. In this section I have given some more detailed examples of the kind of intervention that illustrates the principle and what the students and supervisors understood by it.

Empowerment

Not to work for women but with them. It is amazing how much power you can have by having more information. It must be shared all the time, they are entitled to know what is happening. Sometimes I felt that some of the volunteers decided for the women and just took it for granted that they wanted those particular things done for them. Women must be asked what they want and things must not be decided for them.

This extract from one student's assessment of her placement puts it all in a nutshell. All the students were aware that knowledge is power and that what many women need is more information in order to solve problems. Women frequently exist in circumstances where their power to change things for the better is severely limited partly because change would cause discomfort to the men in their lives, but also because they simply lack the knowledge that would give them access to appropriate resources. Helplessness causes physical and mental health to deteriorate. When someone no longer feels that they can alter or control their

life, their self-image may suffer to the point where existing or potential resources are neither recognised nor used.

Students showed their recognition of this throughout their descriptions of placement projects. From the student at the Women's Health Collective:

The aim was to enhance their self confidence which is basic to enabling and empowering women to reclaim and increase control of their lives. (Assessment Document)

And again:

The skills and strategies used by the Collective and myself were information-sharing, non-judgemental 'counselling', liaison between other groups, support groups for women, etc. The strategy underlying these functions and skills is the empowerment of women in order to gain control over their health lives. The Collective uses existing health systems to achieve its goals. (Assessment Document)

The student at Women's Refuge was equally constructive:

I finished an information folio for the refuge houses. I think it is important for the information to be there for the women and that they can look at it when they feel like it. Often they are bombarded with a lot of information when they first come to the refuge, Knowledge is power, the power of resources, again part of my feminist analysis is to share that power with all women. (Interview)

Empowering the researched was important to the student who looked at stress amongst basic grade social workers. Her supervisor wrote:

The methodology which X used was based on an action-research - that is having the dual aim of contributing to the existing body of information/ knowledge relating to stress and at the same time engaging participants in a collaborative process to help them identify and address their own concerns/issues endemic to their social work practice.

At one point or another, either during our interviews or in the placement documents students and supervisors mentioned that for them one of the key ingredients of feminist social work was that they were working to free women from the painful effects of sex-role stereotyping and institutional sexism.

A good example of this arose during my own placement when I realised the extent to which women are prescribed (and become addicted to) what are called minor tranquillisers (Benzodiazapines). Through working with one brave woman trying to handle the long drawn out withdrawal symptoms associated with these drugs I became aware of what looks like a pervasive tranquillisation of women by the medical profession. It is, after all, easier for doctors to prescribe medicines than to look at why a woman presents with distress in the first place. I shared the relief this woman experienced as she gradually discovered that she was one among many suffering from prescribed drug-addiction and that in this respect what she was experiencing was quite normal. I watched her gather power from this knowledge and develop an informed concern for others in the same predicament.

Empowerment and affirmation are closely linked and interact on each other. By ratifying or confirming someone you can give them the power to take action. By giving someone power you also confirm them as, in your opinion, being capable and suitable for the task in hand.

Supervision

Feminist social workers work for change, and this can make them unpopular or threatening amongst their colleagues. Battered women and violent men, abused children, termination of pregnancy, the restructuring of family units and the range of problems associated with the feminisation of poverty all conspire to produce heavy and stressful areas of intervention. Social workers use supervision as a process in which to give one other support and feedback on their practice with a view to self-improvement and development. Feminist social workers make use of supervision too. The term 'supervision' has connotations of power and inequality but this does not have to be part of the process. Some refer to peer-group supervision or

consultation when talking about feminist supervision. These terms reflect on equal relationship between those involved and their decision to confront and devise strategies to eliminate the elements of power in the supervisory relationship. Strategies for accomplishing this were described by students and supervisors in Chapter Six.

All the students were asked whether they had looked at strategies for continuing to work as feminists and/or social workers. Two students were unwilling to be classified as social workers, one wanted to be a recreation officer and the other saw herself as a community worker and considered this to be different from social work. All had thought about 'survival strategies' and had a positive approach to seeking out supportive supervision once they joined the workforce. They talked in terms of support groups of like minded women outside these agencies with whom they could share consultative or peer group supervision. Unfortunately, these kinds of groups are difficult to maintain, largely because members tend to be overloaded and drop out.

As one student put it:

There's a split between just feminist agencies and non-feminist agencies. If you can find an agency that lets you work the way you want to work as a woman I think you're very lucky. And if not you end up somewhere like the Women's Refuge which is just bloody hard work and none of them stay more than one and a half years because they're so burnt out...

She recognised that feminist social workers really need to develop survival strategies and talked about women's support groups outside the agency - to help keep one's vision alive and keep you going. It is important she said:

To not get the feeling of wanting to give up. A lot of energy goes into working at the refuge because sometimes you feel that you've hit a wall. Especially if you think that a woman is all ready to move into her house, when her partner rings up and says that he is really sorry and she returns home. But if

you give up then women have nowhere to turn, the thing to do is to work on getting more support and acceptance by the wider public.

