Red Biddies, Wailing Banshees, and Rebel Sisters: Reading Feminist Discourses, Women's Movements, and Alternative Periodicals in the Republic of Ireland, 1950-1980

by

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Abstract

In the Republic of Ireland, the years between 1950 and 1980 are often characterized by national and postcolonial historiographies as culturally and politically inert – if not limited – in terms of women's social and cultural output. Not unlike other narratives of feminist and women's histories, studies of this era tend to focus on either the institutional and social conservatism of the Irish state that curtailed women's social lives until the economic boom in the early 1990s, or the contentious politics of the short-lived radical feminist branch of the mid-century Irish women's liberation movement. The reality of women's activism during this period of modernization, like nationalism before it, was that it was a dynamic process of conformity, resistance, and dissent nurtured by new and adapted spaces of feminist criticism and cultural critique. In this alternative reading of women's cultural history, I argue that the intersection between literary censorship laws, state modernization, and media developments enabled print media to reveal itself as a formative site for women's cultural intervention. Throughout my chapters, I examine how feminism unfolded on the printed page of the periodical press, and discern the material and imaginative processes through which the women's movement negotiated the competing demands of state-driven values and social movement actors, paying particular attention to the emergent discourse of autonomy. This critical intervention into discussions of Irish feminism is situated at the junctures of alternative print culture, social movement dynamics, sociological modernity, and feminist history, and argues for a sociospatial reading of feminist discursive practices. In reading materials held in the Róisín Conroy/Attic Press Collection at Boole Library in University College Cork, I hope this study continues to build on the research efforts of Irish feminist and media scholars and highlights the continuing need for work on feminist archives and women's social movements.

Dedication

To feminists everywhere.

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Every space of this dissertation is marked by the personal and professional relationships that have guided, supported, and encouraged its manifestation, and I would like to take this opportunity to render visible those many people behind the pages.

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Introduction

At the moment there are many demands being made on feminists e.g. support for the women in Armagh prison, the recognition of class differences within the movement, the envolement [sic] of men in the struggle for human liberation. Such topics have produced tensions within the collective. We feel the need to go back to basics, thus we asked some members to state 'what is feminism' in their view…We hope that *Wicca* will be able to be a forum where women can discuss such topics. – Wicca Collective. "Editorial." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 12, 1980; (BL/F/AP/1498/14, Attic Press Archive)

The year 1980 is a point of critical mass for feminism in the Republic of Ireland. The opening editorial of the twelfth issue of the monthly feminist magazine *Wicca* identifies a stage of Irish feminist theory and praxis beyond the consciousness-raising essential to the politics of second-wave feminism, which is later reiterated in the last article of the same issue, "Second Phase?": "Feminism in Ireland has reached the stage of critical mass where we look around and find that where we thought we were few in fact we are many" (BL/F/AP/1498/14, Attic Press Archive). According to Linda Connolly, the mainstreaming of the women's movement from the 1960s through the 1970s enabled feminism to become "an accepted subject of public discourse and actor in political society" by the 1980s (*Devolution* 156). While recent studies of the mainstream women's movement have begun to discern the ways in which feminism has effected cultural transformation in Ireland, few have examined the dynamism of feminist ideology within the movement or its unfolding through print. At this time, Irish feminist theory and praxis cannot be demarked along neat categorical lines, as it often is in retrospective analyses of feminist discourse. An examination of the documents produced by Irish women throughout the latter half of the twentieth century reveals an indefinite and shifting understanding of a feminist politics of difference. Within the ideological landscape of feminist politics, as it emerges in print, the uneasy relationship between categories such as feminist and non-feminist, liberal and radical, nationalist and non-nationalist emerges as not only salient to

the discourse itself, but also is key to its political efficacy, as different kinds of subjectivities

are being negotiated amidst shifting socio-political historical circumstances and opportunities.

Although feminism was taken up by political and state actors throughout the 1960s and 1970s, I

suggest that within the women's movement this identification of a stage beyond the

politicization and integration of a feminist discourse into mainstream Irish society is also

underwritten by a sense of failure or loss felt on behalf of feminists; loss of ideological unity,

loss of structural collectivity, but more importantly, loss of autonomy.[1] The rapid development

and advancement of the second phase of the Irish women's movement from the 1960s[2] to 1979

is marked by a discourse and a process of autonomy, particularly in the proliferation of radical,

although transient, feminist organizations in the women's liberation sector. It is my contention

that this discourse of autonomy is mobilized in and through women's alternative print, thereby

organizing the "movement" of women within the Irish women's movement; and it is this

originating discourse and praxis of feminist autonomy that is the focus of this dissertation.

I begin here with a brief overview of the emergence of a new phase of the collective Irish

feminist movement and its relationship to cultural production in the middle of the twentieth

century in order to contextualize the intersections between social change and literary forms that

are intricately related at this period in Irish history. Two signally important events occur, at the

state level, in the early 1970s that significantly orient the re-emergence of the Irish women's

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[1] My claim here is not intended as an evaluative judgment regarding the efficacy of the women's movement, but rather a characterization of the discursive trend in women's periodicals, at this time, concerning the status of autonomy.

[2] Post-independence, Connolly combats the before-and-after narrative of the history of Irish feminism in the middle of the 20th century by noting two strands of feminist activity that persisted throughout the De Valera years and, ultimately, enabled women's broad-based mobilization from the late 1960s forward: "First, a small, elite-sustained movement base was maintained by feminist activists in the post-Independence period who, although constrained by the patriarchal and conservative agenda of the emerging State, adapted structures networks and strategies in an innovative fashion…Secondly, a parallel network of women's groups, mainly engaged in production and social services, mobilized in this period, which is a neglected aspect of the history of the women's movement" (*Devolution* 58).

movement. In 1970, the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, established the First Commission on the Status of Women in Ireland (CSW), which was formerly an *ad hoc* committee composed of the Irish Housewives Association and Association of Business and Professional Women. Then, in 1972, the CSW produced its first *Report to the Minister for Finance,* which outlined the status of women in the Irish economy and advised specific recommendations to address these systemic inequalities, particularly in the workplace. These important developments at the level of state politics can be productively read as responsive to important developments in Irish feminist praxis in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Beginning with both the establishment of the CSW and the emergence of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement (IWLM) in 1970,[3] the Irish women's movement witnessed the development of two parallel and divergent, yet eventually overlapping, branches: the traditionally liberal, reformist, and mainstream women's rights sector and the grassroots-oriented, radical, and autonomous women's liberation sector, respectively (see Connolly *Devolution* 91-97). The reformist women's rights groups, such as Action, Information, Motivation (AIM), Cherish, Women's Political Association (WPA), and the CSW focused on working through official, conventional means to engage state institutions and enact legislative change, and this material and its emergence and significance will be discussed further in the second chapter. While the women's liberation side of the women's movement initially mobilized around the issues set forth by the CSW and the Report on the First Commission on the Status of Women (Connolly *Devolution* 115), they diversified their tactics – particularly the use of direct confrontational action – and organized around the need for an autonomous women's movement. Mary McAuliffe correctly adduces in this history a

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[3] The Irish Women's Liberation Movement (IWLM) was one of the first radical feminist groups in the Republic to gain public attention during the 1960s for its activism. Many sources cite the significant role of the IWLM in the women's liberation movement in Ireland, particularly for its introduction of consciousness-raising and direct action tactics. They were the prominent face of the women's movement until their dissolution in 1972.

generational divide as part of the reason for the development of the women's liberation sector: "Although the Council for the Status of Women (CSW) was gaining some traction with government to implement reforms in Ireland, some viewed the CSW and other longstanding women's groups as part of a traditional mainstream, a mainstream that did not speak about issues of real concern to younger women" ("Change" 86). However, recent historical research has suggested that radical feminist activism during the early years of this period was not invested solely in direct confrontation with the state, but also in cultural critique (Meaney "Opposition" 978), particularly through print. The intersection between literary censorship laws, modernization, and media developments enabled mass media, particularly the mainstream press, to reveal itself as a formative site for women's cultural intervention in Ireland.

"Women First": Women's Pages and the Mainstream Press

A problem women in the women's movement must face again and again is that of the media – and how can we gain control to use it to our advantage. – "Shoulder to Shoulder." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 6, c.1976-7, p. 12; (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive)

Ireland's mediasphere, formed through the effects of state modernization as influenced by global capitalism and consumerism, emerged as a space where cultural criticism took shape. Starting in the 1960s, aided by media reforms[4] and headed by a troop of female journalists, mainstream and widely circulating publications such as *The Bell,*[5] *Irish Press, Irish Independent,* and the *Irish Times*[6] began to seriously investigate the social problems and

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[4] In 1960, Taoiseach Sean Lemass adopted the First Programme for Economic Expansion, which included, amongst other elements, a relaxation of protectionism and censorship laws, as well as a series of media reforms.

[5] Gerardine Meaney, Christopher Morash, and Clair Wills have all pointed to Sean O'Faolain's liberal literary periodical *The Bell* as harboring "the spirit of protest and dissent" and invigorating a dynamic print culture in the early decades of the Republic (Wills "Contemporary" 1127).

[6] *The Irish Press* (1931-1995) was a national daily broadsheet. Founded by Éamon de Valera, the *Press* reached a readership of 100,000 at its height, and supported Fianna Fáil and republican nationalist values until its final publication. Like the *Press, Irish Independent* (1905-now) is a conservative, Catholic, nationalist daily compact with a readership of between 100,000-165,000. In contrast to the *Press* and

internal conflicts of Irish society, particularly at the level of gender. Clair Wills identifies this

period as the historical point of origin for many of the developments in Irish women's cultural

production, which also fundamentally contributed to the social and cultural reformation of

modern Ireland ("Contemporary" 1124).[7] The fact that seven female journalists contributed to

the formation of the Irish Women's Liberation Movement (IWLM), including Mary Anderson,

Nuala Fennell, Mary Kenny, June Levine, Mary Maher, Nell McCafferty, and Mary

McCuthcheon, many of whom were also essential to the formation of the germinal Irish

Women United (IWU) in 1975, points to the significant role of the media in bringing women's

concerns to the forefront of the public sphere as well as women's significant role within mass

media. Irish Women United (IWU) was a radical feminist organization that formed in 1975,

continuing and expanding upon the demands of their predecessor, IWLM. IWU gained

significant media attention for their publically organized protest events, and their self-published

periodical, *Banshee,* will play a pivotal role throughout this study. Importantly, one of the

central developments in the mobilization of feminist politics in public and political spheres was

the appointment of young female (and feminist) editors to the women's pages of the national

daily newspapers during the late 1960s.

　　According to Caitriona Clear, the mediasphere of the Republic in the 1950s and 1960s

was characterized by "a native Irish television service run by the same authority as the radio,

and by four daily national newspapers, two Sunday papers, three evening papers and a vibrant

Independent, the *Times* became aligned with Protestant and unionist middle-class values with a slightly smaller readership than its competitor, the *Independent.*

[7] Christopher Morash aptly points to evidence of a transformative shift in Irish society: "If the argumentative tone of news and current affairs were the most visible signs of a different kind of public sphere emerging in Ireland in the 1960s, the fact that controversy could spring up in more unlikely television genres is perhaps indicative that this was part of a much wider change taking place in Irish society of the time" (*History* 178). For example, social documentaries such as "Open Port" (1968), which detailed the state of prostitution in Cork, brought previously "invisible" issues into social visibility. Similarly, in 1971 IWLM used Gay Byrne's revolutionary *Late, Late Show* as a platform to raise the national social-consciousness on women's affairs.

provincial press" (*Voices* 8). In 1967, *The Irish Times*'s editor Donal Foley first suggested

moving women's journalism out of the margins of columns dedicated to cooking, cleaning, and

consuming and into a separate and distinct page wholly dedicated to news for, by, and about

women and their lives; a page that involved "serious articles, scathing social attacks and biting

satire" about everything from the exploitation of factory girls to access to contraception (Maher

"Vengeance" 12).[8] In *The Irish Times: A History,* Mark O'Brien indicates that while journalists

such as Eileen O'Brien in her column "A Social Sort of Column," and occasional columns such

as "An Irishwoman's Diary," attempted to tackle social issues pertinent to women in the 1950s

and 1960s, women's journalism had been, generally, "confined to columns such as 'Around the

Shops,' 'Good Food, ' and 'Home Dressmaking'" until the occurrence of the women's page

(*Times* 148). Although initially resistant to the idea of a women's page, Mary Maher became

the first editor of *Women First* in 1967 and was succeeded by Maeve Binchy from 1968 to

1972 and Christina Murphy from 1972 to 1974. As O'Brien indicates, *The Times'* page was a

first for Irish journalism and it was not long before the other national dailies followed suit

within the same year (*Times* 170). The *Irish Independent* soon established its own women's

page – "Independent Women" – appointing Mary McCutcheon as editor, while Mary Kenny

took lead on the Women's Page of the *Irish Press.* Regional dailies also followed suit,

including *The Cork Examiner*'s "Woman's World" and *Kerryman*'s "Women's Chat." These

pages came to include issues relevant to the private lives of Irish women, developing

consciousness and awareness, in a mainstream forum. The statement from *Banshee* at the start

of this section indicates that the women journalists of the national dailies sought to "gain

control" of the media and use it to their advantage. Mass media was critical to the advancement

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[8] I pay attention to *The Irish Times* in this section, in particular, because, as Connolly suggests, *The Irish Times* was one of the key resources utilized by IWLM activists "to secure direct coverage of the movement's agenda, events and strategies" (*Devolution* 125).

of the radical sector of the autonomous women's movement, not only as "a vital resource in

disseminating radical feminist ideas," but also "in animating the direct action of women's

liberation organizations in the public sphere" (Connolly *Devolution* 125); Elgy Gillespie

(2003), Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole (2005), Mark O'Brien (2008), and Anne O'Brien

(2016) retrace this important relationship between the women's movement and mass print

media in their respective works.[9] In her account of women's journalism in the 1970s, Anne

O'Brien draws significant connections between the infusion of these feminist perspectives in

Irish print media and the reframing of women in Irish society more broadly:

> Effectively, the women writers used their positions as journalists to very
> intentionally further the cause of the IWLM, which coincided with and cross
> pollinated the women's feminist campaign to change the nature of journalistic
> output…A major contribution of women journalists in Ireland in the 1970s in the
> national paper's women's pages was that they made women's liberation explicitly
> a subject of public discourse. ("fine" 51)

The women's page became a platform for the campaigns, meetings, and agendas of IWLM, in

particular, functioning as a space for information and advocacy, as well as directing calls to

action. According to O'Brien, *The Irish Press, The Irish Independent,* and *The Irish Times*

would often publish articles on women's liberation issues simultaneously, which was "a direct

result of the interactions, networks, co-operation and concerted effort of the three editors of the

women's pages" ("fine" 51). This collaborative, networking approach on the part of Kenny,

McCutcheon, and Maher broke with hierarchical models of newspaper production at the time,

and predated the collective, less hierarchical processes of production in the women's press, an

approach I further unpack in the second chapter of this dissertation. Ultimately, the editors and

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[9] It is important to note that in my own archival research at the University College Cork's Boole Library, I
discovered a significant amount of clippings from the daily women's pages in the Attic Press Archive,
which were contributed by Róisín Conroy, who was not only one of the co-founders of Attic Press, but also
a contributor to *Wicca* and member of IWU. The clipped articles are often accompanied by handwritten
notes, responses, and other attached articles, indicating Conroy's active engagement with the medium.

contributors used the space of the women's page to reimagine the relationship between their

female readership and the categorization of a "woman's issue," while also transforming the

historical relationship between gender and the editorial and operational practices of

mainstream, print media production.

While Maher characterized the Irish daily women's pages as an eventual "forum" for the

incipient Women's Liberation Movement ("Vengeance" 12),[10] *Women First* went mainstream

by 1974. In her final editorial as the women's page editor of *The Irish Times*, Christina Murphy

defined the dissolution of *Women First* as a victory for the women's movement, as its

conclusion signified the movement of "women's affairs" out of the margins and into the

quotidian pages of the press:

> Women's liberation has grown from a frowned-on suspect fringe into an important and
> multi-pronged lobby and, in the process, has pushed 'women's affairs' out of the cosy
> confines of the woman's page and onto the front pages of the newspapers where it
> belongs…But *Women First* goes from today and walks out into the general news
> pages to take its chances with the rest of society. I'm sure its readers will follow it.
> ("Pastures" 6)

In Murphy's opinion, mainstreaming was the end goal of feminism; however, not all of the

former women's page readers liked the chances *Women First* stood among the pages of the

general news in the national dailies. Notably, prior to her agreement to head *Women First,*

Maher was opposed to the segmenting of the *Times* along the lines of gender because, in her

experience, "women's pages were designed by male editors with the advertising department,

for housewives whom they imagined had only one interest: to buy things to bring home"

("Vengeance" 11). Although Maher's critique does not take into account issues such as the

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[10] O'Brien highlights the interactive nature of the women's page within the mainstream press and the
consciousness-raising work of the pages' editors: "Predictably, the letters of complaint flooded their desks
throughout the decade. Nonetheless, the work of these journalists meant that Irish women were given the
forum and words with which to begin debates about the nature and extent of their oppression in society"
("fine" 42).

various ways in which readers consumed women's pages or the strategic use of women's

pages, historically, by groups such as the suffragettes during the first wave of the Western

women's movement,[11] it does point to the way in which newspapers adopted textual,

commercial, and editorial features of traditional women's magazines in an attempt to reach an

imagined female readership throughout the first half of the twentieth century. While it is true

that the mainstream press increased their coverage of feminist and women's issues through

both the general news[12] and the women's pages during this period, Irish feminists also "soon

recognized the need to publish their material in magazines and newspapers of their own

making, which were not driven by commercial or other mainstream interests" (Connolly and

O'Toole *Documenting* 126). At the same time as the women's pages integrated into the

mainstream print press, a wide range of radical feminist and feminist-leaning publications

emerged, which acted as sites of feminine collectivity beyond the reaches of state regulation,

alongside, in addition to, and, often, counter to, mainstream representations.

This profusion of short-lived and long-term feminist periodicals, I suggest, is not only

reflective of the proliferation of diverse radical women's groups throughout the 1960s and

1970s, but also a reaction to the partial subsuming of women's liberation into commercially-

driven mediums. For example, even O'Brien notes that while editors such as Donal Foley were

supportive of the women journalists they hired at the *Times* and *Press,* they also knew that

"women's liberation would sell papers and having young feminist women editing the women's

pages was an obvious asset" ("fine" 47). Hiring female editors was not simply a decision based

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[11] For example, Fiona Hackney discusses some of the "social service goals" of advertising in women's magazines during the British suffrage movement, in which advertising could be strategically used to educate and liberate women ("Living"); an issue I will theorize further in Chapter Two.

[12] For example, in UCD's student feminist zine, *Bread and Roses,* the editors inform their readers that meetings for groups like IWU can be found in the "What's On" column in *The Irish Times.* For further information, see "Is There Life After UCD?" in *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 6, c.1977, p.14; (BL/F/AP/1517/6, Attic Press Archive).

on promoting women's greater representation in journalism; it was also based on a business

model where feminism sold. The radical branch of women's liberation read this economic

imperative as a coopting or embedding of feminism within liberal, as well as patriarchal,[13]

structures of determination, as is evident in *Bread and Roses'*s critique of *Women First* editor

Christina Murphy, herself:

> Having listened to Christina Murphy it is not difficult to see how she became
> Women's Editor of the *Irish Times*! She successfully strikes a delicate balance
> between being patronizing towards those with a serious commitment to the women's
> movement while maintaining a safe distance, all in the same breadth, by non-
> commitment to any except the most liberal-sounding ideas. (BL/F/AP/1517/3, Attic
> Press Archive)[14]

While Louthe's comment speaks to the liberation sector's deeper critique of reformist

objectives within the women's rights sector, it also seems to identify the "delicate balance"

required to deliver women's liberation to readers or consumers of mass print. Louthe's

chastisement of Murphy suggests that radical feminists perceived working within conventional

means or state institutions, such as commercial media, as simply paying "lip service" to

women's liberation, thereby highlighting the parameters of a burgeoning discourse of

autonomous feminism. While mainstream feminist journalists were models and forbearers of

cultural critique, both at the level of form and content, they also became the subjects of cultural

critique in the feminist press. Consequently, feminist periodicals of the alternative press

engaged in a dynamic relationship with mass print media. Many alternative periodicals

included serial columns featuring excerpts of problematic mainstream or commercial media

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[13] While liberalism and patriarchy are distinct but slightly overlapping conditions, Louthe's comment points to the specific way in which feminism had become coopted by liberalism under specific hetero-patriarchal state structures. Although liberalism is the specific manifestation that patriarchal values take at the time of these periodicals, liberalism is not mutually exclusive with feminism. One of the central tensions that will continue to occupy the interests of the women's movement in the Republic is the place of liberalism within feminist ideology and praxis.

[14] Louthe, Carol. "Lip Service or Liberation." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 4, c.1975-6, p. 8.

representations of women, women's issues, and the women's movement. The University

College Dublin student magazine *Bread and Roses* included a recurring column entitled "The

One's That Got Away" and Irish Women United's journal, *Banshee,* integrated a serial column

called "Rumblings," both of which highlighted sexist and misogynistic segments from RTÉ,

Irish Times, Newsweek, Reader's Digest, Irish Independent,[15] along with other commercial,

national, and regional media forums. As the *Banshee* collective declared in its fifth editorial,

"We do not want more women's pages and women's hours, but some real, full-blooded

reporting of women and their lives" (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive). At this historical

conjuncture, Irish feminists clearly needed a communicative form to mediate their demands,

actions, and identities; a form wholly controlled by the women who were producing and

reading it.

   This real, full-blooded reporting of women emerged in the form of single-issue

pamphlets, organization newsletters, newspapers, magazines, journals, and booklists, as well as

conference papers, charters, manifestos, reports, and books throughout the 1960s and 1970s,

including, but not limited to, the following: *Anarchist Feminist Newsletter* (Dublin, 1977),

Anima Rising (Galway Women's Group, 1978)*, Aware* (UCC, c.1975), *Banshee* (IWU, 1976),

Bread and Roses, UCD, c.1975), *Elektra* (TCD, 1980), *Fownes Street Journal* (Fownes Street

Group, 1972), *Liberty* (ITGWU), *Lilith* (Dublin, c.1973), *Markievicz Women's Movement*

(UCC, c.1971), *Rebel Sister* (Dublin, c.1976), *Scarlet Woman* (IWU, 1975), *Status* (Dublin,

1981), *Succubus* (Sutton Branch of IWLM, c.1971), *Wicca* (Dublin, 1978), *Wimmin* (Wimmin

Collective, 1981) *Woman-Worker* (Dublin Branch of IWU, c.1970s), *Women's AIM* (AIM,

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[15] *Newsweek* (1933-now) and *Reader's Digest* (1922-now) are American magazines. While *Reader's Digest* is a general-interest consumer publication that circulates globally in over 70 countries and is published approximately ten times a year, *Newsweek* is a weekly news magazine with a worldwide circulation of less than four million.

1979), and *Women in Struggle* (Dublin, c.1975). In particular, feminist publishing groups and

houses blossomed in the 1970s and 1980s and acted as sites of feminist education, activism,

and counterpublic formation. The largest publishing groups in the Republic include Arlen

House (1975),[16] Irish Feminist Information or IFI (1978),[17] and Attic Press (1984),[18] and yet

these organs and their historical significance are often overlooked in analyses of Irish culture,

politics, and society. In Mark O'Brien and Felix M. Larkin's most recent edited collection

Periodicals and Journalism in Twentieth-Century Ireland (2014), for example, there is no

mention of any of the feminist periodicals I examine in this dissertation. Similarly, Caitriona

Clear acknowledges that there is a particular dearth of scholarly work regarding Irish women's

magazines, "and existing publications and standard texts on Irish media ignore them almost

completely" (*Voices* 5). While her most recent work, *Women's Voices in Ireland: Women's

Magazines in the 1950s and 1970s* (2016), pays an important tribute to numerous Irish

women's commercial magazines, such as *Woman's Life* and *Woman's Way,* her parameters do

not extend to the alternative or radical press. Most important to the range of radical feminist

publications that emerge from the women's movement in the Republic is the diversity of

ideological positions presented. Against this backdrop of proliferating media platforms, this

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[16] Established in Galway by Catherine Rose, Arlen House was the first feminist publishing house in
Ireland. According to Connolly and O'Toole, the press primarily focused on women's writing, and as such,
"became the champion of out-of-print work by Irish women writers such as Kate O'Brien, Janet McNeill,
Nora Hoult and Anna Parnell, as well as new poetry collections by Eavan Boland, Rita Ann Higgins and
Mary Rose Callaghan" (*Documenting* 134).

[17] IFI, founded by Róisín Conroy and Mary Dornan, was a central service for feminist activism. It was of
particular use to groups such as the Women's Centre in Dame Street and the Women Against Sexist
Education group who wanted to publish flyers and pamphlets with information relating to issues such as
health services for women (BL/F/AP/170/2, Attic Press Archive).

[18] Attic Press was one of the most important institutions for feminist activism in the 1980s, central to both
the theory and practice of Irish feminism. As Connolly and O'Toole suggest, "the novels and social texts by
Attic made feminist ideas accessible to new generations of Irish feminists, and for the first time, culturally
specific feminist material was available to Irish women on a wider scale than heretofore" (*Documenting*
138). Important writers published by Attic include Eilís Ní Dhubhne, Mary Doran, June Levine, Nell
McCafferty, and Ailbhe Smyth, to name a few.

conscious move on the part of feminist groups to differentiate their interests from the forms of Irish femininity that circulated within mass media counters the classic liberal model of media and, instead, supports the contention that mass communication media is "more or less endorsing the ideological imperatives of capitalism, industrialized production and various forms of state power" (Pettitt "Bounds" 159). Unlike most feminists involved in reformist activities, the women's liberation sector took to creating its own cultural mediasphere; a space that enabled a horizon of opinion where exchanges had a critical relation to power. In the eyes of the women's liberation sector, the radical or alternative press offered a place for the enactment of ideological difference beyond the confines of the state.

Situating a Theoretical Framework

Historicizing Critical Narratives of "Irishness"

It is in the theorization of this material, discursive, and social space for Irish feminism that my project takes its methodological cues, but before I unpack the specific theoretical apparatus through which I approach these materials, I would like, first, to situate my work within its broader theoretical contexts. I understand my study as located within the following fields: Feminist Print Culture, Feminist History, Social Movement Studies, Periodical Studies, and Rhetorical Genre Studies. While my focus is specifically situated within an "Irish" context, the dominant version of that cultural marker is distant from my theoretical positioning, as are the methodological frameworks that have dominated the parameters of "Irishness"[19] in the fields of Irish Studies, historically: postcolonial theory, modernization theory, and theories of nationalism. These theoretical models are decisively peripheral to my own historiographic

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[19] I employ the term "Irishness" here as a Romantic, traditionalist, nationalist, masculinist, and essentialist marker of Irish identity universally promulgated by the institutions of the state, and symbiotically attached to literature.

model of operation, which is a response to the call of contemporary Irish feminist scholars,

such as Moynagh Sullivan (2000), Anne Fogarty (2002), Margaret Kelleher (2003), and Linda

Connolly and Tina O'Toole (2005) for an alternative framework through which to read Ireland.

As a discipline, Irish Studies is steeped in the national formation as the teleological place of

historical understanding, wherein the history of Irish culture is the history of the Irish nation.[20]

However, as both Heather Laird and Michael Cronin purport, to read Ireland's evolving

sociopolitical status in both contemporary and future Irish Studies is to encounter "a crisis of

narrative" ("Irish" 242).

    In his categorization of Irish Studies critics in the 1980s, Irish historian Roy Foster

declared, "we are all revisionists now," a statement Linda Connolly reframes to describe the

current status of Irish Studies critics; instead, arguing "we are all postcolonialists now"

("Vision" 232). Connolly's proposition pinpoints the way in which the "postcolonial-revisionist

debate" has governed the status of Irish Studies since the 1980s. In a similar vein, the current

crisis of narrative in Irish Studies parallels the previous crisis that propelled the most recent

shift toward postcolonial criticism. Concurrent with a social climate plagued by "economic

recession[21] and bitterly contested social change in the South and a worsening, bloody war in the

North" (Cronin "Irish" 241), the theatre-founded Field Day Company[22] resolved to demystify

what Aaron Kelly depicts as the "romantic paradigm of Irishness" that had long dominated

public cultural and political representations of the nation-state (*Literature* 66). Seamus Deane,

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[20] Connor Carville positions Luke Gibbons, David Lloyd, Seamus Deane, W.J. McCormack, Gerardine Meaney, and Emer Nolan as tracking and catalyzing the "dissolution of an unreflective and ideological notion of national identity as a matrix of critical analysis. All these critics show an interest in the 'ends of Ireland' understood as the remnants and remainders, the fragments and ruins of this matrix" (*Ends* 1).

[21] Conor McCarthy argues that "the crisis of authority in the state system paralleled, even if it did not cause, the crisis of authority in literary and cultural criticism" in the 1970s and 1980s ("Intellectual" 72). Interestingly, the current shift in Irish Studies follows the collapse of the Celtic Tiger economy in 2008.

[22] The Field Day Theatre Company was founded by Brian Friel and Stephen Rea in 1980, who later recruited Seamus Deane, Seamus Heaney, David Hammond, Tom Paulin, and, eventually, Thomas Kilroy to the board of directors (Kelly *Literature* 60).

co-founder of Field Day, stipulated of the project's manifesto, "Everything, including our politics and our literature, has to be rewritten – i.e., re-read. That will enable new writing, new politics, unblemished by Irishness, but securely Irish" ("Heroic" 58). Not only did Field Day bring issues of nationalism and revisionism to the forefront of a debate over "the past," but it also positioned Irish literature (and reading) as the site of reconstructing, rethinking, rereading, and redefining Irishness.

The problem with modern Irish history – whether revisionist[23] or postcolonial – is its conservatively nationalist parameters, which manifest themselves in two particular ways: "A tendency to give primacy to political history, which has inevitably relegated women to a marginal role, and a strong belief in Irish exceptionalism" (Daly "Kathleen" 103).[24] In their efforts to uncover the dimensions of Ireland's colonial past and how it continues to reverberate in the present, postcolonialists (and revisionists) have produced exclusionary critical paradigms, particularly in relation to gender and history, that attempt to produce a regulative notion of 'Ireland' and 'Irishness.' Carville calls the subjects of this model, "the Irish Studies subject of exclusion, where the subject is conceived as structured through a 'constitutive contradiction' between excluded experience and institutional narratives" (*Ends* 33). According to Declan Kiberd, Ireland conforms to a desire for postcolonial freedom that seeks to "resume a past, pre-colonial Gaelic identity, still yearning for expression if long denied" (*Inventing* 286). This project of reclamation in Ireland is a goal, which Rebecca Pelan identifies, shared by other

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[23] Revisionism's desire to equate Irish women's emancipation with separation from Britain, promoting a before-and-after narrative of women's progress, has, in fact, "failed to include women or any real sense of gendered history within what began as a radical attempt to write a new, more objective version of Irish history" (Pelan "Antagonisms" 129).

[24] However, the marginal role of women within the early politics of the nation is a myth, as the involvement of women in the Ladies Land League of 1888, the Easter Rising of 1916, the Irish Women's Franchise League of 1908, and the Irish Women's Workers' Union of 1911 are all examples of women's participation within the establishment of the nation.

settler colonies, such as Africa and India ("Antagonisms" 135). In the case of Ireland, however, this is a past that is largely "Catholic, indigenous, republican and, predominantly, male" (Pelan "Antagonisms" 135). Ireland's post-Independence nationalist agenda reinforces David Lloyd's argument that "the nationalist modernization of Ireland is inseparable from its project of masculinization of Irish public culture and the regulation of a feminine domestic space" ("Counterparts" 200), which becomes clear in the state's political and cultural desire to enter into the European Community in the middle of the twentieth century.[25] Since the 1960s, the economic and social agenda of the Republic has been inseparable from the term "modern," which Cleary identifies as a vague process of integration with other Western societies, particularly Europe ("Introduction" 14). Ireland's eventual European temporal and spatial identification obfuscates the reality of women's history in Ireland, as the alignment with the burgeoning western Women's Liberation Movement becomes the dominant narrative of the progress of women's rights in Ireland, which fails to account for the previous, and definitively Irish, forms of female oppression and agency. While current modes of postcolonial discourse and modernization theory, as they have been taken up in Irish Studies, seek to expose the processes that maintain the marginality of minority cultures by dominant or hegemonic systems of power, they envision a singular trajectory of colonialism, decolonization, and thus postcolonialism, that excludes the full representation of Irish women both inside and outside of Ireland.

An Alternative Methodology

    While I am aware of the broader questions and concerns of the critical discourses of

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[25] While I cite Lloyd here for his claims concerning the organization of Irish space around gender, it is important to clarify that Lloyd's reading affirms the necessity of employing the postcolonial historiographical framework. Critics such as Carville credit Lloyd's work with the predominant problematic "preoccupation with those whose history is inadequately described by the available discourses of colonialism or nationalism" in Irish Studies (*Ends* 33).

modernization, postcolonialism, and nationalism that delineate the parameters of my project, it is my goal in this dissertation to augment Irish history with a theoretical apparatus that is desegregated from the oppressive spatial and temporal gendered paradigm of the postcolonial in post-Independence Ireland; however, considerations of space and time are still at the locus of my methodology. Mid-twentieth century Ireland is a time of rapid and chaotic social, political and economic change, but also a time of restrictive social forms and practices for Irish women. From the heavy Church-enacted censorship[26] in the 1950s regarding Irish women's bodies, to the fierce debates surrounding issues of abortion, contraception, and divorce from the 1970s forward, to the potency of cultural and state anxiety over shifting gendered labour relations under European Economic Community integration, Irish women are regulated by the institutional and cultural discourses of change. Importantly, these shifting discursive formulations of state institutions reinscribe or reinsert women into social spaces in ways that reproduce hegemonic and oppressive structural relations; however, as the simultaneous proliferation of women's alternative media indicates, Irish women were neither simply produced as essentialized Irish subjects throughout the progression of the twentieth century, nor did these sociorhetorical constructions account for the realities of their lives. The periodical press enabled women to create and sustain spaces resistant to discursive forms of state power and to mediate the transformations of social space through the space of the written page.

It is my contention throughout this dissertation that the autonomous women's movement, as both a social formation and an ideological discourse, is mediated primarily through print. The press is the place where Irish feminism takes form, and the polysemous form of the

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[26] Meaney poignantly points to the liberal literary journal *The Bell* (1940-1954) as a cultural site that "understood feminine self-representation as part of its modernizing project," but which was met with intense backlash from the public regarding depictions of the female body, such as in Freda Laughton's poem "The Woman with Child" ("Virgin" 133).

periodical facilitates the dynamism of Irish feminist discourse and praxis of the Irish women's movement as it encounters rapid socio-political and economic changes. By broadly surveying the emergent feminist periodicals at this time from the point of view of print culture's prevailing interest in production, circulation, and reception, I assert that we can discern some of the specific processes through which women's liberation organizations imagined liberating, organizing, and redirecting women through print. This approach requires a consideration of the ways in which print material circulates in relation to the social spaces in which it was both produced and used by women, while also allowing for a reading of changes in these processes over time. As my project seeks to chart the trajectory of Irish feminism in and through print, I will move back and forth throughout this dissertation between four interconnected methodological interventions in my framing of the Irish women's movement, all of which draw attention to the relationship between alternative print culture, social movement dynamics, sociological modernity, and feminist history.

In his research on the sociopolitical role of alternative media, Chris Atton proposes that, "If the alternative press[27] flourishes in tandem with the movement it supports and documents them in order to better understand the role and nature of the alternative media, we need to look at the context of these movements" (*Media* 81). Atton's work provides important methodological insight for my own intervention in the study of Irish feminisms and the alternative press. The first intervention is an historically materialist framing of the external socio-political circumstances in Ireland surrounding the women's movement with which the social movement must ultimately contend, internally; second, a sociological focus on the

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[27]Atton proposes definitional models of the "alternative press" that "privilege the transformatory potential of the media as reflexive instruments of communications practices in social networks: there is a focus on process and relation" (*Alternative* 30). In his definition, Atton suggests that the content of alternative media is only as important as the participatory, reflexive, and non-standard modes of creation, production, and distribution that generate that content.

processes and dynamics of the women's movement in the Republic, particularly organizations

and their feminist cultural production; third, an attention to the form of the feminist periodical,

particularly the formal evolutions of the texts in relation to contemporaneous feminist politics

in the Republic; and finally, an historiographic reading of the issues that emerge in women's

alternative print culture that facilitate or de-facilitate the trajectory and orientation of the

women's movement, particularly in relation to autonomy. The global contention of my

dissertation is that the relation between women's cultural production and the social

transformations that attend Irish modernization has been overlooked and under-represented and

that a reconsideration of the role of this feminist process of imagining in the formation of a

"new" Ireland is mandatory. Through this methodological blending I hope to conceptualize the

ways in which the orientation of the culture of the women's movement is imagined, how it

intersects with and responds to the realities of political life in Ireland at the time, and in what

ways its trajectory transforms and adapts in the present to ensure the continuity of its future.

More specifically, how does feminist periodical culture shape and, in turn, how is it shaped by

the women's movement throughout its transformation? In considering the women's movement

in the Republic, I am indebted to Linda Connolly's *The Irish Women's Movement: From*

Revolution to Devolution (2002) and Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole's *Documenting Irish*

Feminisms: The Second Wave (2005) for their groundbreaking documentation of Irish

feminism as a social movement.[28] While I refer to their works frequently, particularly in terms

of historical reference, there are a number of issues that they have, by their own account, left

under-examined. I continue to build on and expand upon their research and analysis, among

others, by further analyzing the development and progressive constitution of feminist ideology

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[28]As Connolly and O'Toole indicate in the opening of *Documenting Irish Feminisms,* theirs was the first
project funded by the government that led a sustained analysis of the women's movement in recent Irish
history.

within Irish feminist activism, and focusing on the connection between print, ideas, and ideologies and their relation to social history in order to continue recovering the complexity of Irish feminisms and the women's movement in the Republic.

I refer frequently to the category of "Irish women" in my proposal. I employ this cohesive and general term not to essentialize the reality of gender dynamics in Ireland, but to conceptualize the way in which the category circulated in political, economic, and social discourse. The term "Irish woman" is invested with highly politicized, postcolonial anxieties by state formations after independence and I intend to explore the limit of the feminine's integration into and exclusion from political and symbolic structures in the Republic.

Where is the North?

In reading the diversity of cultural projects undertaken by women from 1950 to 1980, I do not propose to simply document the extensity of women's writing, but to remediate these texts into a fuller expounding of Irish feminine politics that will complicate both the narratives of Irish literary history as well as the "monological effects of nationalist narratives in, and about, Irish culture more generally" (O'Toole *Irish* 16). According to Siobhan Kilfeather, the "intertwining of feminist and nationalist discourses is the most distinctive feature in the evolution of Irish feminism" ("Irish" 98), and it is a discourse that is often co-opted by discussions of differences between women in the North and South. In her work on "Affecting Trans-feminist Solidarity," Breda Gray describes the history of transborder relations in Irish feminism as embedded within a "continuing operation of geopolitical relations of power and privilege arising from their locations on either side of the border and the different class, religious, and national(ist) locations" that often reproduces essentialized and stereotyped relationships among these markers of identity ("Trans-feminist" 84). The positioning of

difference has characteristically divided feminists in the South and North on questions of the model of the nation, and forms of anticolonial nationalism and Republicanism, and their relation to women's liberation. Consequently, Connolly and O'Toole indicate "there have been few systematic attempts made to study, reveal and compare either the links or divisions in Irish feminist politics in Irish feminist politics North/South from the 1970s to the present" (*Documenting* 145). Where there have been all-Ireland studies focused on women's activism in the middle of the twentieth century, the majority examine women's issues North and South of the border separately as opposed to intersectionally. Rebecca Pelan's 2005 study *Two Irelands: Literary Feminisms North and South* is a telling example of the narrative of border-induced Irish feminist separatism. A number of other studies regarding the Irish women's movement in the Republic, such as Clara Fischer and Mary McAuliffe's *Irish Feminisms: Past, Present and Future* (2015), only feature a chapter or two on the women's movement in the North in relation to the South.

While the limitations of space do not make it possible for me to offer a thorough engagement with the North, my goal is not to replicate the North/South divide. In my archival research at University College Cork, I found innumerable instances of cross- or trans-border feminist dialogue, where women in the North and South engaged one another across the border through print. These voices are not always in solidarity, quite often they are in conflict, but they are constantly in positions of conversation and negotiation, identifying places of interconnection and exclusion, of unity and dissent. Common points of North/South engagement include, but are not limited to, women political prisoners, contraception, violence against women, equal pay and low pay, childcare, and sexism in education. There are consolidated calls to coordinate a 32-county women's movement, such as the Irish Feminist

Federation,[29] forums for and against the support of women prisoners in Armagh, lists of

women's organizations and their locations in both Northern Ireland and the Republic, and

letters reprinted in Southern periodicals from Northern women's groups in response to their

views on feminism in Ireland. What is clear from these examples is that print repeatedly offers

a place to think through the space of the border; unfortunately, it is a space that is beyond the

purview of this dissertation. What I offer here is a way of beginning to think through spatial

relations in Ireland differently, using the Republic as a starting point for reworking the

relationships between Irish feminism, feminist history, and feminist print culture. It is my hope

that this dissertation contributes to the site-building practices of feminist scholarship on

women's cultural production in Ireland to open up questions about media forms, gender, and

nation to future research, in both the North and South. There is much work to be done on

feminist organizations and groups that look across the border as a means of rethinking border

politics and politics of feminist solidarity.

Chapter Descriptions

The following three chapters are organized according to the chronological trajectory of

the Irish women's movement; therefore, each chapter begins by situating the primary materials

within the historically materialist conditions of their production; however, my goal in this

dissertation is to demonstrate the ways in which historical conditions render visible constituent

portions of the media that dynamically effect the unfolding of social movement issues, tactics,

and politics; therefore, my work is historical in its reading, but also dynamically connected to

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[29] For more information on the Irish Feminist Federation, see articles by Anne O'Brien in *Wicca,* including "Feminist Federation" (no.8) (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive) and "Irish Women's Movement: the next step" (no. 7) (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). Also of interest are "Report to the National Women's Conference from the National Steering Collective of the Feminist Federation" on Dec. 8-9, 1979 (BL/F/AP/1142/5, Attic Press Archive), and "Perspectives for the Feminist Federation, Submission to the 2nd Feminist Federation Annual Conference" by Mary Gordon, Molly O'Duffy, Delores Gibbons, Vera Burke, and Helen Burke (Dec. 1979) (BL/F/AP/1142/6, Attic Press Archive).

the texts of the feminist movement. In this move to examine the dialogic relationship between discursive formations, feminist ideology, and social movement history, I move back and forth between reading these primary texts closely and distantly – both through a case study and a more empirical or distant reading of broader patterns of feminist periodicals. While the case study approach has been the predominant mode of recovery work in Irish feminist literary criticism,[30] I suggest that it also is important to get outside of the particularity that often characterizes Irish criticism – the hegemony of certain voices, mediums, genres, and so forth – and speak to the broader phenomenon of consciousness-raising that women's writing, women's presses, and women's organizations were attempting to bring to the public sphere in a mobilized way post-1950. Unintentionally, I believe the "case," as it pertains to studies of women's movements in Ireland, can and does tend to diminish the role of feminism as an historical force. As my archival findings, research, and analysis indicate, there is a countercultural phenomenon occurring in these decades of women's rights that needs to be addressed as such. So in light of the act of "uncovering," my project aims to blend social and literary histories in a phenomenological-oriented way, reading across the movement, while also highlighting particularly illustrative instances or events.

On a similar note, I would like to address the use of "I" within my document. Part of my original goal in undertaking this project was to engage in a process of "uncovering." To uncover something – to allow it to be seen – may speak to an earlier moment of feminist theory, but is one I believe is still relevant to the Irish context. And this is different than the term "recovery," which carries a significant amount of political weight in terms of narratives of Western feminism and often relies on narratives of progress and loss and return to make sense

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[30] See Tina O'Toole's *The Irish New Woman* (2013) and Maria DiCenzo et al.'s *Feminist Media History: Suffrage, Periodicals and the Public Sphere* (2010), for example.

of their history. Many of my primary texts and their writers have not been acknowledged or "seen" within Irish history, and so it is part of my politics to render them visible – to excavate them from the sedimented history of nationalist and modernist politics. However, as a performative discourse, the genre of the dissertation requires that I exercise a type of pedagogical judgment that will ultimately tell a narrative in the archive I am building. It is important to consider the political efficacy of being in time differently, and I want to be aware of my own agency and subjectivity in the process of remediating and narrativizing these documents, or social agents, thereby constructing a set of historical connections between texts and ideologies. The "I" of my document serves as a reminder of my agency, as well as illustrates my political and ethical relationship to the material.

Chapter One theorizes the periodical as a collaborative site of "assemblage," both spatially and socially – or, a *place* for the reproduction of Irish feminism. The chapter begins by differentiating between the tactics of the women's liberation and women's rights sectors, highlighting the recurrent use of the alternative press amongst women's liberation organizations as a means of assembling feminist consciousness, identity, collectivity, and mobility. Drawing on theories of space and place across disciplinary boundaries, I read the interplay between discursive forms and social relations as materializing new sociospatial formations for the burgeoning women's movement. Specifically, I demonstrate how textual and visual features distinctive to the periodical format enable feminist collectives to sediment relationships between print and modes of feminist direct action. As a means of exemplifying what I characterize as the interconnection between social relations and the spatial form of the periodical, I analyze serialized attributes of cover images across *Banshee* and *Wicca*, reading the visual and semiotic landscapes of feminist protest as rewriting hegemonic spaces of

gendered social practice. It is in this chapter that I begin to chart the emergence of an autonomous feminist theory and praxis through the formal and material features of the periodical press.

While Chapter One begins to theorize the visual and textual production of the spatial reality of the women's movement, Chapter Two traces the proliferation of ideological differences mobilized by the periodical form, specifically the emergent discourse of autonomy. Here, I define the parameters of autonomy as conceived by radical women's organizations in the Republic, particularly Irish Women United and its crucial positioning of *Banshee* as a discursive site of engagement. Mobilizing theories from both social movement studies and media studies, I consider IWU's role as a social movement organization and its three forms of reader-writer engagement employed in *Banshee* as tactics of movement building, including reader-writer contributions, advertising, and feminist historiography – with attention also paid to the relationships between the feminist and commercial presses of the time. In the final section of this chapter, I provide a case study of the women's suffrage movement and the movement for Home Rule as represented in the feminist press. This study raises questions about the historical and contemporaneous relationships between discourses of feminism and nationalism in the Republic, and posits the reinscription of Irish feminist history within an autonomous framework as a mobilizing tactic for feminism in the present.

Chapter Three proceeds along the chronological timeline of the Irish women's movement and witnesses feminists navigate an Ireland in transition. This chapter interrogates the shifting economic conditions and social values affected by the state's entry into the European Economic Community, and the discursive forms enacted by altered spatial and relational structures. Critics and theorists of genre studies provide important methodological insight into my reading

of the adaptive capacity of institutional genres, particularly those related to employment and equality legislation. As autonomous feminists attempt to negotiate their ideological pathways amidst the competing demands of state-driven motives, they find themselves divided over the figure of the workingwoman. I trace the issues of equal pay and employment equality across the production of *Banshee* and *Wicca* and find that service journalism – forms of instructional, how-to information – becomes a means of organizing the women's movement around the identity of the workingwoman; however, these forms of recommended action shift over the span of the women's movement, revealing a reformist strand of feminist thought that eventually demobilizes the autonomous faction of women's liberation.

Nearly all of my primary materials were retrieved by hand from the Attic Press/Róisín Conroy Collection (BL/F/AP), at Boole Library in University College Cork (UCC), and are supplemented by materials excavated, digitally, from anthologies, blogs, and other library holdings. This extensive collection was generated and collected by feminist activist and Attic Press co-founder Róisín Conroy and donated to Boole Library in 1997 by Conroy herself. I spent a month in the winter of 2016 at UCC researching and documenting this archival holding. During my research trip, this non-digitized special collection was open to access three days a week between the hours of 10AM to 4:30PM (with an hour break for lunch in-between), of which I spent every minute pouring over, scanning, noting, and photographing as many boxes of curated records, photographs, papers, newspaper clippings, press releases, journals, and other ephemera as I could – I recorded broadly across the archive with the intention to curate my findings upon my return to the University of Alberta. What is presented in this dissertation is only a mere fraction of the material I brought back with me to Edmonton, of which is still only a portion of the archival collection. While this selection practice is, of course, limited, in

some ways, by time, accessibility, funding, and human constraints, and this archival record is incomplete, it is an attempt to begin to theorize the archive beyond its descriptive listings. I am indebted to the record-keeping practices and labour of Róisín Conroy and her fellow sister activists, to the care and dedication of archivists and special collection staff of UCC Boole Library, and to the research efforts of scholars like Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole, for it is their commitment to the documentation of feminism in the past and present that ensures its continuity into the future.