This student was recognising the pressures on women who work closely with other women in the type of crisis work the Women's Refuge frequently entails. The student at the Women's Health Collective was also aware of the hard work and lack of rewards experienced by some of the workers there. Both the students were in the group which rotated venue and facilitator for weekly supervision. Their supervisor told me how the group had looked at their host agencies and compared funding, resources such as office accommodation and equipment which reflect the value society places on the various organisations. The difference between Women's Refuge and the Department of Health was picked out as particularly obvious. While the former worked from an old and drafty building, in cramped quarters with precarious resources both in terms of available volunteers, paid workers and finances, the latter was housed in a warm comfortable building and was secure in its officialdom. They also noted that just because you are working amongst women does not mean you can expect to be supported as a feminist. The hierarchical administrative organisation of the Department of Health meant that although higher ranking staff could be women they work within a structural framework that reinforces authoritarianism and patriarchy.

A clear statement about the goals of supervision in a feminist context came from one of the supervisors. It adds an extra dimension to this process as a feminist practice principle, and I quote it for the second time:

Supervision - it is to do with goals. It's tied up with feminist social work practice and that's tied up with the liberation of women and so many of the facets of supervision stem from that major goal. So hopefully within the supervisory relationship and within the helping relationships that stem from there its all to do with the liberation of women. The empowering of women. Having means consistent

with ends, so that the supervisory relationship has to be a liberating relationship for the supervisee in the same way that the helping relationship must be to the clients.

Supervisors and students had worked hard to successfully confront and contain the power element in their supervisory sessions. The above statement makes it very clear why this is so important in a feminist context. What you do expresses more clearly what you are on about than what you say. In the learning situation role modelling is very significant. Consistent behaviour which affirms your declared practice stance is essential if you wish to be credible. At the same time the process teaches as much as the content, both for students and for clients. The students and supervisors had developed a good understanding of those issues. For the person who co-ordinates feminist placements this is a crucial consideration. It indicates how important it is to match students, agencies and supervisors so that, no matter what the project or clientele may be, the processes and guiding principles of feminist practice are allowed expression and support.

The data presented in this chapter illustrates how the five principles of feminist social work practice were applied by students and their supervisors. The quotations and examples given are representative of the findings rather than exceptional. The data has presented a consistent picture of this type of feminist social work practice. Students placed in collective agencies, or informal settings tended to have contributed particularly telling descriptions, which I have quoted, of ways in which they applied their principles. However all the women involved in this study demonstrated a high degree of integration between theory, self, and practice which was what they had been striving for.

'GO FOR IT': STUDENTS AND FEMINIST PLACEMENTS

Introduction

'Go for it' replied several of the students when asked what advice they would give someone trying to decide whether to do a feminist placement. Their enthusiasm was echoed by all those taking part in this study. All considered that by doing a feminist social work placement they had had a valuable opportunity for practicing the sort of social work they eventually wanted to do.

Some of the students had chosen feminist placements from the beginning. Others came to realise that, having chosen a woman-centred focus for their field experience, and being placed with a feminist supervisor, had involved them in a feminist placement. They appreciated that they had taken part in fieldwork that proved worthwhile and helped them to integrate theory and practice. Because of this students had looked, with their supervisors, at strategies for continuing to use a feminist approach in social work. These include seeking the support of other feminist social workers in group-supervision, and understanding the scope for feminist practice that various agencies offer. Supervisors talked about the long-term value of such an enterprise. They drew attention to the slow pace at which social attitudes towards women's position in society change. As a consequence it will remain important in the foreseeable future, to provide social services intervention which is alert to the structural inequalities women have to contend with in our daily lives.

The aims of this study were to develop a systematic description of feminist student placements, and to look at administrative issues arising out of such placements, in order to suggest organisational and curricular improvements. In getting this information students and supervisors also gave an account of feminist social work practice. This demonstrated the feasibility of using a feminist analysis in social work. At the same time the data presents an account of a systematic application of feminist principles of practice by students with the help of their supervisors and fellow students.

It was found that students and supervisors had both experienced inadequate communication between themselves and the placement co-ordinator at placement planning time. The main problems were encountered in the very early placement stages. Some students and some supervisors had made assumptions about the feminist nature of the placement they were involved in which turned out to be quite incorrect. In addition some mentioned that male staff visitors had caused them concern. This was partly because it was felt that sending out a male staff visitor was symptomatic of the placement organiser not taking feminist placements seriously, and partly because of the difficulty of talking feminism with a man. Equally problematic was the small number of feminist supervisors available, resulting in having two male supervisors involved in feminist placements. Mention was also made of the lack of feminist social work theory presented in the social work curriculum and the need to increase such studies and articulate them with field practice. Respondents also had no trouble in putting forward practicable strategies for remedying these difficulties.

Particularly useful recommendations included:

1. Pay attention to morale, maintaining a belief in the value of feminist placements despite the difficulties of arranging them.
2. Have patience with collectives.
3. Take a flexible approach to what constitutes a feminist placement.
4. Student levels of feminist awareness should, where possible, be matched when allocating students to a group for supervision.
5. Staff should be quite clear that students involved in woman-centred placements actually want feminist supervision before assigning it to them.
6. Match female staff visitors to feminist placements.
7. Call a conference for feminist supervisors and develop guidelines.