Chapter One: "We invite you to celebrate with us": Consciousness-raising, Collectivizing,

and Assembling Feminism in and through Print

Introduction

Feminism is a demand for liberty. A demand: woman is tired asking for what is hers by right – she must now learn how to take it. Look down through history our grandmothers put their trust in male justice and Parliamentary reform. They had to suffer imprisonment even death through a thirteen year struggle to gain the vote. They carried the torch of womens [sic] rights into this century. Fifty years later that torch burns bright with the flame of Feminism. A Feminism redefined by to-days woman to fit to-days struggle. – Brady, Marion. "Feminism." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 1, c.1974-5; (BL/F/AP/1517/1, Attic Press Archive)

The following exegesis will begin to differentiate between the two divergent strands of feminist thought that developed simultaneously and mobilized women, collectively, in the production of a re-politicized social movement in the mid-twentieth century Republic. While Connolly provides a comprehensive detailing of the specific stages of social transformation that led to the development of the women's movement in *The Irish Women's Movement: From Revolution to Devolution,* I will focus on what I contend is one of the key differentiating tactics of the women's rights and women's liberation sector: the centrality of print in the creation of feminist identities, feminist communities, feminist spaces, and feminist political actions within women's liberation organizations. It is here that I begin to think through print as a representation of social and spatial formations, as I theorize the spatial form of the periodical as a means of confronting the spatial enactment of power and of countering the reproduction of hegemonic knowledge forms and practices in the Republic for feminists. In Ireland, I argue that developing a feminist consciousness requires seeing women in space and time; therefore, the inscription of material locations, bodies, and language in the feminist periodical is crucial in the reclamation of spatiality from state structures and the formation of a politically mobilizing women's movement.

As previously mentioned, the first half of the 1970s witnessed the development of both the women's rights section of the women's movement, which was predominantly centralized under the *ad hoc* Committee on the Status of Women and the eventual CSW,[31] and the simultaneous formation of the reactionary and radicalized IWLM. The objective of the Council, according to Hilda Tweedy, who was the founder of Irish Housewives Association (IHA)[32] and a chair of the CSW, was to focus on institutional and legislative change: "Our priority would be to work for a change in the law, where necessary. Change in the law is the first most important step, but after that is monitoring the implementation of the law and creating an acceptance of the changes made" (Tweedy ct. in *Devolution* 99). While this political mainstreaming had long been a strategy employed by individual groups like IHA, who, in their 1946 constitution, declared an aim to "secure all such reforms as are necessary to establish a real equality of liberties, status and opportunity for all persons" (Cullen "Emancipation" 879), the changing social and political scene of the 1960s and 1970s facilitated the organization of a politicized feminist movement.

Changes in education, employment, and family planning opportunities for women, as well as burgeoning international feminist movements and increasing media interest in women's rights, enabled the pre-existing networks of traditional women's groups to collectivize and publicly lobby for institutional change. As Mary McAuliffe indicates, "While marriage and motherhood continued to be the dominant discourse for women, Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s was changing. With better education, falling childbirth rates, falling marriage rates and rising

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[31] According to Connolly, the early membership of CSW "indicates how its constituency was recruited from inside established institutions or from long-standing reform organisations" (*Devolution* 100). In 1972, CSW's membership included groups such as the ICA and the IHA, whom were active during the abeyance cycle and were "integral to the State-building agenda," despite social, political, and cultural constraints post-Independence (*Devolution* 89-90).

[32] Hilda Tweedy established the Irish Housewives Association in 1942. As an early pressure group for the needs and interests of women, the organization campaigned for issues such as consumer rights and school meals, and lent support to women laundry workers' rights and the proposed Mother and Child scheme.

employment rates, women were making their presence in the public sphere and in the workforce felt" ("Change" 86). And the effects of the earlier reformist stages of this movement did not go unnoticed. At a legislative level, by 1976 the state introduced the following key pieces of legislation: The Married Women Status Act 1957, The Guardianship of Infants Act 1964, The Succession Act 1965, The Marriages Act 1972, The Maintenance Orders Act 1974, The Social Welfare Act 1974, The Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974, The Family Law (Maintenance of Spouses and Children) Act 1976, and The Family Home Protection Act 1976.[33] The majority of these acts were lobbied and campaigned for by service groups and affiliate organizations in conjunction with the CSW. However, as the decade advanced, many women felt that traditional mainstreaming methods were not enough to effect serious political change. As the CSW and affiliated groups worked to expand women's rights through governmental reforms, generational conflict and tactical critique spurred the movement of younger feminists in new directions that built upon but eventually moved beyond the mainstream. For example, in her piece in the fourth issue of UCD's *Bread and Roses* (c.1975-6) entitled "Lip Service or Liberation," Carol Louthe argues that, "The I.C.A. constitute a womens [sic] organisation in name only and have nothing to do with the womens [sic] movement" (BL/F/AP/1517/3, Attic Press Archive). Similarly, Marion Connolly of *Bread and Roses* indicates that she is not disparaging the efforts of women's rights activists; rather, she believes that their traditional tactics prohibit the further advancement of women's liberation: "I am not attacking these women (the majority of whom were middle-class and over 50) I just want to emphasise the fact that their idea of Feminism is not radical enough" ("Report" 14).[34] Connolly's inclusion of the age of the women's rights advocates is significant in that it points

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[33] In brief, these acts gave women legal and separate rights to property, child custody and guardianship, social welfare allowance, and spousal support.

[34] Connolly, Marion. "Report on RDS Conference on Women." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 2, c.1974-5, p. 14.

to the "generationally reactive reading" of feminist movements that tends to dominate the wave

metaphor (Fischer "Memory" 253). Although these reformist achievements, while

conservative, were often inimical to state interests, McAuliffe suggests that it was partly these

differences between "the long established activist women and the younger feminists who

supported the more radical grassroots direct action campaigns [that] were influential in the

creation of the first women's liberation group in Ireland in 1970" – the Irish Women's

Liberation Movement (IWLM) ("Change" 87).

Although the CSW and IWLM emerged along similar timelines, June Levine notes that,

"news of the commission was soon overshadowed by the massive publicity claimed by the

IWLM with seven journalists among its founders" ("Movement" 177). Not unlike other early,

dominant second wave feminist groups in the Western world, IWLM was composed of "left-

learning, educated, middle class and professional women" (McAuliffe "Change" 87).[35] Unlike

the gradualist approach of existing feminist organizations, IWLM "aimed at sweeping changes

by means of a non-hierarchical movement intended both to change women themselves and to

jolt and shock public opinion into awareness of discrimination" (Cullen "emancipation" 882).

While the emergence of the IWLM eventually led to the expansion of women's liberation

groups that ultimately produced an ideological schism in the Irish women's movement, IWLM

worked to radicalize "the mobilizing issues of the CSW and the Report on the First

Commission on the Status of Women" (Connolly *Devolution* 114-5). If the women's rights

sector and women's liberation sector emerged within a similar political context and mobilized

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[35] The founders group included Mary Kenny (*Irish Press*), Mary McCutcheon and Mary Anderson (*Irish Independent*), Nell McCafferty (*Irish Times*), June Levine *(Irish Woman's Journal* and RTE), Nuala Fennell (freelance journalist), Mary McMahon (typesetter and business owner), Fionnuala O Connor (teacher), Eavan Boland (poet), Eimer Philbin Bowman (psychologist), Bernadette Quinn (pharmacist and writer), Rosemary Humphries (nurse), Hilary Boyle (journalist), Mary Earls (bookshop owner), Mary Sheerin (secretary and writer), and Rosita and Inez Sweetman (Levine "Movement" 179-80).

along similar issues, why is it that the women's liberation sector gained more public mobility throughout the 1970s?

A central tenet of my argument is to think through the processes by which Irish feminism and Irish feminist identity were recollected, reconstituted, and remobilized in the middle decades of the twentieth century after a period of subdued abeyance; more specifically, the ways in which print functions as a crucial component of these processes within the movement towards women's liberation. I suggest that it is not a coincidence that the expansion of women's liberation groups coincides with the proliferation of alternative feminist periodicals, as well as the mobilization of the women's movement in the public sphere. While the important relationship between the mainstream or commercial press and the autonomous women's movement has already been noted by scholars such as Linda Connolly (2001), Elgy Gillespie (2003), Mary McAuliffe (2015), and Anne O'Brien (2016),[36] I suggest that feminist print culture offered women another space to critique their present frameworks of knowledge, as well as prescribe and model ways of reconstructing knowledge systems. As the press is the place where Irish feminism takes form, an attention to the dynamism of the formal and material evolutions of these periodicals – in terms of their processes of production and circulation, as well as the textual elements of form and content – can help trace the development of feminist politics and subjectivity in the South. My examination of the earlier framings of the status of the women's movement within feminist periodicals, such as *Anima Rising, Aware*, *Banshee, Bread and Roses, Elektra, Wicca,* and *Status,* indicates that, as the decade progressed and women moved to consolidate collectively, women's burgeoning print culture theorized, charted, modeled and, most importantly, publicized the status of feminism and feminist

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[36] While O'Brien's article "'A fine old time': feminist print journalism in the 1970s" does not purport to offer an objective account of the women's social movement, she draws significant connections between feminist perspectives in national print media and the framing of women in Irish society more broadly.

activism. In both the earlier publications of the 1970s and later publications reflecting on the same time period, retroactively, these texts do two interconnected things of importance. First, through visual and textual invitations to reproduce feminism – in particular, to engage in direct action – these periodicals are central to mobilizing movement on the ground; secondly, these publications create and present a space for sustained and temporally inflected argumentation. More specifically, they provide a material place for meta-reflection on the past and present state of feminism, as well as the women's movement, and their production gives both ideological and socio-material shape to the future trajectory of the movement.

To start, I will frame the junction between feminist studies and print and periodical culture as it appears in this chapter, specifically, as well as the remaining chapters of this dissertation, more generally. Drawing from the frequently cited work of Sean Latham and Robert Scholes in "The Rise of Periodical Studies," I begin from the methodological premise that periodicals are not merely "containers of discrete bits of information," but are, by their nature, "*collaborative* objects, *assembled* in complex interactions between editors, authors, advertisers, sales agents, and even readers" (517, 529; emphasis added). Periodicals are heterogeneous material objects, from their authorship to their generic format to their readership. According to Faye Hammill and Michelle Smith, it is only in reading the various ways in which periodicals' "different types of material (visual and textual, commercial and editorial) compete for readers' attention" that scholars can come to understand how periodicals generate meaning in all their complexity (*Magazines* 4). Hammill and Smith's identification of the material ways in which periodicals are assembled – visual, textual, commercial, and editorial – provides a guiding overarching framework in my analysis of Irish feminist periodicals. The collaboration both within and between visual, textual, commercial, and editorial constituents of periodicals

means that, as primary sources, periodicals offer "myriad moments in which the women's liberation movement comes into focus as an *assemblage* of people, actions, texts, relationships, values, emotions, discourses, and materials" (Beins *Liberation* 4; emphasis added). We must read the aggregate units of a periodical dialogically in order to render visible the networks, relations, and collaborations that repeatedly work to produce meaning in periodicals, both in the acts of reading and producing. Importantly, the repeated collaborative assemblage of print objects that is inherent to the periodical genre is integral to both the theory and praxis of mid-century feminism because it enables both a physical and imagined gathering point for women.

Case Study: Assembling Feminist Consciousness in *Chains or Change?*

As sites of production and consumption, periodicals enable the enactment of a central liberating and mobilizing component of feminism: that is, consciousness-raising. One of the critical effects of feminist activism under the women's rights sector and intersecting IWLM was the raising of women's consciousness, both individually and collectively.[37] Broadly speaking, feminism works to change the ways in which people understand power and knowledge; therefore, consciousness-raising is grounded in the notion that transformation can occur when women begin to share their personal experiences and move to connect them to the larger roots of gendered oppression. Feminist scholars and print culture academics have extensively documented the centrality of textuality to this second-wave process of women's consciousness-raising. As Kayann Short observes, "the power of words to create feminist

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[37] The initial centralization of women under the CSW allowed for the raising of feminist political interests that ultimately led to the expansion and development of new groups subsumed under the following categories: "service groups (such as Cherish); single-issue campaigns (such as Joy O'Farrell's case); and political action (such as the WPA)" (Connolly *Devolution* 106-7). Similarly, the leaders of the IWLM employed an array of strategies, adopting tactics from Anglo-American feminism, that included weekly meetings and consciousness-raising sessions, which also led to the formation of individual women's groups beyond organizational ties (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 26).

consciousness both personally and politically is thematically in discussions of women's politics

and women's publishing from the 1970s onwards" (*Publishing* 8). In their edited collection

This Book is an Action: Feminist Print Culture and Activism Aesthetics, Jamie Harker and

Cecilia Konchar Farr identify the ways in which literary culture primarily "became a

provocation to conversation about readers' own lives and experiences," providing women with

a means of discerning a community on the basis of collective experience ("Outrageous" 4). In

the Republic, one of the most significant events of the early 1970s that helped catalyze

women's political remobilization, and merged both women's rights and women's liberation

interests, was the publication of *Irishwomen: Chains or Change?* by IWLM in March 1971.

 Chains or Change? rendered visible the institutional and cultural oppression of women in

Irish society. The political manifesto detailed six demands organized around eight major areas

of concern; the demands themselves included equal pay, equality before the law, equal

education, access to contraception, one family-one house,[38] and justice for "deserted" wives.[39]

Mary Maher, one of the core members of IWLM, explained the point-of-origin of the pamphlet

in her editorial for the *Women First* page of the *Irish Times* on March 9, 1971:

> Movement is the only word that could properly apply to the group who produced the
> Women's Liberation pamphlet. We amount to a collection of women who have been
> meeting more or less regularly since October – there is no Constitution, no
> organisation, no spokeswomen, no leaders, as yet. We're not asking anyone to join
> us; we are just hoping that Irishwomen will start to join each other, to form groups in
> whatever situation they find themselves in – offices, factories, housing estates, high-
> rise flats – to discuss the concept of liberation and how it applies to them
> immediately. To discuss, and to take action. The pamphlet was written to provide a
> starting point for anyone interested in discovering what the 'Civil Wrongs of
> Irishwomen' are. It's called 'Irishwomen: Chains or Change?' ("Liberation")

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[38] According to Anne Stopper, while one family-one house was included in IWLM's official list of
demands, it was left out of *Chains or Change?* (*Mondays* 77).

[39] The table of contents of the document is organized under eight major areas of concern: "The legal
inequities and how they betray the Constitution," "The sad profile of Irishwomen in employment," "The
education – or miseducation – of girls," "Women in distress," "Incidental facts," "Taxation and women –
designed to penalise," and "Five reasons to live in sin" (BL/F/AP/1139/15, Attic Press Archive).

In the Republic, a broad survey of the numerous biographies and personal accounts of consciousness-raising from the Irish women's movement attests to the significance of publications like *Chains or Change?* in identifying and naming the systemic oppression of women; enabling women to "discuss the concept of liberation and how it applies to them," as Maher stipulates. In her biography *Sisters: The Personal History of an Irish Feminist* (1982)*,* for example, journalist and author June Levine recalls the impact of the IWLM pamphlet on her own subjectivity and activism:

> I was divorced by the time I joined the movement, carrying with me a deep-seated horror of the negative possibilities of marriage for a woman. But nothing ever influenced my decisions against remarriage as surely as did the information in *Chains or Change…*The pamphlet contained a brilliant summary by Mary Maher: 'Five Good Reasons Why It Is Better To Live In Sin'…How many sinners did this document create? (*Sisters* 155-7)

Similarly, the opening editorial notes and mission statements of periodicals such as *Aware, Banshee, Elektra,*[40] and *Status* identify the explicit desire to raise individual awareness "of the oppression of women in its many forms – cultural, social, economic, political, and physical" – as a central goal of their publications (BL/F/AP/1142/10, Attic Press Archive). For example, in a 1975 report by Christina Murphy in the *Irish Times* entitled "Bread and Roses*,*" the U.C.C. women's group stated that they decided to produce *Aware* in order to "concentrate on making women aware of the need for reform and raising people's awareness in general" (BL/F/AP/1293/74, Attic Press Archive). However, it is consciousness-raising that specifically differentiated the broad-based public success of women's liberation from the efforts of women's rights. As Mary Cullen explains in her overview of women and emancipation in the Republic, "in highlighting discrimination against women the new movement identified the

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[40] "The intention of the week [Trinity Women's Rights Week] is to provide a forum for women to discuss with access to information, issues relevant to us" – "Editorial." *Elektra,* 1980, p. 3; (BL/F/AP/1492/9, Attic Press Archive).

individual as the central focus for change, with personal awareness leading to personal

liberation and then to change in society. This appears to have been the new factor that made the

message relevant to so many women in the Ireland of the 1960s and 1970s, in a way never

achieved by the older established organisations" ("Emancipation" 883). For the women's

liberation movement, it was a message made relevant explicitly through print.

Reading and circulating within the same spaces connects women to an imagined

community through acts of naming and self-identification. The women of IWU theorize this

politicization of feminist consciousness, more explicitly, in their reflection on the Irish

Women's Movement in the third edition of *Banshee*:

> One of the currents in the Women's Movement is to view feminism as a seed-bed
> from which to force personal growth, personal liberation, and in which to develop
> new forms of relationships between and among women. The old patterns in which
> men dominated us social, sexually, psychologically and economically are recognized
> for what they are. To many women coming to the women's movement, this bonding,
> this sisterhood is a great joy and support to their personal lives.[41]

The appellation of a shared identity – "sisterhood" – is significant in the movement towards

politicization in that it aligns individual women's consciousnesses within a collective frame of

understanding. A frame is an interpretative scheme, or a lens, through which an individual

interprets an experience or situation (Snow et al. "Frame" 464). Framing is an important

process in the analysis of collective action, according to Agatha Beins,[42] because social

movements are dependent upon the alignment of individual consciousness with the values and

ideals of the movement, and "any identity cannot become recognizable legitimate, or desirable,

without also being intelligible through some kind of frame" (*Free* 141). Stacey Young

instructively observes that print is a useful medium for both assembling and transmitting these

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[41] "Feminism and Socialism," *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 3, 1976, p. 8; (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive).

[42] Beins borrows her understanding of framing from the sociological theories of Sidney Tarrow (1992) and
Alberto Melucci (1996), both of whom are important scholars in framing theory.

collective frames for women, as "feminist publications seek to effect social change through propagating feminist discourses" (*Wor(l)d* 13). In their respective works, Agatha Beins (2011), Maria Dicenzo (2010), Jamie Harker and Cecilia Konchar Farr (2016), and Louise Ryan (2002) similarly demonstrate that periodicals are crucial in the formation of a collective feminist identity grounded in a certain level of identification. However, self-recognition of personal subjection is only the first step to moving forward collectively, as evident in Levine's previous personal testament. Levine initially identifies the self-reflecting stage of consciousness-raising and the recognition of mutual causes of oppression outlined by *Banshee*, but her final question – "How many sinners did this document create?" – also points to the larger goal of the activist process, rhetorically: "moving on from personal narratives to evolving strategies to deal with oppression" (Gamble *Feminism* 208). While the idea of framing has been discussed at length in sociological accounts of how subjectivity is formed and circulates in mediatized environments, my particular interest in framing is in the way in which social movements and, particularly, their cultural output rely on the ideational alignment of individuals with their constructed sets of values in order to garner legitimization and, therefore, participation in direct action. For, as Maher suggested, the goal in the creation of *Chains or Change?* was to provide a "starting point" for consciousness-raising in two senses of the term; a site where women could not only come together "to discuss," but also "to take action."

Part of taking action, or enacting "movement," is the reproduction of feminism and, as I have suggested, in Ireland the origins of the women's liberation movement are tied to the reproduction of feminism through print. How do periodicals both facilitate discussion and direct action through both their form and content? I want to return, for a moment, to Maher's description of *Chains or Change?,* as well as the idea of a periodical as an "assemblage" or an

object that is assembled. An assemblage is defined as "a bringing or coming together; a meeting or gathering; the state of being gathered or collected" ("assemblage, n."). In her account of the materialization of *Chains or Change?,* Maher identifies the way in which the production of the pamphlet facilitated an assemblage, physically providing a gathering place for a group of Irish women, who after regular meetings came to identify themselves as IWLM. Furthermore, it is Maher and IWLM's hope that their manifesto's circulation will not only offer a means to similarly locate, identify, and gather other women, either in "offices, factories, housing estates, [or] high-rise flats" across the nation, but also enable them to create their own assemblages like *Chains or Change?*.[43] In her biographical documentation of the founders of IWLM, Anne Stopper reveals that *Chains or Change?* became a means of understanding the importance of collective action and the capabilities of an assemblage in movement: "The process of putting the booklet together had taught each of the founders what the group was capable of achieving if everyone pitched in – the journalists doing the bulk of the research and writing, the typesetter creating the design for the cover, and others aiding in the production with the endless photocopying and stapling" (*Mondays* 77). In this account, Stopper identifies the ways in which the genre of the periodical invited collaboration through each of its material components – textual, visual, and editorial. However, this process of "putting the booklet together," or collaborative assemblage, results in the production of more than just the booklet; it also results in the production of the group's identity. Laurel Forster suggests that periodicals are linked to group identity formation in the women's movement: "The production of the artefact of the magazine itself, no matter how homemade and humble, announces a group's

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[43] While *Chains or Change?* was a one-time pamphlet or manifesto, I would frame it within the genre of periodical because it is the predecessor, in both form and content, to *Fownes Street Journal,* which was published by one of the Fownes Street branches of WLM after the breakup of IWLM. *Fownes Street Journal* was published monthly from May to September of 1972.

formation. Making a statement of its shared intentions and, through the setting down in print of

its views, lends the group authority" (*Magazine* 209). The repeated assemblage of the women

of IWLM is solidified in the physical output of *Chains or Change?*, which not only calls the

group and its identity into being, but also lends the nascent women's movement a physical and

ideological presence necessary to build collectivity. Therefore, I suggest that Maher, in her

narration of the development of a shared consciousness of oppression, models for her readers a

feminist praxis that is located in print on multiple levels. *Chains or Change?* is positioned as a

space for women's self-reflection, discussion, organization, and theorization, as well as a place

for their reproduction of feminism, thereby linking women's liberation to cultural production.

Texts like *Chains or Change?* produce feminism by providing an impetus for the

movement of women, while also stabilizing a place for new narratives to take form. Beins

argues that feminism's survival, continuation, and progression depends on its ability to

reproduce itself throughout time, and the serial form of the periodical enables solidity through

repetition (*Liberation* 5). Part of taking action, or enacting "movement," involves the

reproduction of feminism, which is a pivotal stage in the process of social movement

development. In Ireland, the origins of the women's liberation movement are tied to the

material reproduction of feminism in and through print. According to Sara Ahmed, the

movement of women is integral to the ideology and practice of feminism:

> We are moved to become feminists…Feminism: the dynamics of making
> connections. And yet a movement has to be built…A movement needs to take place
> somewhere. A movement is not just or only movement; there is something that needs
> to be kept still, given a place, if we are moved to transform what is. (*Living* 3)

As Ahmed indicates, movements require both mobility and stability in order to build

collectivity and sustain or stabilize interactions; a space that enables the enactment of directed

action as well as a place that offers stasis to ensure continuity. Building on Ahmed's emphasis

on the importance of places of stillness for social movements, I borrow from Beins's important

work on American periodical culture, feminism, and social movements in both *Free Our*

Sisters, Free Ourselves: Locating U.S. Feminism through Periodicals, 1970-1983 (2011) and

Liberation in Print: Feminist Periodicals and Social Movement Identity (2017) to begin to

situate the ways in which Irish feminist periodicals materialize a place for feminism. In *Free*

Our Sisters, Beins argues that feminist texts "not only express the content of the movement but

also give it a physical presence. They give the movement not only a *what* but also a *where*"

(*Free* 48; emphasis in original). As she further elaborates, identifying the "where" or places of

a women's movement is important not only because these sites are crucial in constructing

physical and affective relationships within any movement, but also because "the types of places

available to and selected by activists for their political work shape who identifies with those

politics and who takes part" (*Liberation* 44). The autonomous Irish women's movement is built

within the pages of the alternative periodical press, which provides a space – a "seed-bed," as

Banshee intimates – where women cannot only imagine similar experiences within a larger

frame of oppression, but also locate places to begin to transform "what is." In examining the

periodicals in the remaining portion of this chapter, I am interested in theorizing how the genre

of the periodical provides the "what" and "where" of the autonomous women's movement.

Broadly, how do these periodicals move Irish women? Which places do they offer as sites of

stillness? And what features of the periodical stabilize women's movement? More specifically,

what kinds of repeated frames are assembled in the periodicals of the radical women's

liberation movement, ideationally; and why and how do alternative periodicals function,

materially, as effective framing vessels for the women's movement?