Questions were asked about curriculum issues in order to discover the extent to which students felt their academic papers had furnished them with theory appropriate to their placements. The results support my suggestion in Chapter One that students might well consider the B.S.W. curriculum inadequate in preparing them for feminist social work.

Discussion of my conclusions proceeds therefore in two sections:

1. Organisational Issues. Examination of students' and supervisors' experiences of the practical, organisational side of feminist student social work placements. In addition their recommendations for improving the organisation of such placements is discussed.
2. Curriculum Issues. Course content and its articulation with a fieldwork curriculum, in relation to feminist social work theory and practice.

Organising the Feminist Placement

The typical feminist student placement combines the following ingredients: a woman student working from a feminist perspective, doing some form of social work that is woman-centred and being supervised by a feminist supervisor. For those questioned 'woman-centred' meant working with women on women's issues. How this was interpreted varied somewhat. Some wanted the opportunity to work solely with women on their placement. Others were prepared to work with men as well, so long as their analysis remained woman-centred, and their style of work could reflect their feminist perspective.

I have described how students and supervisors talked about their approach to supervision and how they negotiated the question of power and assessment. From a feminist point of view it was essential that where there was an element of power this should be acknowledged in order to equalise the relationship as far as realistically possible. Various supervisors and their students handled the problem of power in a variety of ways. Briefly, student placements fell into four categories or models using a variety of styles which included both women and men for supervision, group

supervision and individual supervision and different methods of assessment.

It is useful for the placement organiser to be aware that flexibility exists within the parameters of what counts as a feminist placement. This increases the possibility of arranging the most appropriate type of project and supervision for each student. The majority of respondents considered it was better to have a sympathetic male supervisor with back up feminist support, than not to try to do a feminist placement at all. To have to make such choices reflects the difficulty of finding available feminist supervisors. Of the sixty students who did concurrent placements at this time ten took part in this research. There may well have been students who would have wanted to do feminist placements but could not, either because they had done something similar before, or because the resources were unavailable. The presence in this study of two students with male supervisors points up the difficulty of locating feminist supervision. Students who received one-to-one supervision had a conventional style of assessment in which the supervisor graded them. However, each of these placements was characterised by a trusting quality in which mutual respect rather than power was uppermost.

Students who were assessed by their peers commented on the responsibility that this form of supervision placed on them for their own development. They considered that they worked as conscientiously as other students and like them made progress and developed their skills and theoretical understanding. Some students may not be sufficiently advanced, however, to benefit to the same extent from such fieldwork conditions. For them loosely structured feminist placements may be contra-indicated and a carefully structured field curriculum would need to be negotiated. These would be students, for example, who have not yet developed a strong feminist analysis and would need extra support in doing so. This could affect the balance of power in the supervisory relationship but I see no insurmountable problem here. Provided all parties to setting up a placement fully discuss the student's learning needs and wishes and the supervisors' resources, the

placement organiser should be able to facilitate a successful, well-structured, feminist placement. The real problem is likely to arise in finding the appropriate feminist supervisor.

The difficulties that supervisors and students had experienced at the very beginning of placement reflect the importance of making sure that all parties to a placement fully understand each other. Communication problems can easily arise.

Because a woman student wants to do a community or a research placement working with women it is easy for the placement organiser to assume she wants to do a feminist placement. This is what happened to several students in this study who ended up doing feminist placements almost by mistake. The placement organiser has to exercise judgement at the placement planning stage and try to elicit from the student a clear notion of the relationship between the project/agency that the student wishes to become involved with, and what perspective and social work model the student wants to develop. In addition to this, where feminist group supervision is what the students are being offered, all concerned must be clear about it in advance, and sympathetic. If possible students in the group should have attained commensurate levels of feminist theoretical analysis. This was not the case for the Model IV group and it was one factor which retarded group cohesion. The placement organiser has, at times, to be directive towards students, recognising, before the student, that he or she has particular needs or would blossom in particular circumstances. If the placement organiser assesses that a woman's skills and interests lie in the area of feminist social work, then that student should be encouraged in that direction. For this to occur, the placement organiser will need to have a positive approach towards feminist social work practice and a clear understanding of what is involved. In addition, students need to be paced. If necessary it could be that a student as yet unsure about her approach to social work will embark on a placement with the option of working out with the supervisor whether or not she will develop a feminist perspective, and thereby turn the placement into a feminist one.

Another area that supervisors and students felt strongly about was the staff visit. Every placement is visited by a staff member, usually about three weeks after it has begun. Four out of the ten feminist placements were scheduled to have a male staff visitor. Just as the students with male supervisors were also tolerant towards having to have a man instead of a feminist supervisor, two of these students were tolerant towards having a male staff visitor. The other two definitely disliked such an arrangement. One got round the problem when a supportive woman staff member called on her and her supervisor and they turned the visit into an official one. The other student suffered her visit but she and her supervisor found it unhelpful and irritating. All respondents agreed that every effort should be made to support feminist placements by ensuring they have if not feminist then at least women staff visitors. Again, if this is to occur, those who organise placements will need to be favourably disposed towards the feminist approach to social work. In addition, it will be necessary to ensure that women staff are available and if possible that they are knowledgeable about feminist social work theory and if not actually feminist themselves, then at least well disposed towards this approach to social work.