Framing Print as a Form of Direct Action

This article is about form, about process, about power. This movement, this process of growth we call Wimin's Liberation, is all about destroying the power structures of this society, which place all men in a position of power over all wimin, and place some men in a position of power over all other people, through the oppressive class system…The forms by which we make the revolution are of crucial importance, therefore, in determining its aftereffects. – O'Laura, Eileen. "The Circle Is…" *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1978, p. 4; (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive)

In the following section, I direct my attention to both *Banshee* and *Wicca.* While the issues I discuss in relation to alternative print, feminist direct action, and space and place extend to other periodicals produced throughout the women's movement, I use *Banshee* and *Wicca* as case studies for two reasons, primarily. The first is that *Banshee* and *Wicca* are self-designated sister publications. While *Banshee* emerged out of IWU and *Wicca* had no specific organizational affiliation, at least six of the former members of the *Banshee* collective continued with *Wicca's* editorial board, including Gillian Burke, Mary Doran, Mary Dorcey, Ger Nolan, Anne O'Brien, and Saundra Stephen, and both publications designated themselves "feminist" magazines. Not every periodical produced and affiliated with the women's movement in the Republic designated itself as politically "feminist," and so it is important to distinguish between the categorization of "feminist" and "women's issues." The second is that both publications have longer run dates, more issues produced, and larger circulation numbers than some of the other feminist publications at this time. *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s collective run dates span the heightened public visibility of the women's movement in the Republic from 1976 to 1981. Although *Banshee* only published eight issues from 1976 to 1977, it produced around 3000 copies per issue.[44] *Wicca,* published every four to six weeks, made a longer run at

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[44] According to the editorial report for *Banshee* no. 1, the first printing of the periodical produced 3000 copies, 2500 of which were distributed or sold (BL/F/AP/1142/10, Attic Press Archive). Similarly, *Rebel Sister* reports that IWU produced 3,000 copies during its first and second runs (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive).

thirteen issues, but saw a slightly decreased rate of circulation – an average of 1,300 per issue (Grassroots *Wicca*). Both of these factors – publication affiliation and time range – allow for the reading of repetitions and patterns, as well as differences, across similar textual objects. As Beins argues, feminism is narrativized through repetitions, where "repetition enables both semiotic and affective stickiness: when a sign circulates in a similar form and there is consistency in its connotations, both meaning and feeling accumulate and are affirmed" (*Liberation* 5). By examining visual, textual, and editorial repetitions across serialized publications over a specific time range, we can better understand the specific affective and semiotic modes through which various alternative periodicals worked to imagine, politicize, and materialize feminism in the Republic.

In the opening of her article entitled "The Circle Is" in the first edition of *Wicca* (1978)*,* Eileen O'Laura discusses the importance of the circle to the Irish Women's Liberation Movement as a form in which every woman is "given the space to form her own thoughts and speak her mind": "We circle to eat, we circle to make music, we circle to make decisions about where and when we will travel, we circle to make decisions about the use of our collective resources, we circle to mediate, to share political analysis, and to work out personal and political conflicts" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive). In O'Laura's narration, the form of the circle also becomes a verb, or a direct action – "to circle" – and this form is crucial to directing the shape and form of the Irish women's revolution. Circling happens in personal and political, as well as public and intimate spaces and places; the women of *Wicca* move in circles. If we think about "revolution" as a circular movement, or rather the action of moving in a circular cause, and O'Laura's definition of the circle as a "space" in which a woman can "form her thoughts and speak her mind," then we can start to understand the ways in which O'Laura

envisions the women's movement as rewriting the spaces of social practice through direct forms of action. As she ends her article, O'Laura concludes, "as we meet in circles, we begin to see the importance of living in circles, of moving in circles, of really making our lives reflective of our politics…Let us truly revolve in circles, making a true revolution" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive). The importance of moving in circles and of living in circles draws attention to Henri Lefebvre's estimation that it is "spatial practice [that] ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion" in the production of social space (*Space* 33); and it is this repeated embodied mobility across space that enables the constitution of place. If the women's movement is to succeed then it must confront hegemonic and hierarchical uses of space, as well as interrogate the ways in which space is fragmented into hierarchies, binaries, and differences that are formed, sedimented, and reproduced. Ultimately, the women's movement must imagine new modes of spatiality for feminism in order to make a "true revolution." To paraphrase O'Laura by way of Ahmed, then, the forms *of* women's movement are key to *the* women's movement.

If, as O'Laura contends in *Wicca*, the women's movement is about form, process, and power, then we must unpack the processes through which the forms of the women's movement attempted to confront the spatial enactment of power. While O'Laura's article is about the form of the women's movement, it is also part of that form itself. "The Circle Is…" maps the physical and social landscape of women's circles, while also providing a material site where women can begin to locate the spatial practice of circling. Returning to Beins, periodicals play an important role in mapping the spatiality of the women's movement by locating places in which feminist activities converge because "each issue locate[s] feminism in both place and time and thus convey[s] where, when, how, and why liberatory work [is] taking place"

(*Liberation* 43). In essence, periodicals represent and convey the circulation of feminist bodies in space and, as social geographer Gillian Rose claims in "Making Space for the Female Subject of Feminism," the "process of representation is central to everyday space and to the engendering of subjects in that space" ("Space" 348). The everyday engendering of subjects within space takes place through the enactment of codes that produce space, both relationally and discursively. Drawing on the work of John Urry, both Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin surmise that the landscape of the social and "its spatial expression of place, is composed of the ceaseless flow of people and materials across and between spaces," whereby social relations are reconceived as a "dense *assemblage* of mobilities" ("Introduction" 7; emphasis added). As objects that circulate, periodicals are not only part of the materials that flow across and between spaces, but also are part of the process of assembling those mobilities – periodicals both mobilize assemblages, spatially, and are assemblages of mobilities, materially. Through their visual, textual, and editorial features, both *Banshee* and *Wicca* move to redefine the spaces of social practice, re-imagining feminist spaces in their representations of feminist mobilities, thereby linking print to feminist action. In what follows, I will demonstrate the ways in which *Banshee* and *Wicca* use repeated visual elements, such as photographs and graphics, and textual features to link the form of print to feminist direct action, and thereby the reconstitution of feminist spaces. One of the first ways in which feminist social relations or mobilities are assembled in the spaces of *Banshee* and *Wicca* is through the visual elements of photographs; specifically, cover images.

The cover of the first issue of *Banshee* is a multi-image cover, which features photographs of three different groups of women. The first is of a woman waving a pamphlet and directing her address to a group of female onlookers; the second, a collage of women's

faces – cut out and compiled together – surmounted by a cutout of the primary figure in Eugène

Delacroix's 1830 rendition of Marianne, or *Liberty Leading the People*; and the third

photograph is a group of women sitting around a table, occupying a male boardroom meeting.

All three images posit female collectivity, contentious action, and textuality as central to

Banshee's identity. None of the photographs contain captions or cutlines, which are identifying

markers of images used in mainstream and commercial periodicals; however, the third

photograph reappears in the subsequent article "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," in

which readers learn that the leaders of IWU infiltrated the quarters of the Federated Union of

Employers on January 8, 1976 in order to "[force] the Vice-President of that organization,

under the watchful eye of an Inspector of the Garda Siochana, to account for their denial of

equal pay to women workers" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In this photograph, the

women of IWU are assembled in a circle, occupying the roundtable of the FUE Directors'

boardroom in equal spatial relations to the all-male group of directors. More importantly,

women also outnumber the male directors, filling the space of the boardroom with their bodies

in unconventional ways. While the male directors only sit at the table, the women of IWU sit

on chairs at the table and around the table, as well as stand and sit on the floor holding protest

signs. The women of IWU disrupt the hegemonic place-bound social practices of the FUE

boardroom – an institution of the state – by assembling new forms of mobilities, and their signs

for "Equal Pay Now" render visible the hidden social hierarchies embedded in that place. This

new assemblage of feminist mobilities and this significant form of spatial disruption results in

physical movement, or "force," as later indicated both in "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen

United," and also in the adjacent article "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries": "It was the
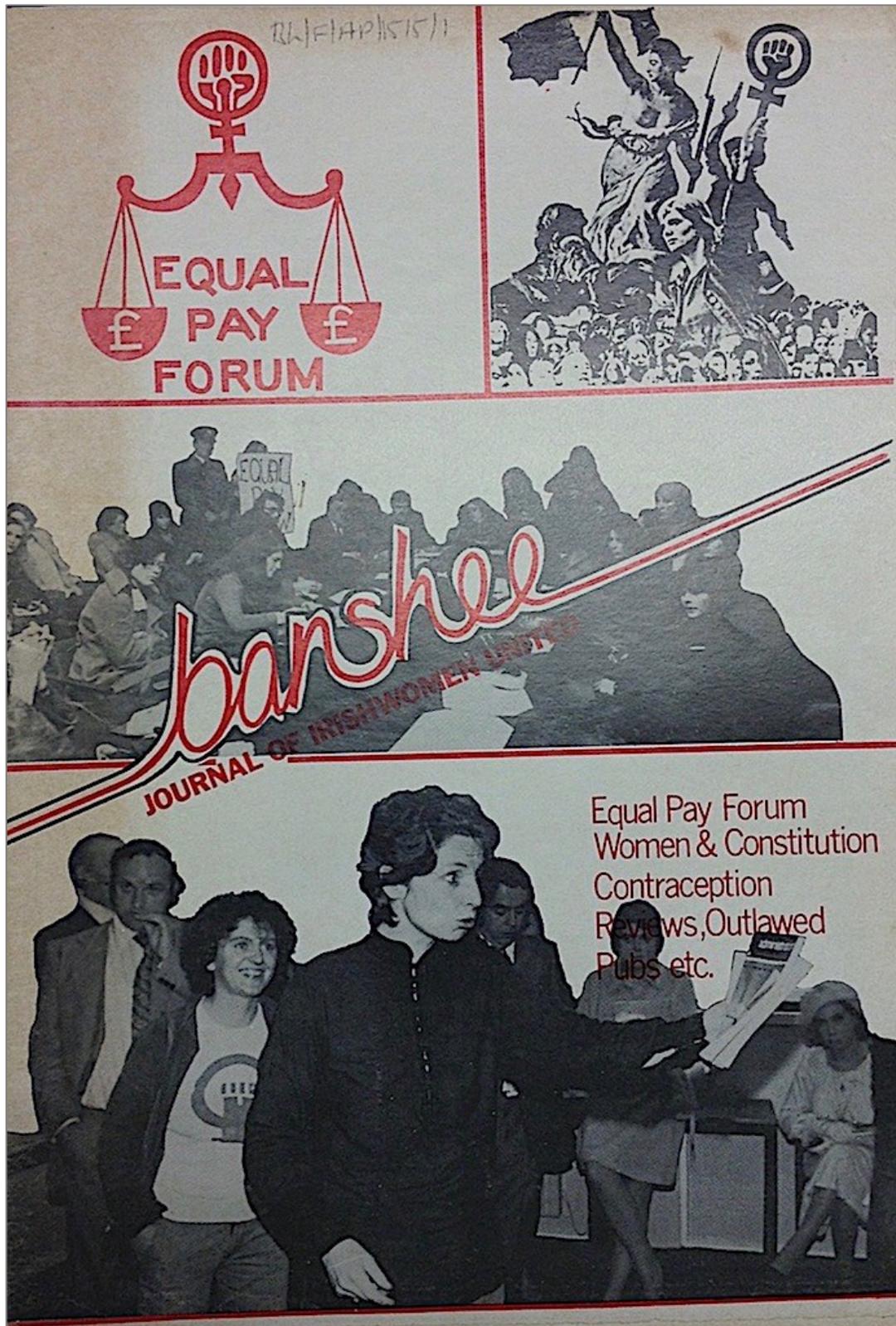
Fig. 1 Cover of *Banshee, Journal of Irishwomen United,* no. 1, 1976 (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

Fig. 2 Cover of *Wicca, A Monthly Feminist Magazine,* no. 1, c.1978 (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive).

picket and occupation of their national headquarters (see article on F.U.E. on this page) by Irish Women United, that were largely instrumental in exposing the propaganda of the F.U.E." (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). [45] IWU points to its radical direct action – its members' occupation of space – as forcing those in power to respond with some immediacy. In the repetition of the photograph of IWU's occupation of FUE headquarters on both the cover of *Banshee* and also in the following article on the occupation, IWU both projects a radicalized feminist image premised on direct confrontational action to their readership and also models modes of autonomous participation and organization within the current state.

The pattern of women in action in public spaces, particularly engaged in acts of political dissent, is repeated both on the covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* and also reproduced within the pages of the periodicals; however, it is the cover that first solidifies this new relationship between feminist identity and the occupation, assemblage, and creation of feminist spaces. According to Sammye Johnson and Patricia Prijatel, "the cover is the most important editorial and design page in a magazine. The cover, as the magazine's face, creates that all-important first impression. It also provides both continuity through format recognition and change through intriguing cover lines from issue to issue" (*Magazine* 240). There are two points I want to draw attention to in Johnson and Prijatel's observation: the continuity of the magazine's "face" and cover line format across periodical issues. While Johnson and Prijatel use the term "face" metaphorically, faces – more specifically, women's faces – have populated the covers of popular women's magazines since the late-nineteenth century, whether in illustrated poster or photographic form. Ross Ballaster, Margaret Beetham, et al. suggest that while "the visual

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[45] "One hour after the occupation, the government went on national television to announce that they were giving equal pay in the civil service. We are not saying that there is a total connection between our occupation and government capitulation. We are saying that the time for soft shoe shuffling is over" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

pleasure offered by the ladies' paper of the 1890s," which often featured illustrations, engravings, and etchings, "is very different from that of today's glossies, which can print high-quality colour pictures on every page…the importance of the good-quality picture, in which the woman is the primary subject, persists" (*Worlds* 118-9). While both *Wicca* and *Banshee* feature women as the primary subjects of their covers, they begin to challenge the visual conventions of traditional women's commercial magazines with the covers of their first issues. According to Marjorie Ferguson, those who produce cover photographs for women's magazines often "draw upon the same common stock of stereotypes and cultural myths as those used in advertisements aimed at a female market," and, therefore, traditional women's magazines often choose selective female types that conform to essences of femininity for their photographic focus ("Photograph" 219). Of course, this statement does not apply equally to all women's magazines with a commercial imperative; however, I suggest that both *Banshee* and *Wicca* counter commercial representations of femininity in their reinscription of what qualifies as women's content, such as whose faces are represented, through their serialization of analogous structural elements of women's magazines.

The "Cover Girls" of Banshee and Wicca

It is significant that the women on the covers of the first issues of *Banshee* and *Wicca* are not only both members of the editorial collective and also activists – their actions supply their periodicals' contents – but also that they are their own "cover girls." The members of these two periodicals move to rewrite the space of journalistic practice, not unlike the female journalists of the commercial press; however, what the alternative periodical format allows that the national commercial press does not, at the time, is the explicit identification of women with the form of their writing. While the names of journalists like Mary Anderson, Mary Maher, Nell

McCafferty, Mary McCutcheon, Christina Murphy and so on, became attached to the partitioned women's pages of the national press through bylines, the faces of the *Banshee* and *Wicca* collectives became attached to their alternative periodicals through cover imagery. Ellen McCracken has suggested that the visual images on magazine covers offer readers "mirror images or windows" to their future selves, while also solidifying the identity of the magazine (*Decoding* 14). While the covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* retain women figures as their primary subjects, not unlike more traditional women's magazines, they also identify and project new modes of spatial and social relationality amongst women. In doing so, they offer alternative windows and images to their readers that are reinforced through both the settings and the signs of the cover photographs and repeated throughout the serial issues.

One of the important features of the representation of women's faces on both *Banshee*'s and *Wicca*'s covers is the presentation of women in groups in public spaces rather than as singular individuals.[46] I have already described the cover of the first issue of *Banshee* in the above section with regard to the IWU occupation of FUE; and while *Banshee* frames its inaugural feminist identity as practiced in relation to the transformation of institutional spaces, *Wicca* projects a slightly more tempered notion of feminist organization and activism onto its readers. *Wicca*'s first cover presents an alternative narrative to mainstream and commercial representations of feminine collectivity, at this time which primarily capitalize on the civic, confrontational, and disruptive events of feminist activism. Similar to *Banshee,* the first issue of *Wicca* showcases a large group of women – eleven members of the *Wicca* collective, to be exact – casually gathered near a bridge and informally posing for the photograph in a loose

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[46] The covers of *Banshee* nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and *Wicca* nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9 all feature women in groups; however, both periodicals also use similar photographic tropes inside all of their issues. While the covers of *Banshee* nos. 2 and 6 are illustrations rather than photographs, I include them in my description here because they follow the same pattern of women presented in collectives, which ultimately reinforce the same identities of both periodicals as their photographic covers.

semi-circle formation with two rows; four members are squatting in the front and seven are standing in the back. A number of the women are raising their fists or signing a pyramid shape with their hands.[47] On the bottom right corner of the cover there is also a small cutout photograph of Noreen Winchester[48] after her release from Armagh prison, surrounded by a group of women with their arms raised and a sign that reads "Thanks for your support" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive). Although the smaller photograph of the Noreen Winchester demonstration recalls the social and spatial dynamics of the FUE headquarters occupation by IWU, the photograph of the *Wicca* collective prescribes another form of spatial practice in line with autonomous direct action. While IWU chooses to emphasize the way in which feminism, as a socio-spatial practice, can disrupt the hegemonic production forces of the state, the *Wicca* collective renders visible the social relations that result in the production of *Wicca*, spatially filling a "void that can't be filled by the capitalist press" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive)*.* The placement of the assemblage of the *Wicca* collective in time and space on the cover of their self-identified periodical is important because it materializes the identity of feminism. This physical identification not only enables the construction of imagined, ideological ties across the women's movement, but it also establishes and provides a physical place for women to connect to the movement.

 In their self-selection of these images for the covers of their first periodicals, both *Banshee* and *Wicca* actively work to control their individual narrative, constructing their

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[47] This gesture can either be interpreted as an occult symbol for the Illuminati, a reference to the Eye of Providence, or the inverted symbol for "vagina" in American Sign Language.

[48] The case of Noreen Winchester was an important event in bringing public attention to the issue of violence against women in the home. In 1976, a nineteen-year-old Belfast woman named Noreen Winchester was imprisoned for murdering her father, who had subjected both her and her siblings to years of sexual and physical abuse. In 1978, women's groups in both the North and South spearheaded an international campaign to secure Noreen's release from prison, eventually garnering her a royal pardon for her "crime."

identity for their readers and engaging in a politics of self-representation intrinsic to feminist consciousness-raising. Although the setting of the cover photograph of the first issue of *Wicca* is not necessarily geographically notable, what is important is that it demonstrates the way in which the act of writing materially carves out a space for women in public. Beins suggests that materiality is essential to the process of identity formation and collective action: "While a collective identity exists as an ongoing discursive process, it requires a material existence. This materiality manifests in the form of action" (*Liberation* 13). Collectivity, visibility, and solidarity are critical to the transition of feminism from an individual practice to a social movement, and the shared material forms or collaborative actions and practices of those individuals become intrinsic to their collective identity. It is this "everywhere nature of feminist communities," Jo Reger argues, that is "important in the movement's continuity over time" (*Everywhere* 7). However, as Reger continues to explain, one of the challenges of feminism over time is that it can appear to be both everywhere, as "an ideology shaping individuals' worldviews and cultural and social norms," and also nowhere, as a result of the "limited visibility of explicitly feminist activism" (ct. in Kelly "Feminist" 82). In other words, the ideology of feminism must also be made visible – its presence must be discernible – in order for an individual to participate or join in collective action. In his influential relational approach to social movement identity, Alberto Melucci proposed that individuals are propelled to either join or not join collective action based on "the differential capacity to define an identity, that is, to the differential access to resources that enable [her] to participate in the process of identity building" ("involved" 343). If the continuity of feminism as a movement relies on the maintenance of feminist communities over time, then the participation of individuals in the construction of those communities means that those communities must be accessible, they must

be identifiable, and they must be locatable. Importantly, the formation of the open semi-circle on *Wicca'*s first cover projects this image of inclusivity and accessibility. The semi-circle functions as an invitation to *Wicca*'s readership to join them in their form of spatial belonging – "let us truly revolve in circles" – and also visualizes an inclusive and dynamic conceptualization of feminism whose continuity (or continuous revolution) depends upon the participation of its readership. Feminist activism, in this case, the act of feminist writing, offers a material form of relationality that ensures a sense of female community, solidarity, and sociality at the level of the public and private, as well as resists the institutionalized formations of the state apparatus, primarily the commercial press. On the cover, the collective identity of *Wicca* is given a material existence, revealing the "face" of women's writing, and locating women's bodies in space. The visual identification of the collective with the identity of the periodicals suggests that the act of writing is an embodied politic and a product of alternative forms of female relationality.

Collectivizing Faces in Places

As *Banshee* and *Wicca* continue to publish their succeeding issues, both collectives continue to depict women's bodies in space on their covers but feature different women's faces in various spaces, thereby materializing feminism's "everywhere" practices. I have already unpacked the presentation of the editorial collectives of both *Banshee* and *Wicca* in action on their inaugural covers, but the proceeding issues of both periodicals feature women at work, women at leisure, women in protest, and women in entertainment. The repeated visualization of feminist activism – of the collectivization of women's bodies and their actions in various settings with a shared purpose – not only positions direct action as an everyday occurrence in

everyday spaces, but also codifies the everyday woman as the face of Irish feminism. For example, the third issue of *Banshee,* while not displaying an organized form of protest, features a confrontation between Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave, a synecdoche for the hetero-patriarchal state, and an unidentified woman. On the cover, a smiling cutout of Cosgrave's head is captioned by a hand-drawn bubble quote stating, "'The majority of the Irish people would not favour a change in the law on contraception,'" to which the woman, in the act of a headstand, responds, "Who did he consult – his own heart?" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). *Banshee*'s third cover renders visible one of the problematic tropes of the traditional women's magazine industry. Elle McCracken explains that cover images represent "a judgment about what constitutes ideal femininity," and "frequently contain an invisible yet implicit man who approves of and defines the feminine ideal" (*Decoding* 14). Similarly, in her study of covers of traditional women's magazines, Ferguson addresses the history of women's bodily presentation, specifically the decontextualized "big head" portrait image. On these covers a close up shot of a cover model's face, which typically communicated "an expression of satisfaction combined with supplication," was used to present an image of femininity and also create an image of the magazine ("Cover" 221). On *Banshee*'s cover, the invisible man is given a representational form through the figure of Liam Cosgrave. Here, his gaze is visibly materialized, as he directs his eyes at the anonymous woman, and his disembodied head functions, literally, as a mouthpiece for state-regulated norms regarding ideal Irish femininity. While Cosgrave's head is portrayed in portrait style, the anonymous woman is presented in full-body form; however, her body is not aimed to please or supplicate. The woman's bodily position draws attention to the embodied act of feminist protest and symbolizes the counter-state formations of feminism – she *literally* stands in opposition to Cosgrave. The women of

Fig. 3 Cover no. 3 of *Banshee* features Liam Cosgrave's head confronted by a feminist body (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive).

Banshee nos. 4, 5, and 7 continue to convey protesting bodies performing acts of state resistance.

While the covers of nos. 4 and 5 show women formally protesting in all-male, civic recreational spaces, a topic that will be addressed further in the following section, no. 7 locates women protesting state censorship of female sexuality, specifically. On this cover, members of IWU[49] are raising banned copies of the British periodical *Spare Rib* above their heads while shouting, collectively. *Spare Rib* was a leftist feminist magazine established in 1972. While the publication circulated in the Republic in the early 1970s, it was formally reviewed by the Censorship of Publications Board in February of 1977 and deemed "usually or infrequently indecent or obscene" – primarily because it contained advertisements for contraception – and, subsequently, was banned in the Republic.[50] In an organized campaign on Saturday, February 12, 1977, twenty members of IWU travelled by train to Belfast, purchased and returned to Dublin with dozens of copies of the banned publication. In the collective's own words in their proceeding editorial, the government's ban on *Spare Rib* "is a blatant infringement of our rights as women to read the literature of our choice;" therefore, "we will fight this assault on our rights, at every level, and particularly we will continue to buy and read the literature of our choice" (BL/F/AP/1515/7, Attic Press Archive). *Banshee*'s presentation of IWU's direct action campaign on both their cover and accompanying editorial is significant because of the connections they draw between feminist print culture and feminist activism. While I have already touched upon the way in which the reading or consuming of feminist writing –

[49] Although there is no cutline for the cover photograph of no. 7, we can deduce that these protesters are members of IWU based on the corresponding news article entitled "Spare Rib." In the article, the *Banshee* collective states that 20 members of IWU went to Belfast to purchase copies of the banned magazine, and as *Banshee* often reports on and visualizes its own activities, it is reasonable to conclude that the women captured on the cover photograph are members of IWU (BL/F/AP/1515/7, Attic Press Archive).