It was felt that a flexible approach to what could count as suitable projects or settings for feminist placements was an essential quality for the placement organiser to possess. In addition, students were particularly concerned that those who request feminist placements should receive encouragement. Many had found the time spent negotiating their placement particularly demoralising. It made them anxious. It was generally agreed that once placements were underway, and contracts had been negotiated, then course requirements gave enough latitude to enable students and supervisors to work as they thought appropriate.

Section Two: A Feminist Social Work Curriculum and its Articulation with Fieldwork Practice

On every placement, the student is expected to demonstrate how well he or she is able to link up their practice with theoretical material learned in the classroom. In the B.S.W. degree the concurrent placement is the third and last placement a student does.

It is reasonable therefore to expect that if students are encouraged or at least allowed to undertake feminist placements, they should already have had access to a course in which feminist material relevant to social work practice has been taught.

When students were asked what papers had influenced them it transpired that for many it was the sociological papers which developed a theoretical approach to structural inequalities which were most influential. Many of these papers are at present taught in the Sociology Department and would not place an emphasis on social work. Students would have liked the social work curriculum to include practical material on woman's health and development so that topics like sex-stereotyping, menstruation, marriage, sexuality, birth, menopause, consciousness-raising and self-defence could be explored. In addition respondents pointed out that the lack of women's studies on the social policy and social work curriculum was discouraging. It meant that students had constantly to argue in defence of taking up a feminist standpoint, before they ever got into their discussion topic. Not having to do this was something students in the women's refuge and women's health collective particularly valued.

The two feminist supervisors as graduates of the B.S.W. course, made some interesting points regarding feminist content and the curriculum. One felt that the course already tried to put a bit of everything into the curriculum and wondered how much more could be squeezed in. The other criticised the curriculum for not mainstreaming feminist sociological theory. She considered that instead of regarding it as an optional extra, it should take its place as part of the core curriculum.

This could mean not only introducing a women's studies type of paper into the degree, but also incorporating feminist theory into the entire curriculum. For example, feminist research would be discussed in the 76.258 research paper, and feminist sociological theory would take its place alongside Althusser, Habermas, and others in the social policy papers.

If this were so, students could be expected to be familiar with the different feminist theories, and to have thought about their

application to social work practice at least before going out on their second and third placements. This would result in students and supervisors feeling more supported in their feminist endeavours. Feminist social work would be legitimated through the university and this would assist the efforts of practitioners already in the field who try to eliminate sexist assumptions and practices in social work. Gradually, such affirmative actions will increase the pool of supervisors who can give feminist supervision to students. If it is accepted that feminist social work practice will benefit clients and that it is something women clients want, then social work educators must help by giving students an opportunity to learn how to be feminist social workers. At present that opportunity is arising mainly through the students' fieldwork experience. The social work skills which they identified as feminist were not being taught in the classroom. Skills such as learning how to work amongst women without pathologising or patronising them, and how to talk and listen to women so as to help raise their consciousness to the level where they can at least see that no one has the right to batter or abuse them. Students reported having to work at this with their supervisors. They did not appear to have found material in their social work course which helped them do this, other than their feminist analysis. This had often been studied in non-core papers, run by other departments.

In spite of these difficulties, it appears that students, together with their supervisors, had a firm grasp of the five principles of feminist practice that I outlined in Chapter Three as: Analysis; Integration; Affirmation; Empowerment; and Supervision.

Informed by these principles, students had met their learning goals and gained a degree of confidence in their practice which will stand them in good stead. The range of placements covered every mode of social work practice, from individual casework, family work, group work, residential [at the women's refuge], community work, research, policy and planning. They had drawn on psycho-analytic approaches, task-centred methods, the principles of community work, action-reflection and feminist research methods to inform their practice. Between them, they had run workshops, held

meetings, devised programmes and community information, gained funding for the distribution of pamphlets on incest and sexual abuse, and space in a college newsletter for their material. One student argued, successfully, with a hospital working party that her feminist research method should stand. Another worked intensively with her client to help her gather the courage and commitment to go to Hanmer Springs and confront her problems at the Alcohol and Drug Dependency Centre there. Her client came back from the programme later and felt it had been worthwhile.

Concluding Remarks

The variety of social work intervention outlined points to the scope of feminist student placements. The placement organiser has to know that the student who needs to further develop 'one to one' skills can do this on a feminist placement. Likewise, a feminist student who needs to work in a structured setting, to have statutory experience can gain this, always provided that she has access to feminist supervision.

What emerges from this study is the fact that women are already doing feminist social work. Many have not waited for the theory to be distilled at university and handed down to them. Instead, out of their practice, they are developing theory. The contact between social work students, woman-centred agencies and feminist supervisors is one route by which social work academic staff can keep in contact with these developments. In a sense it is these women working for women in the community, and struggling against oppression, who are the best informed about feminist social work practice. The placement organiser needs to be sensitive to this as it has implications for his or her work. Students need access to these women for their field experience. In my opinion placement organisers should aim to increase the number of feminist supervisors. Perhaps it would be useful to run a conference for feminist social workers where they can discuss social work education and their role in it.