[50] Both *Banshee* and *Wicca* counter this censorship target by including advertisements and information on contraception and family planning clinics throughout their periodical issues.

alternative periodicals, specifically – created an *imaginative* community, the *Spare Rib* campaign also demonstrates the way in which the act of reading can organize a *physical* community and activate political realities. As *Banshee* indicates in their editorial, women's right to read is crucial to the education and consciousness-raising of women at the level of the ideological, but what it also materializes is the way in which reading propels action. In this instance, words move; or, rather, the right to read words moves, as the purchasing of *Spare Rib* for reader consumption becomes a mobilizing and collectivizing act for feminists. Not unlike the women in a headstand on the cover of no. 2, *Banshee* no. 7's "cover girls" are actively confronting the institutions of the state through their bodily formations. In this instance, the act of reading is specifically coded as an embodied act of feminist resistance, thereby rendering print a form of feminist action.

While *Wicca*'s covers similarly represent women's bodies in acts of resistance or dissent, they also move to present alternative forms of relational and spatial contention, specifically, women at work. According to Caitriona Clear, in the 1950s and 1960s Irish working women did find images of themselves in the advertisements, letters pages, and service articles of women's magazines, such as the Irish-produced *Woman's Life, Woman's Way, Model Housekeeping, Woman's Mirror, Irish Tatler and Sketch/Lady of the House,* and *Miss,* as well as British periodicals such as *Woman's Own, Woman,* and *Woman's Weekly*;[51] however, more often than not those images focused on "feminized" professions and labour. Clear further explains that while a magazine like *Woman's Life,* for example, did attempt to pay attention to "ordinary" working girls and women, it primarily tended to feature "workers whose occupations needed publicity (actors, authors, dress designers and makers of cosmetics and

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[51] *Woman's Weekly* (1911), *Woman's Own* (1932), and *Woman* (1937) are weekly women's lifestyle magazines.

sweets and other luxuries), and those whose occupational identity was by definition glamorous – air hostess, for example" (*Voices* 24-5). The covers of *Wicca*'s fourth and seventh issues expand the realm of women's participation in the paid labour force, remapping the spatial and social divisions of gendered labour. Although following the same formula of a single centralized photo beneath the masthead as *Banshee*, the cover of *Wicca* no. 4 does not include a photograph, but rather a reproduction of a poster entitled "Working Women Unite" – whose slogan runs across the top and bottom of the print – printed by the Chicago Women's Graphics Collective in 1975. In the poster, there are two women in an office hugging one another while seated in two office chairs, their faces turned towards the viewer in delight (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive). What is noteworthy about this cover is its constitution of what qualifies as a feminist space. Similar to the cover photograph of *Wicca*'s collective on its inaugural publication, no. 4 imagines the workplace as offering an opportunity to enact a feminist politics. Beins suggests that for feminism, the idea of what constitutes a feminist space ultimately "affect[s] the creation and experience of specific places…and experiences of these places shape conceptions of feminism, which, in turn, inform how feminist spaces are imagined" (*Liberation* 45). In this presentation of the workplace as a potentially feminist space, *Wicca* not only provides women with information regarding locations to practice feminism, but also reimagines how the workplace can be experienced and, in turn, shape feminism.

In *Wicca* no. 7, the collective, again, turns to imagining how women experience the workplace. Although the collective cite their cover photo as appearing courtesy of the *Irish Times,* I have not been able to locate the original photograph; however, it depicts a tradeswoman, most likely a maintenance worker or pipefitter, working on a city pipeline. Her dirty and robust demeanor counters the overly curated, coiffed, and posed image of the cover

girl model typical of popular women's magazines at the time (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). In her analysis of the "glamorous" occupations depicted in commercial women's magazines in the Republic, Clear argues that the movement of women, specifically single women, into the public sphere of paid labour throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century resulted in their bodily scrutiny: "Women – mostly single – were inhabiting the public sphere as never before and the more-than-doubling in the number of female hairdressers between 1946 and 1961 suggests not only rising female income but a heightened obligation to public presentability on women's part" ("*Life*" 73). This focus on women's presentability can also be read as an extension of the aftermath of colonization in the Republic, where a "well developed system of male domination, characterized by obsessive concern with control of women's bodies" meant that women's bodies were tasked with maintaining the cultural purity of nationhood (Moane *Gender* 105).[52] Susan Cahill reminds us that the postcolonial investment in maintaining an independent nation resulted in "emphases on borders and ideas of purity…particularly in terms of the family and the reproductive body" (*Irish* 15). Like the woman in the headstand opposing Liam Cosgrave on the cover of *Banshee* no. 2, the tradeswoman on the cover of *Wicca* no. 7 challenges modes of female presentability premised on bodily purity, supplication, and objectification. *Wicca* imagines women's (re)productive labour beyond the confines of the home and enacted through the bodily mode of motherhood; however, her body still labours on behalf of the state. *Wicca's* cover does not necessarily seek to overthrow institutionalized forms of capital, labour, and state but rather seeks to reimagine

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[52] In the wake of Independence, the gendering of Irish national identity took effect with the intervention of a new discourse on the Irish, which inherently attached women's bodies to the state. This discourse, according to Lloyd, "asserts [women's] femininity as part of the set of characteristics that make them incapable of self-government, [and] demands a response in the form of a remasculinization of the Irish public sphere" ("Counterparts" 202). As both Rockett and Meaney et al. have argued, the sanctioned discourse of the Free State was wary of the "foreign, the urban and the sexual," all encapsulated in the figure of the modern Irish woman (Meaney et al. *Reading* 6).

the productive spatial relations of women's labour, while also drawing attention to the centrality of material bodies to the transformation of social relations. On their covers, *Banshee* and *Wicca* display women in alternative relationships with places and actors within social spaces. Caroline Sweetman indicates that the goal of women's movements is to mobilize collective action against gender-specific forms of oppression, but feminist solidarity can only begin by empowering women's relationships: "The company of women represents an alternative form of social network which enables individual women to move away from dependency on the traditional social relations available to them via engagement with the family, marriage and the household" ("Solidarity" 218). *Banshee* and *Wicca* use their covers to represent women using their bodies to redefine their forms of relationality – as sisters, friends, colleagues, coworkers, demonstrators, and revolutionaries – within various places to move away from traditional forms of dependency in order to organize new forms of collective female agency while affirming the existence of feminism in those spaces.

How Protest Signs and Cover Lines Stabilize a Place for Feminism

While the cover visuals of *Banshee* and *Wicca* represent and enact the transformative spatial potential of feminist praxis, they also attempt to stabilize the alternative press as a place for Irish feminism – offering a site of stillness – through their portrayal of the linguistic markers of direct action. One of the most notable features of the cover photographs that portray collective direct action, or protest in action, in *Banshee* and *Wicca* is the visual and linguistic emplacement of protest signs[53] – signs in motion as women march, signs in stasis at occupations and demonstrations, handmade posters, banners, and picket signs. What stands out more than anything, though, is that these signs are *verbal*; there is rarely a symbol or image

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[53] Protest signs also are repeated throughout the inside issues of both periodicals, but since my primary focus is on the covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* in this section, I will confine my discussion to the cover photographs, primarily.

included in the featured signs at women's protest events, apart from the astronomical symbol for the planet Venus enclosing a raised fist that became a universal emblem of radical feminism throughout the 1960s and 1970s. What becomes evident in surveying the photographs of *Banshee* and *Wicca* is that language is a vital part of the action of the movement, both during *and* after movement events. These presentations of assemblages of women in public spaces at different moments in time draws attention to the ways in which women-led protests in Ireland were not only spatial but also discursive affairs, and the language of protest is "increasingly enmeshed and mutually constitutive" with the space in which protest action takes place (Kasanga "linguistic" 22). According to Melissa DeAnn Seifert, while social movement signage overwhelms contentious events, historically – a phenomenon that is acutely apparent in surveying the visual documentation of protest – visual culture is overlooked in protest studies (*Sedimenting* 3). Rodrigue Landry and Richard Y. Bourhis's concept of the "linguistic landscape," grounded in sociolinguistics, has recently drawn the interests of scholars in social movement and media studies for its usefulness in analyzing the semiotic resources of protest discourse. [54] For example, Adam Jaworski and Crispin Thurlow identify "textual mediation or discursive construction of place and the use of space as a semiotic resource" as the primary dimensions of the semiotic (or linguistic) landscape ("Semiotic" 1).[55] In examining the terrain of the discrete protest events visually documented and reproduced in *Banshee* and *Wicca,* I argue that verbal protest signs are not only a means of mediating the discourse of protest in

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[54] In their original 1997 work entitled "Linguistic Landscape and Ethnolinguistic Vitality: An Empirical Study," Landry and Bourhis argue that, "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration," and each linguistic landscape can serve "an information function and a symbolic function" (25).

[55] Jaworski and Thurlow expand the boundaries of former definitions of the linguistic landscape by designating what they define as the "semiotic landscape," which refers to "any (public) space with visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning making" ("Semiotic" 2).

WOMEN & THE CONSTITUTION

JUSTICE DEMANDS THE VOTE
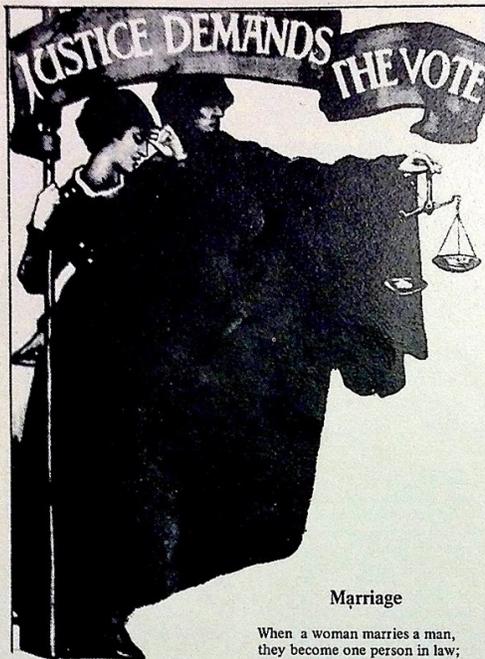
The Irish Constitution states that *"all citizens shall, as human persons be held equal before the law"*. Having struck that hopeful note, it goes on to say that the State in legislating for these citizens may "have due regard to differences of social function".

The social function of men is not defined in the Constitution; it refers, however, to women in one exclusive context only — that of the home, as wives and mothers. Without women in the home, it says, the common good cannot be achieved. In recognition of this, the State undertakes to ensure that mothers will not be forced by economic necessity to take a job and *"neglect the duties in the home"*. (What home? There are 10,000 families on the Dublin housing waiting list). What money does the state provide for mothers? Deserted wives, widows, unmarried mothers and battered wives are all living on a government allowance which wouldn't feed a single person never mind a family. Ten per cent of working women are married mothers. Most of them working because they need the money to supplement their husband's income. The State has thus forced 26,000 married women to work outside the home *"through economic necessity"*.

Marriage

When a woman marries a man, they become one person in law; the personhood being invested in the man. The woman surrenders many of her legal rights to her husband. On marriage, a woman loses her identity and in many legal respects ceases to exist.

For example, the law of domicile states that a married woman's home is the same as that of her husband, even if they are living apart by consent or are legally separated. This still applies even if the husband commits bigamy or deserts his wife. Besides denying the wife's existence as an independent individual, this can create difficulties in many matters such as inheritance.

Under Irish law a woman is also the exclusive property of her husband. An Irish husband may claim monetary compensation from any man with whom his wife commits adultery, she cannot do the same if he is the offending party. The husbands claim involves an assessment by jury (until the recent High Court decision, juries could only be made up of males) of the wife's value, i.e. her physical condition, her reputation and character, her capacity for work etc. Recently, a husband was awarded £14,000 in the High Court "for loss of services" when his wife went to live with another man. This is perhaps the most glaring illustration of how a married Irishwoman is regarded before the law, not as a person, but as a piece of property.

Divorce is of course forbidden in Ireland. Even if the couple get a Church annulment, they are still married in the eyes of the State. Given the bonds imposed on women within marriage this is the most cruel bond of all. Even if a woman is deserted, battered or living in misery with a man, there is no way out of the marriage.

Employment

Implied in the Constitution's view of women as primarily wives and mothers is the idea that women are merely "passing time" and not to be considered in the same light as their male co-workers. This presumption has lead to women being paid less than men for equal work. Many women are exploited as sources of cheap labour in menial jobs which have been rejected by men for jobs offering better pay and prospects.

The married working woman is considered for reasons of taxation to be dependent on her husband. Most of her tax-free allowance is included in her husband's allowance. It is possible to have separate tax assessments but most married women don't bother because the Dept. of Inland Revenue is so inefficient.

Social Welfare

More restrictive still are the limitations imposed by the social welfare system on married women. For instance, if the woman tries to be the breadwinner, she is not entitled to unemployment or sickness benefits, as long as her husband is fit for work. Needless to remark, the reverse is not possible.

Men are entitled to the dole, though they have never worked, while women MUST have worked for at least one year to qualify. All this in a society which claims that it holds all citizens equal!

These are only a few of the inequalities and discriminations against women enshrined in the Constitution. Piecemeal changes are gradually being made in the laws but these do little to destroy the image of women created by such laws. Women will have a long fight to gain the equality rightfully theirs before the law.

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Fig. 4 The bottom right corner of a *Banshee* article features two women in the act of protest. The woman on the left is holding a sign with the astronomical symbol for the planet Venus enclosing a raised fist (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

action, but also that their remediation or recirculation on the covers of these feminist alternative periodicals provides a means of assembling collective identities while also contributing to the place-making of feminist periodicals.

In the Irish women's movement, protest signs are communicative devices that rely primarily on language to verbalize discourse in the unfolding protest events; therefore, it is important to begin by surveying the language of protest documented in *Banshee* and *Wicca.* In my categorization of protest actions and events, I draw on Verta Taylor and Nella van Dyke's conceptualization of protest repertoires as "sites of contestation in which bodies, symbols, identities, practices, and discourses are used to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized power relations" ("Tactical" 268). Each of the photos discussed captures women in various places collectively engaging in both bodily and discursive practices that disrupt, challenge, and confront institutionalized power relations.[56] While protest signs feature prominently in both the photographs used in the articles and covers of both periodicals, I will continue to focus my discussion on the covers, generally, because of their serialized format. In what follows, I offer a comprehensive description of the cover visuals of *Banshee* and *Wicca* that feature protest events, paying particular attention to the linguistic landscape of each cover photograph. In surveying the protest signs on the covers of both periodicals, I propose that these discursive texts serve three general functions: to name, to inform, and to unite. These multiple functions enable feminists to build critical narrative of resistance in order to move from identifying problems to mobilizing action.

I have already described the "Equal Pay Now" signs that fill the boardroom of the FUE

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[56] I borrow my use of the term "protest" from Taylor and van Dyke, who define protest as "the collective use of unconventional methods of political participation to try and persuade or coerce authorities to support a challenging group's aim" ("Tactical" 262). This definition of protest applies as much to exceptional events as it does to day-to-day practices.

headquarters during IWU's occupation in the first issue of *Banshee*. *Banshee* nos. 4 and 5

similarly record women occupying male-governed spaces, but rather than confronting

commercial spaces, these women attempt to reclaim sites of recreation and leisure. The

photograph on the cover of *Banshee* no. 4 displays a group of women leaning in a leisurely

manner against the railing of a tennis court at Fitzwilliam Tennis Club,[57] while a woman

occupying the chair umpire's seat holds a sign that reads, "Why are you afraid of women?"

(BL/F/AP/1515/4, Attic Press Archive). No. 5 locates women, both IWU and non-organization-

affiliated, at the Forty-Foot bathing place protest; their bodies either in full clothing or in their

bathing attire, holding signs that state, "Stop bathing apartheid," "Forty-Foot gentlemen attack

women," and "In Ireland private property means men's property," while either conglomerating

on the steps of the bathing place or jumping into the water (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press

Archive).

The signs at both the Fitzwilliam Tennis Club protest and the Forty-Foot protest draw

attention to the gendered exclusions and divisions embedded in social spaces that mediate

everyday embodied experiences of places. In these all-male civic athletic facilities, the practice

of masculinity is localized and predicated on women's spatial exclusion from sport and leisure.

Similarly, the ensuing responses of the male participants to protesting female bodies in these

facilities draws attention to the gendered power divisions produced and reproduced by space

within place. As Anne Finn Enke argues, civic athletics was generally the purview of men, who

"secured masculinity though assertive use of their bodies in highly visible spaces" (*Finding* 6).

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[57]Again, there is no cutline to identify the time and place of the cover photograph of *Banshee* no. 4; however, the Editorial for no. 4 tackles discrimination in athletic facilities, particularly the 40-Foot swimming-place and the Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club, a private members club in Dublin that restricted its membership to men until 1996. Numerous organizations protested the inequality of the sport and leisure facility, and as there is a tennis court featured in the bottom left corner of the cover photograph, I suspect this protest is staged at the Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club.
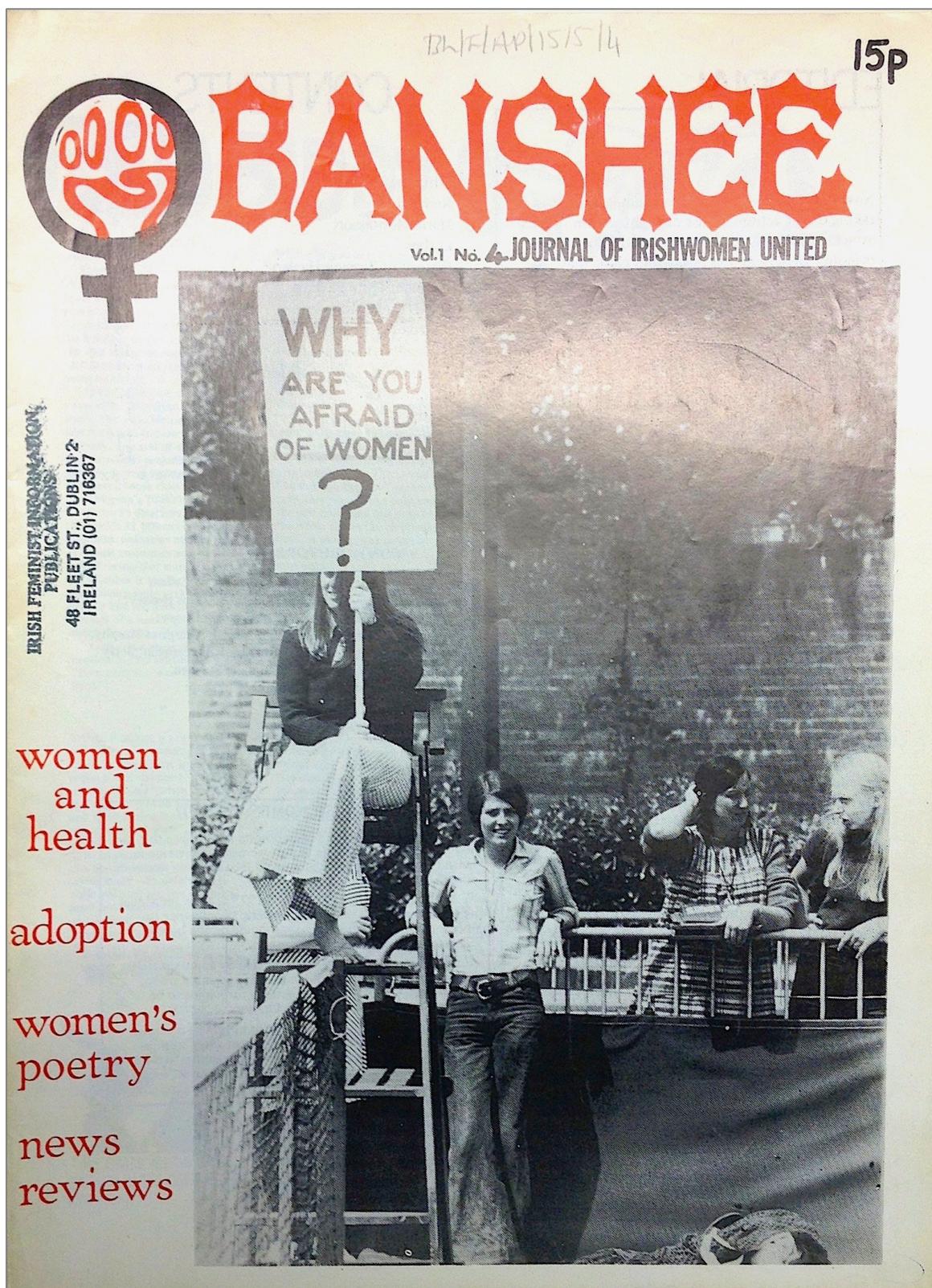
Fig. 5 Women protesting the gender discrimination at Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club on the cover of *Banshee* no. 4 (BL/F/AP/1515/4, Attic Press Archive).
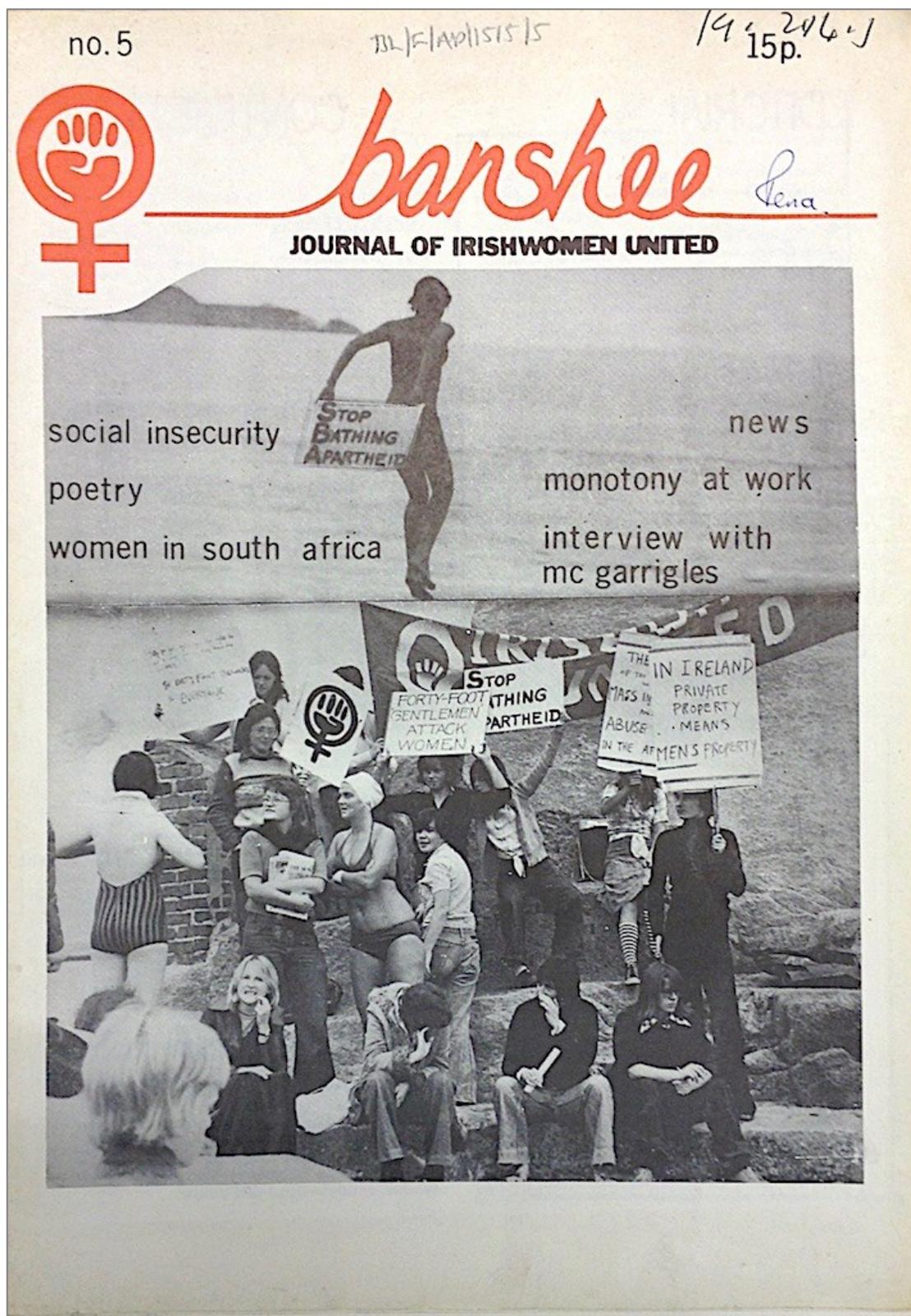
Fig. 6 The cover of *Banshee* no. 5 presents members of IWU staging a demonstration at the gentlemen's Forty-Foot Bathing Place (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive).