To summarise: this research found that students doing feminist social work placements had encountered certain initial difficulties, such as communication and comprehension of what feminist

placements are and a paucity of feminist supervisors. Ways in which these problems could be avoided were addressed and have been discussed. Students reported that there was too little feminist academic material in their degree relating to social work practice. What there was tended to come too late in the course to be of use on placement. They, and their supervisors, had ideas about how this could be remedied. At present there is little structural support for feminist placements. The goodwill that a placement organiser shows in facilitating such arrangements is largely a personal matter. The placement organiser is, I suggest, in a position to argue with his or her colleagues for curriculum changes in response to the concerns which the students and supervisors in this study have raised. I believe that the issues discussed in this study give grounds for introducing feminist studies, both academic and practice-based, as part of the core-curriculum. I also hope that such feminist studies will be carried out at a stage in the programme which enables them to inform the social work theory students will carry with them to their placement.

APPENDIX ONE
SOCIAL WORK UNIT
MAY 1986

Dear

You may already know that I am enrolled as a Masters student in the Social Work Unit and that I am undertaking some research for a Thesis. In my position as Placement Co-ordinator, I have developed a great deal of interest and concern about placements. As a woman, I am particularly interested in the impact of women's issues on the social work profession and its part in our curriculum at Massey.

Therefore, combining these two areas for study, I am undertaking a content analysis of self-styled feminist placements. From this I hope to answer the questions.

1. What is a feminist placement?
2. Can we offer feminist placements at Massey Social Work Unit?

Obviously, I need your help and co-operation in undertaking this study. If you consider that you are doing a feminist placement, please could you fill in the enclosed form and return it to me.

In choosing this area for study, I hope to get some useful, up-to-date New Zealand data which will be of help both to women social workers and women clients, and I will be duly grateful for your co-operation.

Perhaps I should also clarify my role in writing this letter; I am approaching you as a fellow student, and not as a member of staff.

Yours sincerely,

MARY NASH

I am doing what I consider to be a self-styled feminist placement.

YES/NO

I would be willing to talk to you about this. YES/NO

NAME:

PHONE NO.

STUDENT PLACEMENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Section One: Assignment to the Placement

1. How did you get this placement?
2. What was the placement you wanted to do?
3. What were your expectations for this placement?
4. Did you want to do a feminist placement all along?
5. Did you have any choice as to who supervised you?
6. Would you call yourself a feminist social worker now?
7. If not, how would you describe yourself?
8. If 'yes', please describe what being a feminist social worker meant to you.
9. How have you come to this position?
 - e.g. - personal life experiences
 - previous placements
 - women's groups
 - input from Massey papers
 - other
10. Please could you explain what your feminist perspective is?

Section Two. Detailed description of placement.

Introduction - I see you were at [name agency].

1. What type of placement have you just done;
 - community
 - research
 - casework
2. Please tell me what you did - e.g.
 - set tasks
 - projects
 - one to one work
 - group work
3. What placement activity seemed most important to you?
4. Have you any newspaper cuttings, displays, reports or anything else about your placement that I can see?
5. What contact have you had with other professionals through this placement?

6. What contact have you had with women's groups?
7. What contact have you had with other community groups?
8. What contact have you had with other agencies in town or further afield?
9. What contact have you had with other feminist students?
10. Have you had contact with other groups outside your agency which you think are relevant and not so far included here?
11. What sorts of things about your placement make it feminist for you?

processes
content
supervision
other

12. Have you had a feminist placement before?
15. Have you had a feminist supervision before?
16. Do you think you can have one without the other?
17. If you have had a feminist placement before, how did it compare with this placement? [Supply cues as above.]
18. Have you had a non-feminist placement?
19. How was it/they different from this placement?

style
content
agency, etc.

20. Was your agency supportive of your placement?
21. Did the people you were working with see you as innovative?
22. Did you get any client feedback?
23. What kinds of things would you like to change in your agency or area of placement?
24. How would you go about it?

Section Three: Drawing up the Contract

1. Was your contract a group contract or was it based on one to one supervision?
2. Which ever way it was, was this what you had originally wanted?
3. What were your priorities in making your contract?
4. Did you have any difficulties in making your contract?

5. Could you describe the sorts of things you put in the contract?

special issues

style of supervision

learning goals

6. Did you ever review the contract?

7. If 'yes', why and was the review useful?

8. If 'no', do you think it might have been a useful thing to have done?

9. What was it about your contract that made it feminist?

10. May I look at your contract and use it as data?

11. If you had a previous feminist placement, how did that contract compare with this one as regards feminist perspective?

12. If you have had non-feminist placements, how were those contracts different from this one?

Section Four: Staff Visits

1. Was the staff visitor a woman?

2. [If 'yes'] Was she sympathetic to feminism?

2. [If 'no'] Was it difficult having a male visitor given that you were doing a feminist placement?

2a. [If 'yes'] What sort of things were difficult?

3. Did you raise any issues during the staff visit?

4. [If 'yes'] What were they?

5. Was the visit helpful/ Was the visit useful in any way?

6. May I look at your visitor's report and use it as data?

Section Five. Supervision

1. What sort of supervision did you have on this placement?

2. Was supervision different this time from previous placements? If so in what ways? (e.g. style).

3. What do you see as the essential ingredients of feminist supervision?

4. How do you compare feminist supervision with non-feminist supervision?

advantages

limitations, etc.

5. What did you talk about in supervision?

6. Did you find your supervision was helpful?
7. Did you use supervision for support?
8. Did you use supervision for learning?
9. What other uses did you make of supervision?
10. How did you deal with the power/authority that supervisors have over students?
11. Is feminist supervision really possible within the system?
 - Massey BSW degree system
 - Social Work agency system
12. Without feminist supervision is it possible to do a feminist placement?

Section Six. Assessment.

1. Please describe how you and your supervisor did your assessment?
 - group assessment with supervisor equal role
 - individual assessment with supervisor equal
2. Was this different from previous placements? If so, how?
3. Did you find the process of assessment helpful? If so please describe how?
4. If you did not find the assessment process helpful please explain why not.
5. Do you have any strong feeling about assessment in a feminist setting? If so, please describe.
6. What do you see as your personal achievements in this placement?
 - areas, etc. feminist approaches

Section Seven: Theory and Practice

1. What papers have you drawn on at Massey to develop your interest in feminism and the women's movement?
 - paper titles/no.s
2. Please tell me in what way each paper was useful in developing your feminist perspective.

3. Going back to what you said about your development as a feminist social worker, what sorts of links have you been making between theory and practice?

Let's look at social work theories first - e.g.:

human development
therapies/family work
casework
other

4. What theories have you consciously drawn on during your placement?

5. Can you give me an example in which you have used a particular theory in practice?

6. Have you had problems integrating a feminist approach to social work with your work on placement?

7. Could you give examples to illustrate your answer?

8. I'd like to talk about the B.S.W. curriculum now. How does your feminist perspective affect the way you have experienced the B.S.W. curriculum?

The way it has been taught

What you've been taught, e.g.

Material about women and social policy

Women as welfare service providers/consumers

Interviewing women

Skills and intervention strategies

9. What theories of normality have been presented to you?

Erikson

Human Growth and Development

Successful outcomes in women returning to family

10. Have you had sufficient input about women and sexuality?

childbirth, menstruation, lesbianism, incest, rape

11. Would you have found more information about these areas useful?

Please elaborate

Section Seven: Review

1. Looking back, do you wish you'd done anything differently on this placement?

supervision styles, contract, projects, process

2. Did you learn what you'd hoped to learn from the placement?

3. Do you feel the placement has affected your feminist perspective? If so please describe how.

4. What sort of advice would you give a student wanting to do a feminist placement?

5. What has this placement shown you about the position of women in society today?

6. Do you see contradictions in the idea of a Professional feminist social worker?

7. If 'yes', please give examples.

8. Do you want to go on being a feminist social worker?

9. Do you think it will be difficult? Why/Why not?

10. What strategies are you developing to help yourself? - to maintain a feminist perspective?

11. What area/s would you like to work in when you graduate?

APPENDIX TWO: SUPERVISOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SUPERVISOR TO ACCOMPANY INTERVIEW

1. Name.
2. Agency.
3. Position.
4. Name of student(s) supervised on this placement:
5. Do you regard this as a feminist placement.
6. What style of supervision did you adopt
e.g. feminist/ non-sexist/ other.
7. Have you supervised a feminist placement before this one?
8. Are you familiar with the Massey Programme?
9. Please briefly describe student placement project (3).

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Part One; Feminist Perspective and Origin of Placement

1. Your student has identified this placement as a feminist one. Do you agree?
2. What has the student been doing on this placement?
3. Do you regard yourself as a feminist social worker?
[If 'yes' go to 4 and 5, if 'no' or supervisor is male go to 5a - 5c.]
4. Please tell what this means to you.
5. How did you come to be a feminist social worker?
personal life experiences
previous work experiences
membership of women's groups
input from professional courses
other
- 5a. Was this an area of difficulty for you - in what ways? [If 'yes' go to 5b, if 'no' go to 5c if supervisor is male, go to 6 if supervisor is female.]
- 5b. How did you work round these difficulties?
- 5c. [Ask all male supervisors.] How did the fact that the student had a male supervisor affect the placement?
6. Have you ever supervised a feminist placement before?
7. How did you come to be involved in this placement?

8. Did you devise the project?
9. Did the student approach you to be her supervisor?
10. Did Massey approach you to be the student's supervisor?
11. Was this placement identified by all concerned as a feminist one from the outset?
12. Can you suggest better ways to set up feminist placements?

Part Two: Placement Details

1. You've already told me what sort of placement the student was doing. Could you illustrate this by telling me about something in particular that she did which highlights her work?
2. What contacts were made with other professionals?
 - with other professionals?
 - with community groups?
 - with other agencies?
 - with other feminists?
 - with any others?
3. Did you have any support/ supervision going for you during this placement?
4. Can you identify what sorts of things have made this a feminist placement for the student?
 - content
 - process
 - supervision
 - other
5. Have you any newspaper cuttings, displays, reports or anything else about the placement that I could look at?
6. If you have supervised feminist placements before, how has this one compared with the others?
 - See question 4.
7. Have you supervised non-feminist placements before? [If 'yes' go 8.]
8. Could you tell me how they have differed from this one?