While assertive bodily performances usually took symbolic form through sport, the women at both protests highlight the ways in which that assertiveness became physically targeted at women who attempted to challenge the gendered socio-spatial exclusivity of recreational facilities. Here, the language of representation of women's experience in these civic spaces, conveyed through protest signs, is one of symbolic and physical violence; however, what is more significant about the discourse in these two protests is its representation of the spatiality of fear. The relationship between women's fear of violence in public space and women's use of space has been well documented by feminist geographers. Liz Bondi and Joyce Davidson, among others, have argued that the spatiality of women's fear of violence means that since "women rarely claim or control space, instead they are caught and confined by space" ("Situating" 24). In these discussions, women are subjects experiencing fear in space; however, the signs at the Fitzwilliam Tennis Club and Forty-Foot protests invert the normative relationship between space, gender, and fear. The women of IWU and their affiliates claim that all-male sporting facilities are actually the spatial expressions of men's fears ("Why are you afraid of women?"), and their attempt to physically exclude women from using that space is, in actuality, to allow themselves to be confined by the conventions of space instead. The protesters' textual discourse at the Fitzwilliam Tennis Club and Forty-Foot bathing area not only mediates the demands of the protestors, but also attempts to reconstruct the gendered relations and subjective experiences of all-male places in the Republic.

While the *Wicca* collective begins their publication with a multi-theme, multi-image cover in their first issue, nos. 2 through 9 serialize the act of protest in a multi-theme, single image cover. [58] No. 1 features the collective making symbolic hand gestures in the primary

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[58] Between no. 9 and no. 10 (1979-1980), the *Wicca* collective takes a six-month break and rebuilds. According to the editorial for no. 10, the collective dissolved "because of other pressures on some women

photograph of the cover, while the smaller cutout in the right hand corner conveys a women's demonstration, specifically the release of Noreen Winchester. The cutout photograph displays a sign that clearly reads "Thanks for your support," and that protrudes into the primary photograph of the *Wicca* collective (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive). In many ways, the demonstration's protest sign shares the same role as a coverline, which is "a headline on the front cover of a magazine advertising a story of feature inside" ("cover, n.1"). On the bottom of the cover of no. 1 (see Fig. 2) the cropped photograph of the demonstration is placed in alignment with the other headlines that inform readers of the content they will find in this issue, including the following: "Belfast women speak out," "Where to get contraceptives," "the farce that fits the fashion," and "Feminist radio show on A.R.D." (BL/F/AP/1489/1, Attic Press Archive). While the other content featured on the cover is communicated through specific titles of articles – verbal coverlines – the article on Noreen Winchester's demonstration is represented through both the action and language text of protest, wherein the sign in action becomes the means of advertising the feature story. If we think of readers as constituents, as Johnson and Prijatel suggest, then a magazine editor uses a coverline "to let each constituent reader know that there's something important for her in each issue" (*Magazine* 279). "Thanks for your support," then, plays a dual role on this cover: as both a linguistic marker of the specific protest event and also a discursive marker of *Wicca*, ultimately, informing *Wicca*'s readership that this periodical is a *place* for them to find and locate feminism.

This visual and discursive reconstruction of the event of protest enables the periodical to share in the spatial dimensions of feminist action, thereby materializing *Wicca* as a place of

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involved and lack of feedback to *Wicca*" (BL/F/AP/1498/11, Attic Press Archive). This dissolution is reflected in the textual, commercial, visual, and editorial aspects of the periodical, and, subsequently, the cover of *Wicca* no. 10 breaks with the previous serialized form of the cover genre. While I will address these changes more specifically in the later chapters of my dissertation, for this reason I will not include nos. 10-13 in this chapter.

protest. On the one hand, "Thanks for your support" becomes an intertextual marker of feminist solidarity and support. In the specific event or act of protest, the verbal text conveys a message of solidarity with Noreen Winchester on behalf of her supporters as well as gratitude on behalf of Noreen Winchester for their support. On the other hand, "Thanks for *your* support" can also be read as a direct address to *Wicca*'s readership on behalf of the periodical's collective that functions as a means of assembling feminist identity. As Seifert has suggested in her work on union protest signage in the United States, "signs worked collaboratively to signify solidarity, build community, and make place" (*Sedimenting* 34). While Seifert's remark speaks to the roles of protest signs specifically during the event or act of protest, I suggest that the sedimentation of the event of protest within the space of the periodical enables the effects of the texts of protest to last longer than the event itself. *Wicca* informs its readers that this is an organ that supports Noreen Winchester, and if readers also support Noreen Winchester, they can or should support *Wicca* as well. In effect, the protest sign reinscribed as a coverline is an invitation to those who support the event of Noreen's demonstration to find a place in *Wicca* to convene in solidarity with a like-minded community of feminist activists.

Given the placement of the Noreen Winchester sign in the first issue of *Wicca,* it would be possible to conclude that protest would appear to be a secondary concern of the publication. However, it becomes the dominant focal point of the periodical's subsequent publications. The cover of the second issue of *Wicca* contains a single photograph of eight of the women involved in the first all-female Drogheda Confexim Factory occupation (see Fig. 7), standing next to body-length handmade posters that read, "Help us please fight for our rights" and "We the workers are sittin [sic] and sleeping inside. We are tired and weary but we won't give in"

(BL/F/AP/1498/2, Attic Press Archive).[59] The occupation began after thirty-five women factory workers were denied back pay for three weeks of voluntary unpaid labour on the promise that payments would be made after orders were met. According to the feature article by Clodagh Boyd entitled "No Taxes – No Stamps – No Wages – Drogheda Women Say 'no more,'" upon receiving the news,

> Anne Smith and Kathleen McCabe scaled a 10 foot wall, entered an open back door, and opened the front door of the locked building for the other women. For two weeks they have been in occupation. For the first few nights the women slept on the carpeted upstairs until the electricity was shut off and they were forced to sleep on the factory floor with only blankets and pillows. Some of the women are as young as 15 and say they were frightened at night and couldn't sleep. (BL/F/AP/1498/2, Attic Press Archive)

In spite of their worries, the women workers "intend to stay until the wrongs against them have been righted" (BL/F/AP/1498/2, Attic Press Archive). In *Wicca* no. 5, the feature photograph is aligned to the left and captures smiling women, holding signs, and marching in protest in the streets. The photograph does not designate where, when, or why the protest occurred, but, based on the dominant visible sign in the photograph that states "Right to walk freely and safely in the street" and the year of the protest (1978),[60] it can be deduced that the shot is likely taken from one of the Reclaim the Night or Take Back the Night demonstrations that swept across Europe in the mid- to late-1970s (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive). The subsequent article by Jean O'Keefe in no. 5 entitled "Sexism in the streets" argues that sexism is "the chronic disease that keeps women off the street at night, prevents them visiting places and traveling, traps them in miserable jobs, loads them with tranquilisers, lands them in

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[59] Unfortunately, I have not been able to recover any archival holdings for *Wicca* no. 3 or no. 6 in my research.

[60] While the cover of no. 5 has a handwritten inscription of the periodical's supposed year of publication (1977), the article on p.14 – "Unemployment Assistance: how to apply" – includes a feature on how to apply for unemployment assistance under the Social Welfare Act, which was instituted in 1978: "From the first of October this year (1978) single women are entitled to unemployment assistance on the same basis as men have been" (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive); therefore, I deduce that this issue was published in 1978 rather than 1977.

hospitals and kills them" (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive). In both these events, protestors, again, reveal how women's institutionally inscribed fear of public places, particularly the streets and workplaces of Ireland, contributes to the gendered production of space and spatial relations.

Both the linguistic texts of protest on the covers of nos. 4 and 5 highlight the demand for women's "right" to space – "Help us please fight for our *rights*" and "*Right* to walk freely and safely in the street" – which suggests that the current material ordering of space is a socially constructed phenomenon intended to produce exclusion and to deny rights. While these protest signs also draw attention to women's fears, in a slightly different vein than the Forty-Foot and Fitzgerald Tennis Club demonstrations, the signs on the above covers identify women's fears of bodily precarity in publically accessible spaces, foregrounding the embodied dimensions and social processes of spatial practices.[61] Linda Sandberg suggests that fear is "connected to how public space is used, occupied and controlled by dominating groups at different times" and, more specifically, how women's fear of violence is characterized by both this temporality as well as spatiality (*Fear* 24). Both the Drogheda Factory occupation and anti-sexual assault march discursively articulate the ways in which fear organizes women's mobility inside and outside of space, temporally; fear is the mechanism that keeps women off the streets at night, compels them to accept precarious labor, and prevents them from enacting what Martha C. Nussbaum defines as bodily integrity, or the ability "to move freely from place to place" ("Bodies" 172). However, choosing to inhabit a collective position of precarity also becomes a means of disrupting the organizing logic of the state. Both the covers of *Wicca* nos. 4 and 5

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[61] I situate my understanding of precarity in relation to Judith Butler's use of the term in "Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics." She argues that precarity "designates the politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death" (ii).
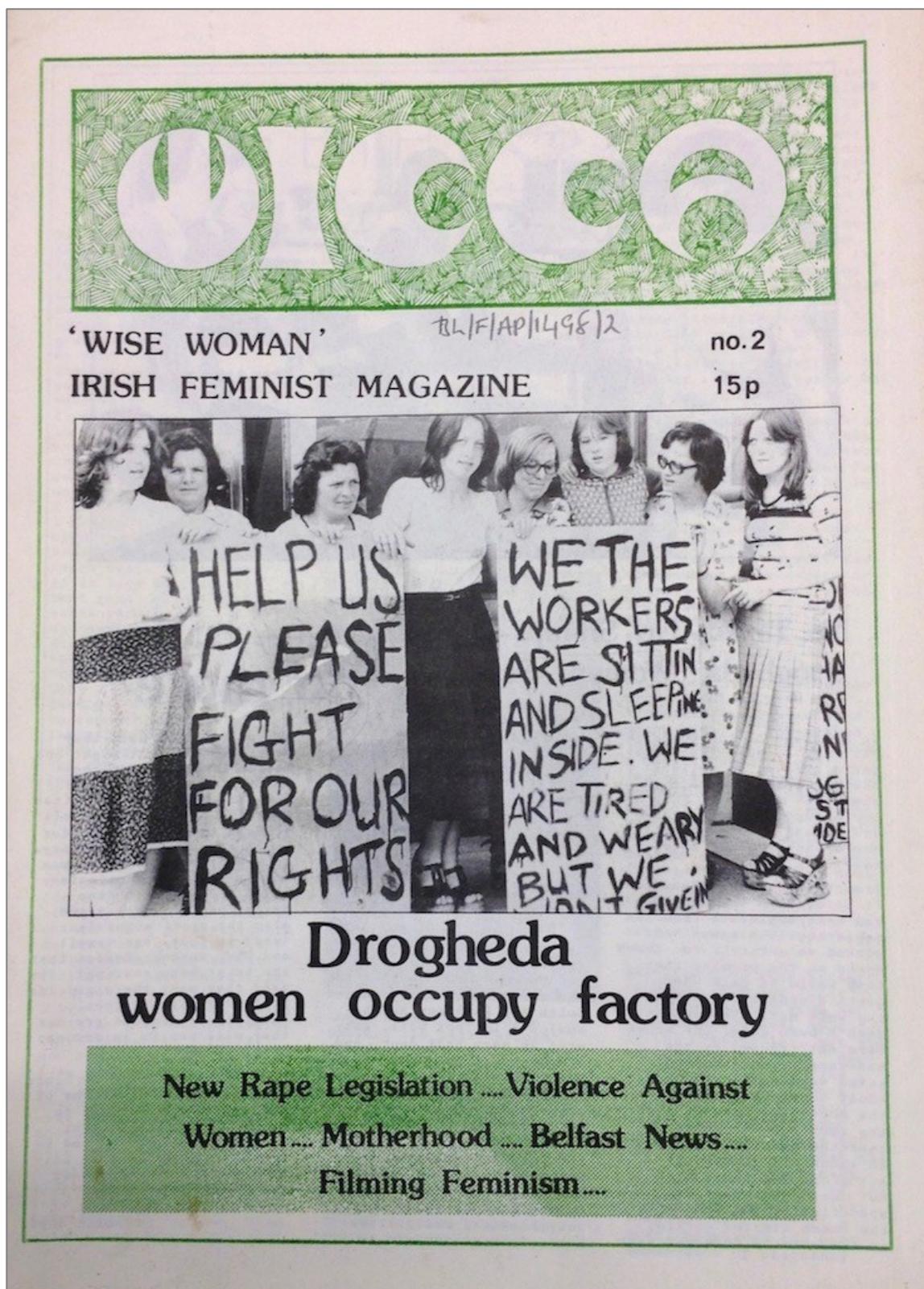
Fig. 7 Cover of *Wicca* no. 2, 1978, featuring the first all-female Drogheda Confexim Factory occupation (BL/F/AP/1498/2, Attic Press Archive).
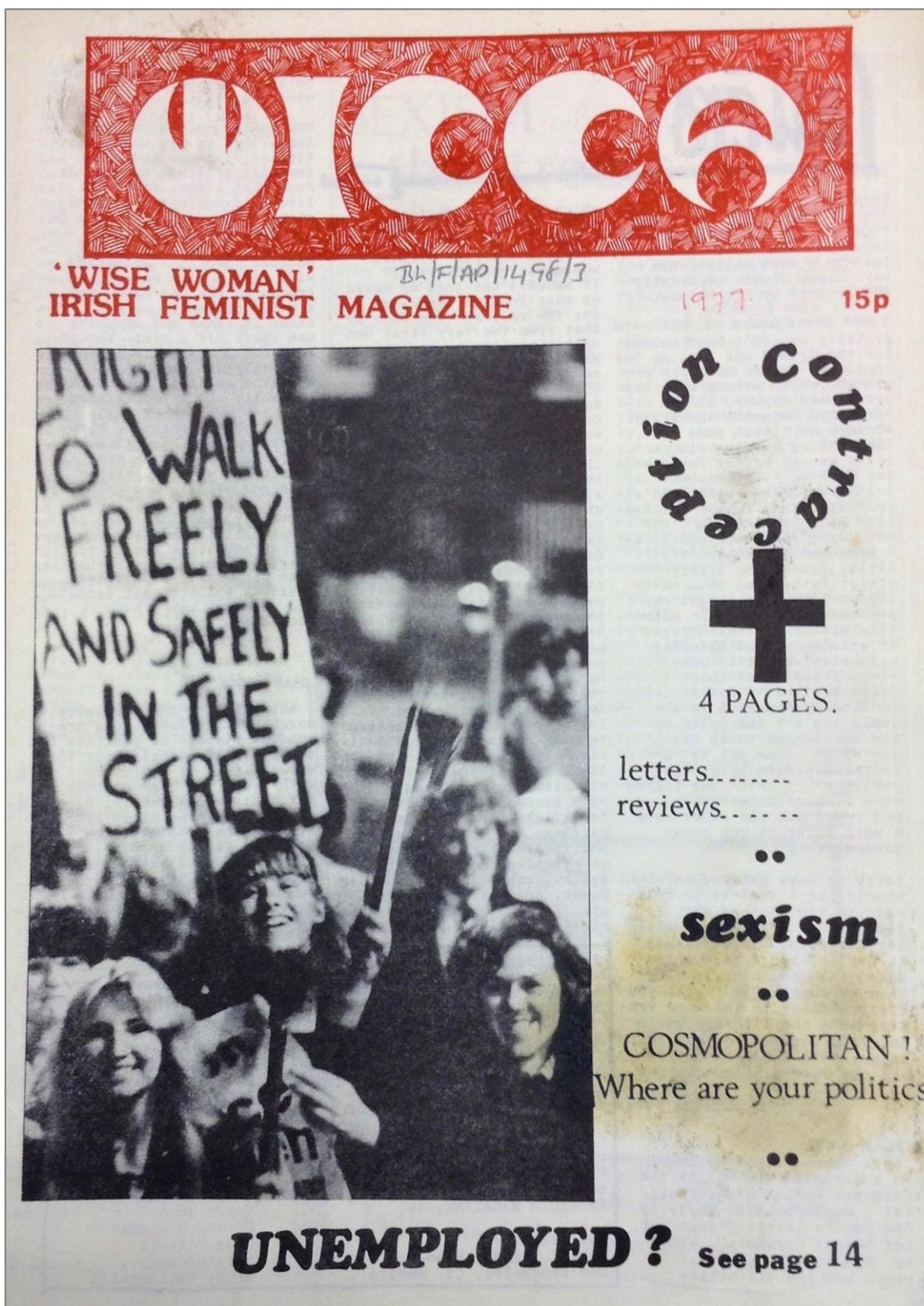
Fig. 8 The cover of *Wicca* no. 5 is, most likely, a photograph from a Take Back the Night or Reclaim the Night march or demonstration (BL/F/AP/1498/, Attic Press Archive).

represent the ways in which women activists use both their bodies and discursive texts to temporally and spatially challenge the uninterrupted ownership of the civic and commercial spaces of Ireland, as well as contribute to the remaking of space for the practice of women's rights.

Both the signs in the Drogheda Factory occupation and women's march draw attention to the ways in which the public performances of an all-women factory occupation and a women's street march are exercises in non-existent rights. To paraphrase Judith Butler, to publicly exercise or assert a right within a space without having that right to belong in that space is to render the body vulnerable ("Performativity" 4). Corporeal vulnerability is performed through the protest signs of the Drogheda factory workers – "we are tired and weary" – and further reinforced in Boyd's article in her description of the conditions of occupation: young women forced to sleep on the factory floor, without electricity, for over two weeks. Similarly, the protest sign on the cover of no. 5, "Right to walk freely and safely in the street," held by women as they walk through the streets, calls attention to the fact that these women are asserting a right they do not possess in their act of marching and, thereby, placing their bodies in potential positions of risk. While protest signs function as a means of performing precarity, those signs also are vital tools in reorganizing space and in making place for women. Here, precarity is both a response to the casualization of the labour force and a consequence of the rigid, gendered societal structures that affect women in the Republic differentially than men. As those marginalized by or excluded from hegemonic spaces, women must work to produce what Lefebvre designates as "an appropriated space," a social space formed through means of self-presentation and self-representation (*Space* 34). Protest signs allow for the representation of self by discursively and materially constructing relations to and within space. As Jaworksi and

Thurlow suggest, semiotic landscapes "define or organize the meaning of these spatial practices as well as social practices enacted in the spaces" ("Semiotic" 8). These visual texts give new meaning to space by enabling women to experience specific places differently, both physically and imaginatively. While the physical embodying of precarity may seem paradoxical in that it is the very consequence of systemic exclusion that feminists are seeking to overturn, I suggest that the collective performance of bodily precarity in the act of public protest becomes a tactical means of spatio-temporal disruption.

Protest events are significant because they take place *in* specific places, thereby structuring the relationship between feminism and a specific location and enabling the "ideas, ideologies, conceptions, and imaginaries that construe space [to] become lived" for social actors (Beins *Liberation* 44-5). The Drogheda Confexim Factory, for example, serves as a representation of space,[62] specifically a setting or place where unequal gender relations persist in relation to financial productivity. It is a place of linear temporal continuity that prioritizes a socio-economic order that privileges men's claim to national space, as indicated by the fact that the female workers labour here for weeks on end without pay from their male employer, are denied insurance and other welfare benefits, and remain prohibited from joining unions or risk termination (BL/F/AP/1498/2, Attic Press Archive). Essentially, the Drogheda Factory occupation reveals the way in which spatial practices that underlie national economic activity and productivity depend upon the reproduction of female precarity. What the women's occupation makes clear, though, is that the collectivization of female bodies in place can interrupt linear progress and disorder the prescribed use of space. Carl Leigh Fraser suggests that, "protest disrupts the physical continuity of space and imposes a series of social (and

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[62] Lefebvre defines "representations of space" as "tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations" (*Space* 33).

sometimes physical) relations which realign the tacit rules of engagement, which are

(temporarily) changed" (*Protest* 22; emphasis added); however, as Sheehan Moore points out,

what makes the act of occupation different from other forms of protest, such as demonstrations

and rallies, is its "temporal and spatial *persistence*" ("Space" 6; emphasis in original). Despite

their corporeal vulnerability and fears of spatial transgression, the female occupiers "will not

give in," as their protest signs communicate, discursively. To persist in bodily precarity, both

publicly and collectively, is to claim space in the creation of what Donna McCormack and Suvi

Salmenniemi identify as "non-dominant modes of collective existence that pose a challenge to

the constraining, destructible and unbearable effects of contemporaneous living" ("precarity"

4). The Drogheda protest is a response to a lack of worker's rights, specifically rights for

female workers, which suggests that the current formation of the body politic is no longer

bearable for women. The physical and discursive occupation of space presents a possible mode

for realigning and reproducing social relations. As Boyd's initial depiction of two of the factory

workers, Anne Smith and Kathleen McCabe, scaling the factory wall to unlock the building for

the invasive occupiers suggests, an unregulated, excessive, and unruly femininity presents a

threat to the spatial boundaries of the workplace and its collective bodily persistence through

time has the potential to reorient the state's logic of gendered spatial usage.

The collectivizing in and claiming of space by female bodies, however, is not only the

prerogative of workers, activists, organizers, and magazine collectives; the covers of *Wicca*

nos. 8 and 9 reveal that it is also the purview of wives, mothers, and daughters. These are

normative gender roles for women that are typically formed by positioning female bodies in

relation to specific places like the Irish home, in accordance with the constitutional collectivist

model of heteronormative patriarchy. The representation of these "traditional" women "out of

place" on the covers of *Wicca* challenges the hierarchical spatial relations of gender and national belonging in the Republic. The cover of *Wicca* no. 8 returns to the streets with a photograph from the post office strike solidarity march that took place on June 12, 1979 in Dublin. The image depicts the wives, mothers, and children marching on behalf of the post office workers who had already been on strike for eighteen weeks over unfair wages. Marching through the streets, picketing and chanting, the women hold signs that read, "Make our husbands an offer they can't refuse Mr. Faulkner"[63] and "The election is over your party have nothing to gain now when you exagerate [sic] our husbands wages on T.V. and radio" above their heads (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive). The repeated framing of the female protesters' demands for "our husbands" on the picket signs materializes the identities of the female bodies performing civil disobedience. A similar image of radical female kinship is conveyed on the cover of *Wicca* no. 9. While the image does not specify a time, place, or event of protest, the close-up photograph features a mother sitting with her arms wrapped around what appear to be her two children – a boy and a girl – in attendance at a rally. While there are no protest signs on this cover, the little girl looks straight into the camera, engaging the gaze of the reader, thereby enjoining mother, daughter, and reader in a collective act of protest.

What is significant about the depictions of protest illustrated on both of these covers is the way in which motherhood represents a route to feminine politicization outside the home and in the streets. Historically, the home has served as a male-designated "feminine" space in which to privatize and confine the female body, specifically the maternal body, thereby rending its materiality "lost" within both the private and public sphere (Jeffers *Gender* 29). In her feature article on the post office worker's strike in *Wicca* entitled "Women in Action," Róisín Boyd

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[63] Pádraig Faulkner was the Fianna Fáil Minister for Posts and Telegraphs from 1977 to 1979.
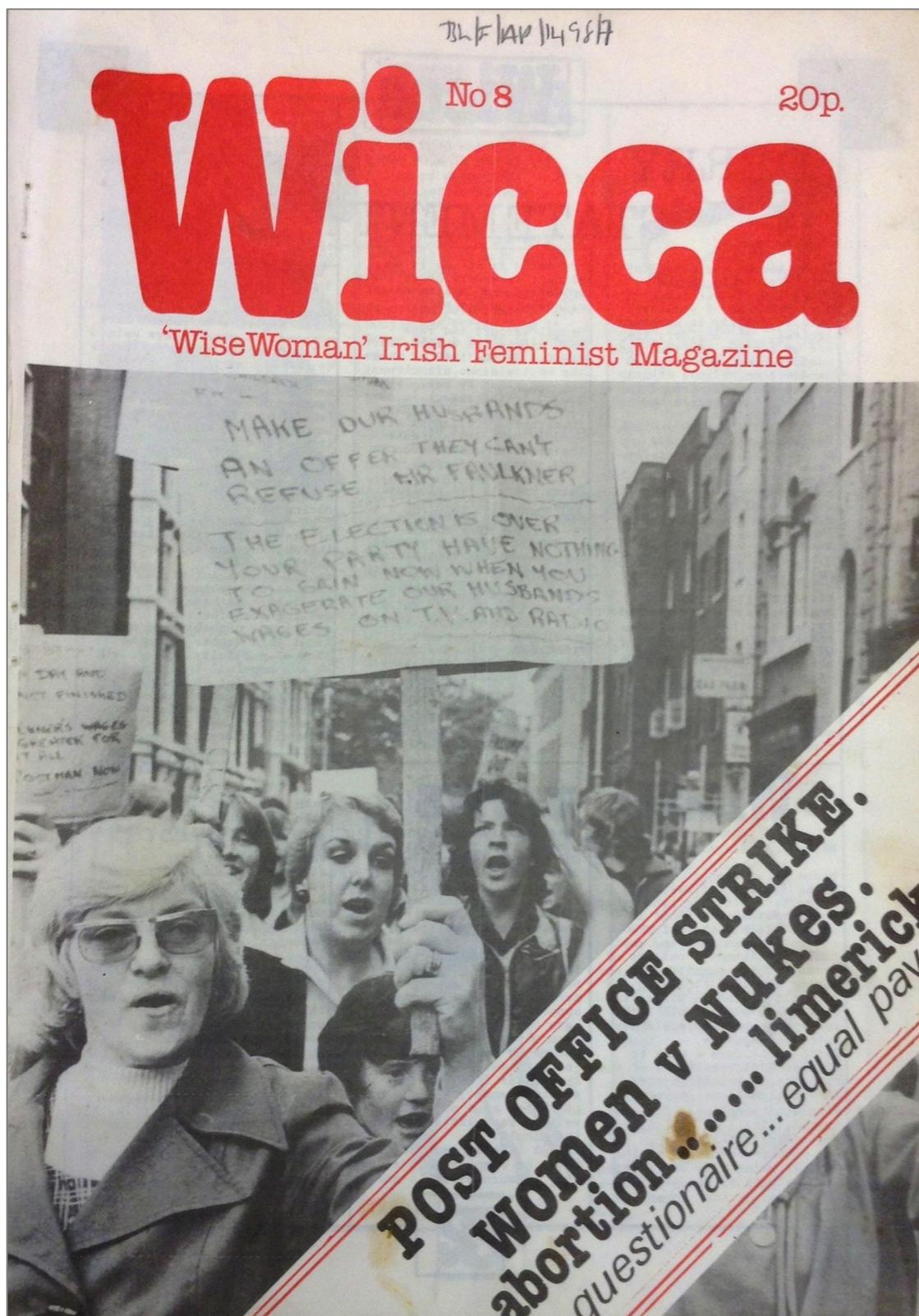
Fig. 9 The wives, mothers, and children of striking post office workers march in solidarity on June 12, 1979 on the cover of *Wicca* no. 8 (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive).
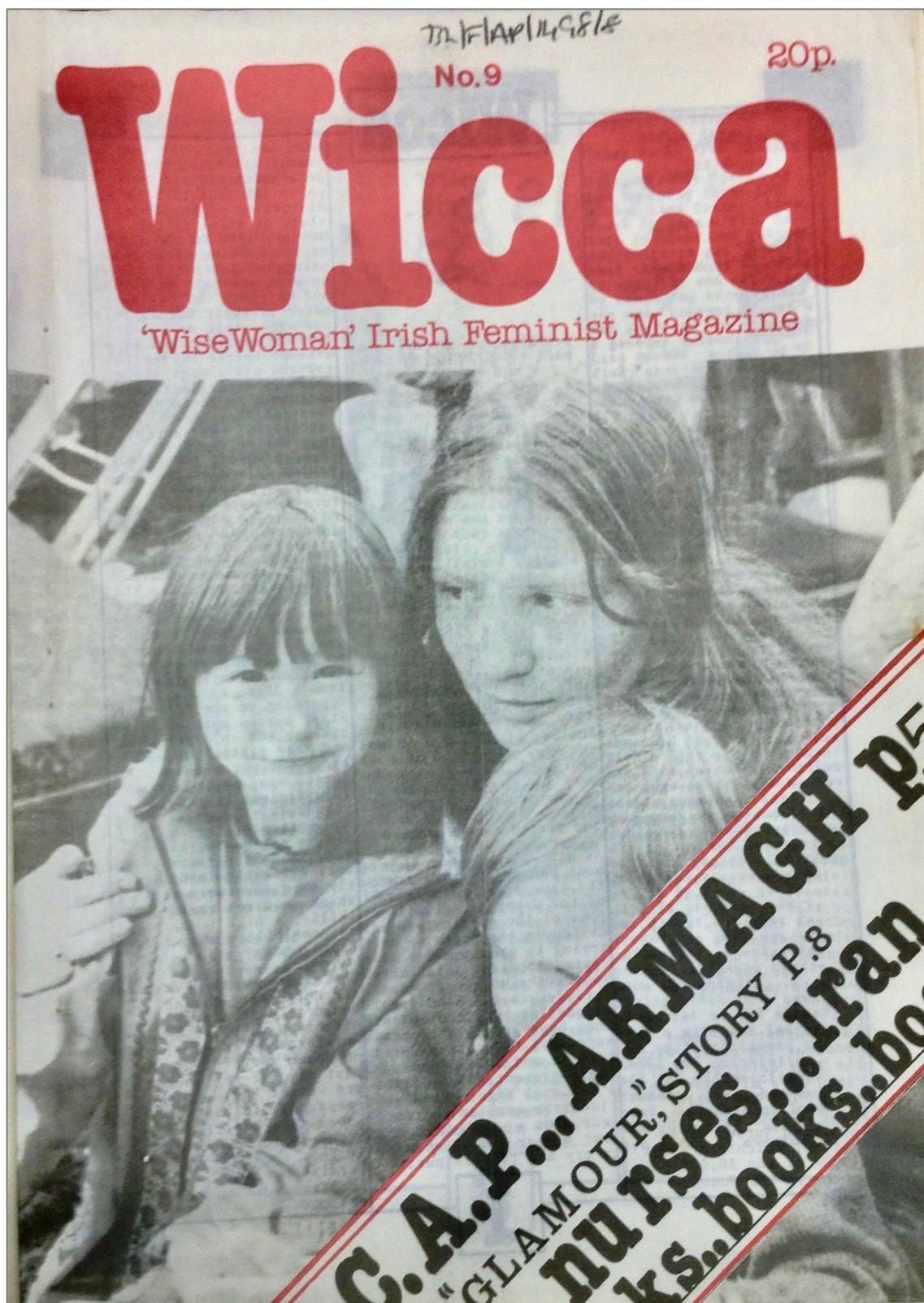
Fig. 10 A mother and her two children attend a rally on the cover of *Wicca* no. 9 (BL/F/AP/1498/8, Attic Press Archive).

reports that while the original intention of the women was to organize a meeting "to express solidarity with their sons and husbands," when the mothers and wives saw they "were isolated no longer they realized they were in a position to change the post office workers' situation" (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive). The women in Boyd's article recognize that the role of the mother and the role of wife offer a form of social solidarity beyond the isolating spatial boundaries of the home. The collective taking up of space by maternal bodies in places of non-belonging attaches a new spatial practice to the identity of Irish motherhood, and protest signs give material existence to this discursive process, both in time and in place. While the earlier covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* designate female identities beyond motherhood as important to the transformation of social relations, these later covers amend motherhood and female corporeality as feminist sites of resistance, and the visual remediation of these various events in which different kinds of women engage in activism, on the covers of alternative periodicals, is an attempt to expand the temporal relations of feminism.

While the events of the women's anti-sexual assault march (no. 5), the post office worker's solidarity protest (no. 8), and the unnamed protest (no. 9) do not allow for the same tactical persistence of protesting bodies as the form of occupation (no. 4), the serial format of the periodical aids in lending temporal continuity to otherwise ephemeral actions. Both the discourses and actions of protest are given a place to exist in *Banshee* and *Wicca*, particularly on their single-image covers, and this serialization of protest – in both its spatial and discursive forms – attempts to establish the continuity necessary to distinguish a social movement from a discrete event. In their critical analysis of collective action, Donatelle Della Porta and Mario Diani argue that social movements "are not merely the sum of protest events on certain issues, or even of specific campaigns. On the contrary, a social movement process is in *place* only

when collective identities develop, which go beyond specific events and initiatives" (*Social* 21; emphasis added); however, as they further suggest, collective identity can only develop when meaning is assigned and connected to "experiences of collective action dislocated over time and space" (Della Porta and Diani *Social* 95). In other words, narratives need to be built that reinforce feelings of collective belonging across time and space. Beins suggests that while rallies, demonstrations, marches, and picket lines were moments of feminist disruption that "gave feminism a place," "they were also ephemeral and spatially born" (*Liberation* 55). Although these events "temporarily overwhelmed and transformed public locations, creating space for feminism," any trace of feminism and its existence could be erased as soon as these events ended (Beins *Liberation* 55). I have already discussed the ways in which the visual and linguistic landscapes of protest work to materialize collective identities in place during the events of protest, but I also suggest that the temporal and spatial textual presentation of these photographs in *Banshee* and *Wicca,* particularly the cover format, attempts to stabilize feminist activism in order to create a narrative for contemporaneous feminism.

One of the striking features of both the covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* is the absence of temporal markers, and this lack continues throughout the pages of the periodicals. There are no printed dates on the covers of either of the periodicals, and there is a notable scarcity of cutlines pertaining to photographs. A cutline "informs the reader of who, what, when, where, and why or how about the photograph," and because photographs "depict events frozen in time, the first sentence of a cutline is always written in the present tense" (Hanock "Cutline"). It is important to note that the photograph of the FUE Occupation by IWU in no. 1 contains one of only three cutlines in the whole of *Banshee;*[64] the second, appears under a photograph of a member of

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[64] "Irish Women United confront directors of the F.U.E. during their occupation of the F.U.E. H.Q." (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

IWU diving off of the Forty-Foot bathing place in the demonstration staged by IWU on September 5, 1976 in no. 5;[65] and the third, beneath a photograph of female telephonists' striking for equal pay next to a post office in Dublin on behalf of the Post Office Workers Union in winter of 1977 in the seventh issue of *Banshee.*[66] While there are notably more cutlines in *Wicca,* they tend to leave out the "when" of the events photographed; dates and times are usually missing. Also of importance to the temporal dimensions of the featured photographs are the production schedules of these periodicals. While *Banshee* ran on a near-quarterly production schedule, *Wicca* positioned itself as a "monthly" magazine; however, there are significant inconsistencies in both production schedules over the course of their publication dates. These inconsistencies are significant because it meant that photographs, as well as articles, on the events or acts of protest often were featured months after an event took place, rending the photographs outside of their historiographic moments. The lack of temporal indicators, specifically in relation to feminist acts of civil disobedience, suggests that the present immediacy of the event, immediacy that is the capital of daily national and commercial publications, is less important than the act of the event itself. Essentially, these events are remediated out of time, and often out of place. Similarly, in documenting the seemingly ephemeral texts of protest – protest signs – beyond the immediate event, the collectives of *Banshee* and *Wicca* labour to narrativize the discourse of protest in action and stabilize a place for the development of collective feminist identities. This repeated temporal format with difference in content allows for different women in different spaces with different concerns to contribute to the present dynamic collective identities of the periodicals. Ultimately, the cover format and content of *Wicca* and *Banshee* narrativizes and reinforces the collective,

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[65] "Member of Irishwomen United at 40 ft." (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive).

[66] "Telephonists' strike for equal pay" (BL/F/AP/1515/7, Attic Press Archive).

participatory, and accessible nature of feminist identity.

Conclusion

Feminist history unfolds on the printed page, revealing the apposite relationship between social relations and the spatial form of the periodical. In reading the covers of sister publications, *Banshee* and *Wicca,* serially, I have begun to trace the discursive and material forms that agential politics takes in the women's movement in the Republic. Not only does the alternative press locate feminism in Ireland, ideologically, but it also grants it a place, physically, thereby enabling women to identify the "where" and "what" of feminism. Both the visual and semiotic landscapes of the covers of *Banshee* and *Wicca* work together to stabilize feminist social-spatial relations by reproducing those relations, materially, within the pages of the alternative periodical. This visually distinct format enables periodicals to share in the spatial dimensions of feminist discourse and action, rendering print a central component of feminist praxis. While the cover photographs, specifically the locations and protest signs, of both periodicals narrativize political acts of feminist resistance within the streets and workplace, as well as athletic and leisure spaces, the mode and matter of those narratives begins to shift as readers turn inwards to the individual pages of the publications. Although *Banshee* and *Wicca* suggest that feminist identity originates with the occupation, assemblage, and creation of feminist spaces by women, who qualifies as a feminist, what counts as a space for feminism, and which modes of relationality are prescribed within those spaces shifts as the women's movement moves inward and reflects on its present and future continuity. It is important to note that not all of the featured events and acts of protest I discussed are directly related to "the women's movement" or categorically labeled "feminist"; however, their reinscription within

explicitly feminist magazines demonstrates an attempt to expand the network of activity and extend the scope of feminism in the Republic. The relationship of feminism to alternative ideological frames becomes a central point of conflict within the women's movement in the Republic, and emerges in the editorial, commercial, visual, and textual features of the alternative press. In the next chapter, I will begin to chart the dynamic trajectory of Irish feminism, ideologically, through the material, formal evolutions of the alternative periodicals retrieved from my archival findings.

Chapter Two: Uniting Irish Women: Mobilizing Autonomy in Irish Feminist

Historiography

Introduction

An autonomous Women's Movement exists "wherever women organize independently to pressurize a government, an institution, to make change. It is a creature of constant ebb and flow – a chameleon. And of course you cannot change only from within. You also need the mass pressure of a social movement from without. And it is a mistaken analysis to believe otherwise. – Speed, Anne. "Feminism in the South of Ireland – A Discussion." *The Honest Ulsterman,* no. 83, Summer 1987, p. 49; (BL/F/AP/1148, Attic Press Archive)

As the alternative press became a place where more and more women could find and

practice feminism, a dynamic culture of feminism developed that became a vehicle for

ideological diffusion within the women's movement, enabling both the consolidation and

expansion of the movement's boundaries. Not unlike other narratives of feminist histories, the

"peak" of second-wave feminism in Ireland has often been reduced to certain events, key

players, and a curiously concentrated and monological ideological structure, frequently

"characterized, or stereotyped, as a unified entity" (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 13).

Although, as recent scholarly works, such as Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole's *Documenting*

Irish Feminisms: The Second Wave (2005), Rebecca Pelan's *Two Irelands: Literary Feminisms*

North and South (2005), and Clara Fischer and Mary McAuliffe's *Irish Feminisms: Past,*

Present, and Future (2015), have revealed, "feminist groups have constantly worked to

confront, debate and overcome real *differences* among Irish women" (Connolly and O'Toole

Documenting 13; emphasis in original). As Connolly expounds, "The experience throughout

the 1970s was that there were real differences in ideological orientation among Irish activists.

However, diversification did not threaten movement survival and expansion. In fact, the scope

of the movement expanded rapidly during this period" (*Devolution* 150). An examination of

emergent women's groups, organizations, and coalitions throughout the 1970s reveals that the

women's movement was a multi-faceted and multi-feminist social movement that relied heavily on textual cultural production to construct a feminist counterculture that challenged, destabilized, and reimagined mainstream values. And while I agree with Connolly that diversification helped spread the broad base of the women's movement, women's groups and organizations perceived and dealt with diversification in different ways, particularly in relation to their conception of "autonomy." Ideological conflict – or *real* difference – was inherent to the autonomous women's liberation movement, and resulted in the proliferation of new women's groups. Throughout the remaining two chapters I will further demonstrate the ways in which ideological difference enacted fragmentation and re-orientation of and beyond "autonomy" and is, therefore, a central transformative dynamic of the women's movement; significantly, these ideological differences were confronted, debated, and mediated at the level of text.

"We look around and find that where we thought we were few in fact we are many": The Proliferation of Women's Organizations

Before I begin my investigation of the feminist press and the autonomous women's movement that it attempted to bring into being in this chapter, I must first contextualize the ideological and organizational proliferation that precipitated the movement for autonomous collectivization. As the women's rights sector continued to focus on reformist achievements and the women's liberation sector concentrated on consciousness-raising and direct action tactics as initiated by the IWLM, the women's movement took shape. In part, it was the socio-political changes that made visible the steadfast resistance of institutional bodies to systematic change within Irish society and sparked a feminist consciousness that created a counterculture

to challenge the established order that proved out-of-step with the changing social conditions of women; however, debates over the sources of social inequality and feminist tactics between liberal and socialist feminists soon became a point of conflict within the women's liberation sector, often resulting in organization disintegration. As IWLM was the dominant face of the women's liberation movement at this time, a brief overview of its disintegration provides an exemplary case of this wider phenomenon.

While IWLM emerged under a manifesto of five demands – equal pay, equality before the law, equal education, access to contraception, and justice for deserted wives – the sixth demand, one family-one house, appeared later and reflected the interests of socialists in the group. According to Levine in her own reflection on the movement, "'One family, one house', emerged later in opposition to the Forcible Entry and Occupation Bill[67]…Máirín de Burca argued that since Irish society defined woman's place as being in the home, equality could mean little in overcrowded, insanitary and insecure conditions. Mary Kenny, Nuala Fennell and others did not agree that this Bill, mainly against the homeless, was a feminist issue" ("Movement" 180). The "one family, one house" demand reflected and revealed ideological tensions within the groups, illuminating a refinement of what qualified as a "feminist" issue. Connolly indicates that a split emerged within IWLM, with a growing group of women identifying with the women's rights tactics of the CSW as opposed to the socialist and radical interests of many of the other women in IWLM (*Devolution* 118-9). Similarly, in her analysis of the downfall of the Fownes St. group, Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) – the first, direct descendant of IWLM – Betty Purcell suggests that political streamlining is partially what led to the split between radical and liberal women within the organization, and the eventual

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[67] The Prohibition of Forcible Entry and Occupation Act (1971) made the forcible possession of squatted property a criminal offence, as well as made its public endorsement illegal.

collapse of the group: "In Fownes St. too, there was a real absence of political discussion that differences were swept under the carpet for as long as possible, and later took the form of personal antagonisms. This lack of discussion meant a high turnover of radical women who left feeling that the group wasnt [sic] moving anywhere" (BL/F/AP/1517/1, Attic Press Archive). When Nuala Fennell, one of the members of the founder group of IWLM, resigned from IWLM in the summer of 1971, she cited the evolving elitist and socialist tinge of the group as the reason for her departure: "I can no longer work for these changes with the elitist and intolerant group who are using Women's Liberation as a pseudo-respectable front for their own various political ends, ranging from opposition to the Forcible Entry Bill to free sedatives for neurotic elephants" ("Resignation" 201).[68] While Fennell's claim regarding neurotic elephants runs on the sardonic side, her pointing to a faction of the group's investment in the Forcible Entry Bill as detracting from the cause of women's liberation reveals the way in which socialist interests became a central point of proliferation within the IWLM, and indeed, the larger women's liberation sector.

The example of IWLM's disintegration and Fennell's critique of the search for a new feminist paradigm taking shape amongst IWLM exposes an understanding of a feminist identity and ideology that prioritizes gender as the primary and exclusive visible category of analysis amongst certain factions of liberationists. While Irish Women's Liberation Movement emerged under the platform of an all-women's liberation movement, both they and their offshoot Women's Liberation Movement (WLM, formerly the Fownes Street group) fell victim to similar ideological pitfalls as the women's rights activists they critiqued. Briefly, like the

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[68] Fennell continues, "Perhaps this development was a foreseeable trend, the Women's Lib group now in America being the radical troublemaking anti-Establishment group, and it is the National Organisation of Women (NOW) who are achieving reforms and concessions" ("Resignation" 201). Fennell's assertion accentuates her belief in reformist as opposed to radical tactics.

women's rights sector, many in the women's liberation movement were accused of maintaining and reinforcing "petite bourgeois" interests. The leftist group Revolutionary Struggle provides a thorough analysis of the causes of such class bias within IWLM:

> The Women's Liberation Organisation was not conscious of its own history (the struggles of women in the earlier period in Ireland) and while it functioned in the context of working-class offensive, the ideas of the organisation did not come from the working-class, but were influenced mainly by organisation of its OWN CLASS in other countries…The orientation explains the major contradiction which riveted the organisation. For many of the professional women, the major task was to pressurize for reforms in legislation but the Women's Liberation Organisation had not succeeded in becoming an effective pressure group taken seriously. On the other hand it had become centered on spectacular-type actions (such as bringing contraceptives across the border) complemented by consciousness-raising groups and 'ideology sessions.'[69] (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive)

Revolutionary Struggle is attuned to the Anglo-American influences on the Irish women's movement. As IWLM formed, devoid of any "structural links with the historical women's movement in Ireland, or indeed with the parallel *ad hoc* committee on women's rights" (Connolly *Devolution* 112), they drew their influences from both the women's liberation movements in the United States and Britain and also their feminist publications (McAuliffe "Change" 87); and, as numerous academic works have verified, middle-class interests characterize both the United States and British mainstream second-wave movements.[70] As Steve M. Buechler indicates, the "white, middle-class mobilization bias of women's movements has deep structural roots" (*Movements* 138). While women of more privileged racial and class groups "may well be attracted to feminist mobilization because it addresses their one subordinate status," women who face multiple intersecting forms of oppression find that "preexisting forms of social organization and collective identity become crucial in tipping mobilization balance" (*Movements* 138-9). The mobilizing issues of IWLM brought these

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[69] *Rebel Sister,* Revolutionary Struggle, no. 5, May 1976.

[70] See H.L Smith (1990), Barbara Ryan (1992), Gail Collins (2004), Stephanie Cootz (2011), and Jill Franks (2013).

variations in identities and their implicit hierarchies to light, a factor that would continue to be a tipping point amongst women's liberation groups as the decade progressed.

Proliferation over points of ideological difference is, therefore, both a social achievement and a structural obstacle in relation to the developing women's movement in the Republic. On the one hand, the continuation of both formal and informal women's organizations after the dissipation of IWLM in 1972 points to the inherent potential within the expansion of the mass base of politically conscious women. In her analysis of the women's movement in the United States, Barbara Ryan argues that a similar diffusion of feminist ideology across a wide range of women's groups was in evidence during the early stages of the women's movement because it allowed for the rapid dissemination of feminist ideas throughout various areas of society (*Feminism* 63). Such was the case in the development and expansion of the women's liberation branch of the women's movement in the Republic. Through their belief that the women's rights activists' focus on legislative, state-oriented change was not producing substantial enough improvements for women, the simultaneously emerging women's liberationists hoped to change the game for women by grounding their movement in radical cultural change. According to Levine, one of the most important effects of IWLM was that it "provided a breeding ground for the many pressure groups which emerged throughout the seventies" ("Movement" 183). At the Women's Liberation Conference held by the UCD Women's Group on March 10, 1979, the organizers reflect upon some of the many groups existent throughout Ireland since the formation of IWLM:

> In Dublin alone: Rape Crisis Centre, WICCA, ICAP, YU, Womens' Forum, Womens' Advisory Committee. Equal Pay Support Group, Support Committee for the P.P. Telephonists, Liberation for Irish Lesbians, U.C.D. Womens' Group and various discussion groups. In Galway, Limerick and Cork there are CAP Groups and Womens' Groups. There is the Belfast Womens' Collective and the Belfast Lesbians'

> Group. Also in the North there are the Relative Action Committees. (BL/F/AP/1139/13, Attic Press Archive)

Other groups that emerged during this time include Adapt (1973), Access, Information and Motivation, or AIM (1972),[71] Ally (1971), Cherish (1972), Family Planning Services (1972), Fownes Street (1972), Women's Aid (1974), and the Women Political Association (1970).[72] In her article for *Hibernia* entitled "Irish Women's Organizations" on January 16, 1976, Róisín Conroy also compiles a list of thirty-eight organizations across the Republic – both new and old – such as Cork Federation of Women's Clubs, Feminist Alliance, Irish Federation of University Women, and Single Women's Association (BL/F/AP/1111/2, Attic Press Archive). Many of these formal and informal groups and organizations became effective pressure organs, mobilizing campaigns and lobbying for specific issues, while others focused on providing services and creating communities for women.[73] However, other types of informal organizations, such as women's alliances, consciousness-raising groups, women's studies groups, and women's collectives continued to flourish, as well. These organizations often enabled women to feel a sense of empowerment and unity, but ultimately lacked the structural resources to move women into the activism of the women's movement. While not all of these groups had pretensions of moving women into the realm of activism, Susan Staggenborg indicates that the survival of a social movement is dependent upon the connection of networks of groups and social actors to shared goals and the attempt to advance them ("Cycles" 182). While consciousness-raising, both personal and collective, is an important part of social

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[71] Nuala Fennell was a founding member of this service organization, along with Ann McAllister, Deirdre McDevitt, and Bernadette Quinn, whose main purpose was to "seek legal reforms for women through a combination of research reports and the support groups for deserted and 'battered' wives" (Threlfall *Mapping* 190). The organization was critical of the lack of political focus in the women's liberation movement (Galligan *Politics* 94).

[72] See Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting,* p. 31.

[73] I borrow my definitions of formal and informal (or non-formal) organizations from Srilatha Batliwala in *Changing Their World: Concepts and Practices of Women's Movements*, 2nd ed., pp.15-19.

change, its effectiveness – in the context of social movements – is in its function as a mobilizing resource.