9. What would you regard as the key ingredient for a feminist placement?

- project
- supervisory style
- other

10. Did the student's agency lend itself to the expression of a feminist style of social work? [If 'no', go to 11.]

- accommodation
- resources
- hours

11. Could you describe what the student's relation to the agency was like - how did this affect the agency?

12. Can you tell me whether the student's clients noticed that the student was working with a feminist perspective?

13. What sort of client feedback did you and/or the student get?

14. Has the student made any suggestions as to how the agency policy/function could be more feminist/ non-sexist?

Section Three: The Contract

1. How was your contract with the student negotiated?
2. Was the contract a group one or based on one to one supervision?
3. What were your priorities in drawing it up?
4. What use did you make of the contract?
5. Was it helpful?
6. Could it have been more helpful/ useful - how?
7. In what way would you regard the contract as a feminist one?
8. How did it compare with previous feminist and non-feminist contracts you have negotiated with students?
9. May I use the contract as data?
10. Looking back at the placement, did it match up to your expectations as expressed in the contract?

Section Five: Supervision

1. How do you organise and plan supervision sessions?
2. What did you talk about in supervision?
3. What do you consider the essential ingredients of feminist supervision?

4. [For non-feminist supervisors.] How did you and the student approach supervision given that she was doing a feminist placement? Did you have to adopt your usual style? If so in what ways?

5. What use did your student(s) make of supervision?

education

support

guidance

other

6. How did you handle the issues of authority/ power and accountability on this placement?

7. Can one have a feminist placement without feminist supervision?

8. Were you aware of any advantages, strengths in supervision that related specifically to its feminist style?

9. Is feminist supervision really possible within the system?

Massey B.S.W. degree

Social Work Agency

Section Six: Assessment

1. Please describe how you and your student(s) did the assessment?

group assessment with supervisor having equal vote

individual assessment with equal supervisor

other

2. Is this your usual method?

3. If so, why?

4. If not, why the change?

5. Was the process of assessment useful?

6. How did it fit into a feminist context?

7. If you did not find assessment useful in this placement, please explain why?

8. What would you say were the students personal achievements in this placement?

9. What did the student learn on this placement?

- skills
- intervention techniques
- groupwork
- net-working
- confidence in certain areas
- feminism

Section Seven: Theory and Practice

1. What papers have your students drawn on at Massey to develop their interest in feminism and the women's movement?

2. Going back to what they said about their development as a feminist social worker, what sorts of links have they been making between theory and practice?

- human development
- therapies/family work
- casework
- other

3. What theories has your student been consciously drawing on during placement?

4. Can you give me an example in what your student has used as a particular theory in practice?

5. Has your student found it difficult to make links between theory and practice?

6. If 'yes' - please describe how this has worked for her?

7. If 'no' - why do you think it was not helpful?

8. Please tell me what you think of the Massey B.S.W. curriculum in relation to feminist issues?

- how it is taught
- skills and intervention strategies
- content on women/ social policy/ welfare

9. What theories of normality has your student encountered?

10. Do you consider these up to date?

- stereotyped
- sex-stereotyped
- other

Schedule of Papers for the BSW degree

* = Not offered in 1987

E = Also available extramurally

C = Corequisite

P = Prerequisite

† = Appropriate courses from other subject areas may be accepted with approval of the Head of Department, in place of the prescribed prerequisites. Not all 300-level papers may be available each year. Check with Department before enrolling.

‡ = This paper has an interdisciplinary perspective. Intending students who lack the prerequisite 76.201 should consult with the Head of Department.

Part One (seven papers required)

Requirements

(a) Compulsory (six papers)

46.101	Introductory Social Anthropology (E)
75.101	Individual and Social Psychology (E)
76.101	Introductory Sociology (E)
76.102	New Zealand Society (E)
76.151	Community Development, Welfare and Social Work (E)
77.130	Introductory Social Economics †

(b) Optional (one paper)

36.102	Human Development (E)
75.102	General and Applied Psychology (E)

Part Two (eight papers required)

(a) Compulsory (five papers)

76.205	Modern Social Problems (E)	P 76.101, C/P 76.151
76.251	Social Work in a Multi Cultural Society	C/P 76.151
76.255	Field Work Practice I (E)	
76.258	Social Welfare Planning and Research (E)	C/P 76.151
76.262	Law, Welfare and the Social Services (E)	C/P 76.151 / P 76.101

APPENDIX THREE(b) *Optional (two papers)*

14.221	Administrative and Behavioural Processes (E))	
14.226	Personnel Management (E)	)	Pass in Part I
14.227	Industrial Relations (E))	
34.103	Critical Thinking (E))	
34.211	Metaphysics I)	
34.213	Ethics I (E)	)	Pass in Part I
34.224	Philosophy of Social Science)	
36.202	Educational Psychology (E)	)	P 36.102
44.221	Development Issues and the Third World (E))	
46.102	Introductory Ethnography (E))	
46.201	Core Anthropology (E)	)	P 46.101 or 46.102
46.205	Kinship and Marriage	)	P 46.101 or 46.102 or an approved alternative
48.106	New Zealand Society and Culture (E))	
48.204	Early New Zealand History (E)	)	Pass in Part I
48.206	Race Relations: Australia and NZ (E)	)	Pass in Part I
60.111	Introductory Statistics (E))	
64.131	Language and Communication (E))	
75.201	Social Psychology and Personality (E)	)	Any 3 100-level papers
75.202	Cognitive and Behavioural Psychology (E)	)	P 75.101
75.203	Introduction to Psychological Research	)	P 75.101 or 102
75.204	Industrial and Organizational Psychology (E)	)	P any 100-level paper
75.205	Behavioural Psychology	)	P 75.102
76.201	Sociological Theory (E))	
• 76.203	Social Structures in the Modern World)	
76.204	Small Groups (E))	
• 76.207	Marriage and Family	)	P 76.101
• 76.209	Sociology of Community (E))	

APPENDIX THREE

76.210	Media, Cluture, Society)	
76.211	Women in Society (E))	
76.212	Structural Inequality)	
77.205	Economic Policy and Government (E)		P 77.130

(c) *Elective (one paper)*

Which may be a further paper from (b) above or from the list of papers in BA, BBS, BEd, and BSc degrees.

Part Three (eight papers required)(a) *Compulsory (six papers)*

36.210	Advanced Human Development I		P 36.102
or 75.305	Issues in Developmental Psychology (E)		P75.201 o4 75.101 or 75.203 or Part Two or 76.258'
76.351	Integrated Practice in Wel- fare and Development		P 76.251
76.355	Field Work Practice II		P 76.255, C 76.351
76.357	Professional and Organisa- tional Issues in Social Work (E)		P 76.251, 76.255
76.358	Intervention, Assessment and Change		P 76.251
76.362	Social Policy (E)		P 76.262

(b) *Optional (one paper)*

14.326	Contemporary and Emer- gent Practices in Per- sonnel Management (E)		P 14.226, P 14.227
14.327	Current Theory and Prac- tice in Industrial Relations (E)		P 14.227
36.337	Special Education (E)		P 36.102 and Part Two
41.101	Introduction to Food and Nutrition		
46.213	Maori Society: The Tribal Group		P 46.101
46.304	Ethnicity and Race)	
46.305	Popular Movements	)	P or C 46.102, and
46.309	Regional Ethnography	)	any of 204-8, 213
46.310	Applied Anthropology)	

APPENDIX THREE

64.232	Language Problems in Society (E)	
68.203	Human Resources in Health Care (E)	P 75.101 and 76.101
75.301	Community and Group Psychology (E)	P 75.201 ¹
75.302	Abnormal and Therapeutic Psychology (E)	P 75.203 or 76.258 ¹
76.301	Advanced Sociological Theory (E)	P 76.201
76.302	Techniques of Social Investigation (E)	P 76.202 or 76.258
76.303	Social Change and Politics in NZ Society (E)	P 76.201 or 205 or 212
76.304	Sociology of Administration	P 76.201 or 204
76.305	Crime and Society	P 76.205
76.310	Race and Ethnic Relations (E)	P 76.205 or 212
‡ 76.312	The Arts in New Zealand	P 76.201
76.365	Special Topic	P 76.251

(c) *Elective (one paper)*

Which may be a further paper from (b) or from the list of papers in BA, BBS, BEd and BSc degrees.

Such other papers, particularly language subjects from the BA (Humanities) list as may be approved by the Head of Department may also be taken.

Part Four (five papers required)

Compulsory (five papers)

76.451	Social Work Fields of Practice	Pass in Part Three
76.455	Field Work Practice III	P 76.351
76.457	Professional Development and Ethical Issues	P 76.355, P 76.357
76.458	Social Service Management	P 76.358
76.462	Social Development and Social Planning	P 76.362

FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR FEMINIST SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

PRINCIPLES	MEANING	EXAMPLES OF INTERVENTION
ANALYSIS	Feminist theoretical understanding and critical appreciation of social institutions structural inequality, the production and distribution of resources and how these affect groups and individuals in our society.	Research. Theoretical development. Social policy development. Submission writing. Education, discussion.
INTEGRATION	Events/people are seen in a wholistic context. The personal and the political are linked to allow the social as well as the psychological aspect of a client situation to be seen. Women identify with women.	Applied analysis. Avoidance of deficit practice models, blaming the victim. Integrated model of social work practice. Women working with women for women.
AFFIRMATION	Validation of women's experience of life as deserving of attention; woman has been object too long - now it is time for her to be the subject for a change, and not just the 'other'.	Consciousness-raising. Assertiveness training, self-defence, Women's Collectives, Refuge, Health, Rape Crisis. Working with women's strengths.
EMPOWERMENT	Recognition of women's oppression and the importance of giving women the power we should have. Helping women to gain confidence and be independent.	Demystification of helping processes, encouraging women's self-help organisation and the principle of client self-determination. Liberating women from all forms of oppression in our daily lives, as well as structurally.
SUPERVISION	Strategy for practitioner survival in which like-minded women support each other in their work for/with women. This occurs in a consultative and trusting environment where power and knowledge can be shared.	Group supervision. Peer supervision. Using a consultative egalitarian approach.

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