However, one of the truths the breakup of IWLM proved was the continuing tension amongst feminists regarding reformist (state) and radical (anti-state) forms of organization and activism.[74] Connolly points out, in the case of IWLM, the group's proliferation "resulted in part from activists' consensus that organisational diversity could be a practical means to achieve radical feminist objectives at the same time as coping with participants' diverse interpretations of a general ideology, that of feminism" (*Devolution* 122). While some groups did continue to pursue feminist objectives, not all of these organizations continued to serve the women's liberation movement, explicitly, including those that were offshoots of IWLM. Many of the former members of the "radical" IWLM opted to work alongside and within state forms of participation. In order for organizations to be considered among those that stand in direct relationship to movements, Srilatha Batliwala indicates that, "they have to go beyond mere service-provision and engage with the movement's agenda in some concrete way" (*Concepts* 19). In her overview of the women's movement in *Magill* magazine in April of 1979, Pat Brennan argues that these organizations that developed after IWLM actually had more impact on legislative change: "While the Women's Liberation Group had the most dramatic impact on the consciousness of Irish women on their role in society and their underprivileged status, it was other organisations that started, although unobtrusively, the process of persistent lobbying for changes in the law and administrative practices" (BL/F/AP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive). With Batliwala's qualification in mind, I would argue, for example, that Nuala Fennell's group Action, Information and Motivation (AIM) functioned as a women's interest group rather than

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[74] It is important to note that this is not a fully representative dichotomization of reformist and radical interests, but it is one of the constructed forms of identification employed by Irish feminists in the pursuit of an autonomous movement.

a social movement organization. Yvonne Galligan argues that the term "women's movement" should be used more broadly than it is in its inclusion of women's politicized activity. Although I would agree that AIM was a significant pressure group in the advancement of women's rights, it also strategically chose to project an identity that deviated from the dominant radical identity of the women's movement in order to achieve its reformist goals, which is evident in Galligan's own depiction of the group: "AIM adopted a professional, mainstream pressure group approach from an early stage, far removed from the protest-oriented activities of the women's movement," which relied on a strategy of "framing its demands as issues of justice rather than as 'feminist demands'" (*Politics* 97-8). While arguably an effective approach, this strategic concession to (or manipulation of) what was defined as male-identified state forms of inclusion was often critiqued by radical feminists working to produce an alternative feminist sphere.

As previously relayed, another issue that arose for the base that continued to support movement goals in the mid-1970s was that it lacked a representative mechanism to advocate on behalf of the decentralized networks of women. Marion Connolly poses the question in *Bread and Roses*, "With 40 or so women's groups in the country why has no change been brought about?" (BL/F/AP/1517/4, Attic Press Archive).[75] It is a question to which she has an answer: a lack of political strength and autonomy. In her article "The Women's Movement as a Political Force in Ireland" (1976), Connolly analyzes a recent public meeting regarding the state's postponement of equal pay legislation as a "failure" on behalf of the women's movement to mobilize support for change: [76]

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[75] Connolly, Marion. "The Women's Movement as a Political Force in Ireland." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 5, 1976, pp. 9-10.

[76] Briefly, under Directive No. 117 the EEC set the final date for the full introduction of equal pay among its member states for January 1, 1976. While Garret Fitzgerald signed the directive, guaranteeing Ireland's commitment to equal pay, on December 18, 1975 Michael O'Leary introduced an amendment to the Equal

> This lack of political strength has several causes: the one with which I would like [to] deal here is a lack of unity of purpose among the womens [sic] groups in Ireland. In discussing this I think it would be useful to examine the recent issue of equal pay and the action taken in response to the Governemnts [sic] decision to postpone it. At first there was great enthusiasm and feeling of militancy in the various womens [sic] groups…So we saw some unity with the emergence of an Ad Hoc Committee on Equal Pay and the organisation of a public meeting in the Mansion House. There was a record attendence [sic] in all ages and from all backgrounds, but the meeting turned out to be nothing more than a talkshop, from the stage to the floor. No leadership was given, no feedback was encouraged, and all the women went home, I am sure, feeling quite annoyed because nothing more happened….Thus through a lack of unity and leadership on the part of the organised womens [sic] movement in Ireland, an issue which could have been the beginning of much more, died. (BL/F/AP/1517/4, Attic Press Archive)

This decentralization, as she continues, will "always militate against the political effectiveness and credibility of the movement" because "groups acting in isolation cannot achieve anything especially when the immediate issues facing the women's movement are ones that have the potential of gaining mass support" (BL/F/AP/1517/4, Attic Press Archive). Jo Freeman has argued that structurelessness will inevitably lead to political impotence because the "more unstructured a movement is, the less control it has over the directions in which it develops and the political actions in which it engages" (ct. in Atton *Alternative* 99). If every ideological conflict leads to proliferation or fragmentation, and if these groups do not maintain networks of connectivity or develop shared or reliable governance mechanisms, then the diversion of energies can result in isolation and movement stasis – as in the case of the aftermath of IWLM. Of course, part of what led to IWLM's disintegration was exactly the founder group's attempt to impose structural unity on the movement. After the addition of the sixth demand – one family, one house – members of the founder group attempted to attain consensus from each of the local women's liberation groups regarding the expanded agenda, thereby attempting, in Levine's words, to "control the mass movement by appointing themselves the co-ordinating

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Pay Act proposing that Ireland postpone its implementation date. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

executive" ("Movement" 182). Group members read this organizational move, whether

accurately or not, as an attempt to impose traditional, hierarchical, patriarchal structures on

women's activity.

Despite a deep distrust of traditional male forms of organization, both the example of

IWLM's disintegration and Connolly's critique in *Bread and Roses* point to the desire to

manage women's collective power through new organizing tactics, forms, and structures to

coalesce a movement. More importantly, though, these examples highlight two mobilizing

impetuses: the first is a need to organize and maintain pressure for change from outside the

reformist structures and bodies of the state; and the second is the role of periodicals in both

opening up a material space for ideological debate, particularly regarding the present state of

Irish feminism, and discursively shaping the real and imagined future structure of the women's

movement. As the base of consciousness-raised women continued to grow, women's

organizations continued to proliferate, and ideological difference started to spread in the midst

of a changing socio-economic political climate, this discourse of autonomy emerged in and

through women's print.

Moving Women Towards a Theory and Praxis of Autonomy

"Irishwomen United is now one year old. It was originally established to co-ordinate the
activities of a number of women's groups. Its present identity has grown out of the need to an
autonomous women's movement. At the outset it was decided, that the form of group be
flexible and democratic – every individual is encouraged to participate. This aim is reflected in
the rotation of all offices including that of chairperson…And now we have *Banshee* to
articulate and illustrate our oppression as women and to initiate radical change in the present
structure of our society." – Editorial." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 3, 1976, p. 2; (BL/F/AP/1515/3,
Attic Press Archive)

The push for autonomy within the women's movement is not exclusive to the Republic,

alone. There are numerous academic studies that describe a trend in autonomous movements in

the Western hemisphere, including Germany, Italy, Finland, and the United States, as well as in the Global South and Middle East, including but not limited to South Africa, India, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Taiwan, and Palestine. However, what "autonomy" means within a women's movement is a widely debated topic and varies depending on the cultural context in which the movement is situated. Drude Dahlerup argues that in order to speak about a feminist movement, or rather the "-ism" of feminism, we need to be able to identify a common core of feminism as a continuous, autonomous ideology ("Continuity" 60). My aim in this section is to contribute to the ongoing discussion and research surrounding women's autonomy by defining "autonomy" within the Irish women's movement in a way that will avoid reproducing homogenizing and universalizing definitions of feminism and feminist experience, while also identifying the ideas and visions of the autonomous women's movement and those who label themselves as feminists in the Irish context in order to trace feminism as a continuous movement.

In its most basic form in relation to the Irish women's movement in the Republic, autonomy is envisioned as the creation of collective organizational and ideological structures and practices that are separate from and counter to traditional, patriarchal, and hierarchical state forms of inclusion. While radical feminists largely pursue this autonomous movement through radical means, the Irish autonomous women's movement is highly informed by socialist feminists and the pursuit of liberal ideas of political equality. As I will discuss later in this dissertation, for many of these radical periodicals the autonomous prioritization of gender as a salient and bounded category of analysis within the women's movement is a short-lived mobilizing frame of analysis that is as much about defining women against state forms of political inclusion as it is about redefining them to accommodate female subjectivity in order to

negotiate the influence of socialist (coded as male) politics. The autonomous women's movement is continuously confronted by intersecting categories of identification, particularly in the forms of socialism and nationalism, which unveils a feminist agenda that often belies a series of uneven dependencies and mutual exclusions. In order to begin to contextualize the autonomous dynamic of the women's liberation movement as both a practice and ideology enacted through print, I will first frame the expansion of the women's liberation groups within the women's movement in the mid-1970s. According to Rabab Abdulhadi, "social movements do not sustain themselves without organizations," whose actions are guided by both their ideologies *and* the historical political conditions in which their movement occurs ("Autonomous" 669; emphasis added); however, movements are not simply the sum of their actors. As Solveig Bergman suggests, "the fluid and 'diffuse' elements of the movement, like its cultural and discursive expressions" must also be considered alongside the actions of organizations and networks in the formation of a new collective identity ("Feminisms" 28). The women's liberation branch of the Irish women's movement was comprised of organizations whose ideologies influenced the ideas and actions of their members, and these groups used print both to circulate their ideas and to form a collective feminist identity; therefore, it is important to trace the origin, development, and trajectory of these groups in order to clarify the dominant voices and rhetorical shifts that constitute the range of feminist periodicals and situate their periodical practices during this period I associate with the "autonomous women's movement."

The emergence of Irish Women United (IWU) and their self-published magazine, *Banshee,* in 1975 signaled one such attempt to re-structure women, collectively, through both an autonomous-movement organization and the alternative press, synchronously. Batliwala

defines a movement-created organization as "those set up by movement constituents/members to structure and govern themselves more democratically and effectively, to gain greater visibility and voice, make coherent and strategic decisions, and/or coordinate their collective power and action" (*Concepts* 17). IWU's formation, charter, structure, and tactics position them within the role of a movement-created organization. In a document prepared for a teach-in regarding dual membership on May 8-9, 1976, IWU identifies various forms of women's organizations, positioning themselves within the mass movement category: "Women's organisations fall into three kinds: There are groups organised to full [sic] a single function such as AIM or CHERISH…There are women's groups which are themselves caucuses or auxiliaries of larger organisations: trade unions, the Labour Party, RMG and RS. And finally there are mass movements: NOW in the United States and IWU here" (BL/F/AP/1178/4), Attic Press Archive). And it is IWU, its real and imagined role as a social movement organization, and its ideological, discursive, and sociospatial reproductions of autonomous feminism that are the focus of the following section.

"We are, indeed, Banshees": The Origins of Irish Women United, Banshee, and the

Autonomous Women's Movement

You've just read the daily papers. You've been listening to the radio. You're probably about to watch television. Would you know, from the attention devoted by the media to women, that females form fifty-one per cent of the population?...BANSHEE is the answer of Irish Women United to the media silence. Our magazine will detail, monthly and minutely, the oppression of women and the means of removing that oppression. More positively, we will record our pride and joy in being women and our strength in unity. We have chosen the title deliberately. Banshee means fairy woman. Originally the fairy woman was a person of wisdom. Now banshee has come to mean a wailing person, without joy, whose voice means death. This magazine will change all that. When we shout it will be with justifiable anger – we will be announcing death to sexism and womens' [sic] oppression. We will also be announcing re-birth. We are come agin, as joyful women seeking our full development as people. We are, indeed, Banshees. – "Editorial." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1976; (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)

IWU is characterized as a crucial social actor in the women's liberation movement, particularly in its ability to garner attention for the women's movement in the public consciousness. However, it is both IWU's imagined and material praxis of autonomy through *Banshee* that I am interested in unpacking in the following sections. While IWU is one of the few women's organizations that has received a significant amount of attention in recent scholarly works, little consideration has been given to its discourse and praxis of autonomy or its role within the pursuit of an autonomous women's movement.[77] On June 8, 1975, IWU launched after adopting their charter at a women's conference in Liberty Hall, Dublin. The preamble of the charter states: "At this time, the women of Ireland are beginning to see the need for, and are fighting for liberation. This is an inevitable step in the course of full human liberation. Although within the movement, we form diverse groups with variant ways of approaching the problem, we have joined together around these basic issues" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).[78] The charter was designed by approximately one hundred women, both as representatives of organizations and as individual actors. In the crafting of its agenda, IWU immediately demonstrates an anti-hierarchical, bottom-up process of democratic debate and discussion that is informed by what Batliwala identifies as "a theory of change that incorporates both gender and social transformation" (*Concepts* 21), and also enacts a form of prefigurative politics grounded in women's autonomy. The collective drew together women already involved in a number of leftist-oriented groups, including Movement for a Socialist Republic, the Irish Republican Socialist Group, Revolutionary Struggle, Women for Radical Change, and the International Lesbian Caucus, among others (McAuliffe "Change" 89), but the majority of

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[77] Yvonne Galligan (1998), *The Field Day of Irish Writing, Vol. IV and V* (2001), Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole (2005), DCTV's *Looking Left* featuring Connor McCabe (2010), and Mary McAuliffe (2015) have all featured discussions of IWU, but the majority of their discussions of *Banshee* are topical, documenting the general content of the periodical.

[78] "Irish Women United Charter." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1976, p. 12.

whom had found the traditional radical and leftist groups inhospitable to women's issues. According to the third edition of *Banshee* (c.1976-77)*,* IWU emerged out of this explicit desire for a space to pursue radical interests within and through a purely feminist frame, a space for women to organize autonomously: "Irishwomen United is now one year old. It was originally established to co-ordinate the activities of a number of women's groups. Its present identity has grown out of the need for an autonomous women's movement" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). And within their theories, strategies, and methods, IWU seeks to mobilize and build this movement for women across a diverse constituency. As Evelyn Conlon addresses in her research on "The Historical Points of Continuity and Discontinuity in the Women's Movement in Ireland" (1978), Irish Women United engaged in theoretical and analytical discussions in order "to establish how the Womens [sic] Movement in Ireland should proceed about getting its demands and how it should involve women who had never been involved before" (BL/F/AP/1143/2, Attic Press Archive). Part of building a movement across a diverse constituency begins with constructing an agenda around which women can identify, mobilize, and act.

Irish Women United Women's Charter

Expanding on the tenets of the IWLM, IWU organized around seven demands for women's liberation that were collectively agreed upon and stated in their charter, which was printed on the back of each of the eight editions of *Banshee*:

1. The removal of all legal and bureaucratic obstacles to equality.
2. Free legal contraception.
3. The recognition of motherhood and parenthood as a social function with special provision.
4. Equality in education – state-financed, secular, co-education schools with full community control at all levels.
5. The male rate for the job where men and women are working together.

6. State provision of funds and premises for the establishment of women's centres in major population areas to be controlled by the women themselves.
7. The right of all women to a self-determined sexuality. (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)[79]

These key demands demonstrate an ideological foundation centered on liberating women by advocating for the civil means to ensure their own self-determined capabilities, means currently not offered by the state. Similar to IWLM, IWU aimed to organize and build support across an established set of issues as opposed to single campaigns, thereby continuing the demands of IWLM but also advocating for women's centers, free contraception, and self-determined sexuality.[80] Levine indicates that these particular issues were added as a result of the influence of radical and lesbian feminists who saw gender as the source of all oppressions ("Movement" 185), and both of whom had been alienated under the organization of IWLM.[81] For some feminists, this expanded agenda under a new manifestation of the women's liberation movement organization held the promise of increasing and motivating participation, as well as extending movement support. For example, the first broadsheet of *Scarlet Woman* (July 1975) provides an overview of the potential of IWU:

> This development in the Irish women's movement, so long dormant, is extremely
> encouraging for those of us who see women's liberation as a key part of the struggle

[79] For a full listing of and expansion upon the charter tenets, see "Irish Women United Women's Charter" in (BL/F/AP/1111/1, Attic Press Archive).

[80] It is important to note, as Galligan does, that while IWU's agenda is similar to that of IWLM, the majority of the activists who attended the organizing conference for IWU and contributed to the charter had minimal previous connections to either the founders or the activities of the women's liberation movement (*Politics* 55).

[81] According to McAuliffe, the inclusion of self-determined sexuality in the IWU charter "was the opening salvo in what would be ongoing discussion in the group about sexuality. This was a radical idea in an Ireland where female sexuality had been regarded as of primary concern, not of the woman herself, but of the Catholic Church and the State" ("Change" 91). However, Marie McMahon, one of the former members of IWU, suggests that because abortion and lesbianism were not openly included in the charter, despite their discussion in the editions of *Banshee*, IWU's was "a revolution with limits" (ct. in Cullen "Emancipation" 100). For academic work on queer, lesbian, and gay activism and periodical culture in Ireland, see Ed Madden's "Queering Ireland, in the Archives" (2013), Elizabeth Kirwan's "The Irish Queer Archive" (2009), Linda Connolly and Tina O'Toole's "Lesbian Activism" in *Documenting Irish Feminisms* (2005), Kieran Rose's *Diverse Communities: The Evolution of Lesbian and Gay Politics in Ireland* (1994), *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing IV* (2001), as well as the Irish Queer Archive.

for the self-determination of women in Ireland. If Irish Women United are able to build on this success it could, *through the charter*, form the role of attraction to unite all women, workers, students and housewives. Also judging from the response from the delegates from Galway, Cork and Limerick, it could break out of the purely Dublin-oriented syndrome and build a *nationally* representative organization. An important part of this perspective, must be also, to make contact with women in the six counties, and establish itself on a thirty-two county basis. (BL/F/AP/1174/2, Attic Press Archive; emphases added)[82]

Not only does *Scarlet Woman* see IWU as having the potential to unite women in an autonomous women's movement across the Republic through their charter – a combination of radical, socialist, and liberalist interests – but also across the border, something that was a dividing point among the members of IWLM yet continued to be a growing interest amongst women's liberation groups as the decade progressed. As Anne O'Brien recognizes in her article "Irish Women's Movement: the next step" in the seventh issue of *Wicca,* retrospectively, this notion of unity-across-diversity was manifest in IWU's origin: "I.W.U. was originally an umbrella group made up of different small womens [sic] groups and individuals who had diverse experience and priorities but it quickly came to see itself as one group" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive).[83] While IWU's projection of itself as "one group," suggesting unity in spite of diversity, proves more imagined than real throughout the organization's evolution, this effort to build a coordinated, self-governing yet anti-hierarchical structure from its initial formation points to IWU's explicit objective to build an *autonomous* national women's movement. An important part of building this coordinating effort was the creation of *Banshee,* through which IWU hoped "to articulate and illustrate [their] oppression *as women* and to initiate radical change in the present structure of our society" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive; emphasis added).

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[82] "Irish Women United." *Scarlet Woman,* Broadsheet No. 1, 26 Jul. 1975.

[83] O'Brien, Anne. "Irish Women's Movement: the next step." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 7, c.1979, p. 13.

Banshee: Journal of Irish Women United (1976-1977)

While IWU engaged in many different tactics and strategies to mobilize feminist

consensus and activism, *Banshee* was the primary site of discursive identity work. William K.

Carroll suggests that, "new social movements are based not in material interest but in the

discursive practices that construct new political subjects and create new political spaces in

which to act…in distinctive and potentially radical ways, through personal and cultural

transformations that refuse accommodation with existing institutions" ("Movements" 17;

emphasis in original). The first issue of the journal launched on March 6, 1976. [84] The

periodical tackled a wide range of issues in its eight editions focused on but not confined to the

six issues presented in the accompanying IWU charter; however, the IWU charter was

explicitly printed on the back of each publication, thereby materializing the politics of the

organization and offering an ideological location through repetition. Periodicals provide

movement contact, and as IWU identified itself as the prime "instrument with which to

mobilize these masses of women," the organization envisioned *Banshee* as both a medium to

articulate women's oppression and also a tool to initiate radical change for its readers –

targeting both active and potential movement participants. In their discussion paper for their

teach-in on May 8-9, 1976, IWU places itself as an organization within the larger social and

cultural context of the Republic: "What is qualitatively different from that period with todays

[sic] situation, is that the instrument with which to mobilize these masses of women has now

emerged in I.W.U. It is not an 'artificial' creation placed at the centre of the stage by a handful

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[84] Different scholarly sources have pinpointed 1975 as the start date of *Banshee;* however, the Report from the Editorial Committee on *Banshee* (May 1976) indicates that, "the decision to bring out a regular journal was taken at a general meeting of Irishwomen United shortly after Christmas. At this meeting it was agreed that the journal should be monthly and the first issued [sic] would appear on International Women's Day (6th March)" (BL/F/AP/1142/10, Attic Press Archive). As IWU formed in April of 1975, its first publication of *Banshee* could only have appeared on March 6, 1976.

of manipulators, as some like to assert, but represents the organic growth of the collective

consciousness of the most advanced women in capitalist society today. This is not asserting that

we are the elite, the best, that all other women should be forgotten about, but recognizing the

specific role we have as I.W.U." (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive). As previously

discussed, the formation of a collective identity revolves around achieving forms of ideational

alignment, and is also important in the process of mobilizing action;[85] therefore, organizations

and movements need to work to provide and legitimize frames that express their interpretations

of the world and also resonate with their participants. As Stacey Young suggests, feminist

publications play an important part in the activism process because "social change is made

possible by changes in how people understand their situations and how they perceive their

options for altering those situations" through their propagation of feminist discourses (*Wor(l)d*

25).[86] Along with the propagation of feminist discourses, the collectives also model their own

theories in practice – or, the material options for altering those situations, which I discussed

earlier in this and the previous chapter. bell hooks argued that there is no feminist movement

without praxis, and in order to transform autonomous feminism – the proposed radical break

from traditional, hierarchical, patriarchal knowledge structures – from a theory to a practice,

feminists must provide and model new ways of knowing and being in the world for women.

The creation of *Banshee'*s editorial committee and its attempted implementation provides such

a model of autonomous organization in practice.

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[85] However, while identifying with a collectivity and/or its cause is necessary for actual participation, it only "indicates mobilization potential but does not ensure participation" (Snow "Dilemmas" 268). It is also important to note that identity and ideology are not the only factors that contribute to mobilizing action, but these two elements will be the primary focus of my analysis as I am examining periodicals, specifically, as sites of identity formation.

[86] Atton also confirms the important role of cognitive praxis in his account of new social protests in Britain and their focus on knowledge production, "the process whereby social movements create identity and meaning for themselves and their members" (*Media* 105).

As Pat Brennan notes in her discussion of *Banshee* in *Magill* magazine (April 1979), the production of the journal represented "a compromise and a structural experiment" where "the editorial committee was appointed on a rotating basis" (BL/FAP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive).[87] A segment from the first Report from the Editorial Committee on *Banshee* (May 1976) details the formation and role of *Banshee*'s committee:

> There was a long discussion on the role of an Editorial Committee. It was finally decided that for the first three issues of the paper the editorial committee[88] should consist of no more than 9 sisters and after that a new committee would be elected…The committee was then elected by a show of hands from those volunteering to work on the paper. As it happened 11 sisters volunteered so it was decided that the 11 would attend the first editorial meeting and between them would work out a working committee for the first three editions of the paper…It was simply decided to base the policy of the paper on the Charter under the direct control of the editorial committee but subject to approval, on any contentious matter, by the whole group. (BL/F/AP/1142/10, Attic Press Archive)

Banshee's collective was based on a strategy of autonomous organization, where the rotation of positions, democratic decision-making, and collective production were intended to subvert the intrusion and development of hierarchical forms of knowledge and power. This alternative structure was further extended to the practice of writing, where IWU hoped that each of their workshops would collectively write articles to contribute to *Banshee*. As the first editorial report continues, the "magazine [was] mainly written by sisters outside of the editorial committee and therefore reflect[ed] the general thinking of the whole group" (BL/F/AP/1174/5, Attic Press Archive), demonstrating what Atton describes as a form of knowledge production that is both participatory and non-hierarchical (*Media* 104). IWU's radical form of participation

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[87] Brennan, Pat. "Women in Revolt." *Magill,* Apr. 1979, pp. 45-6.

[88] The first editorial committee was composed of Nell McCafferty, Marie McMahon, and Anne Speed and, as outlined by Revolutionary Struggle, "the early copies of the journal reflect the socialist bias of the women" (BL/FAP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive). Nell McCafferty and Marie McMahon are listed as contributors for nos. 1-3; however, Anne Speed is only listed as a contributor for no. 1.

within their own autonomous organ also was reaffirmed in the organization's participation within the state.

IWU was recognized in both mainstream and alternative presses for their organized and radical forms of direct action. I would like to look at one such example of IWU's radical activity in relation to the EEC directive on equal pay – an example I will return to throughout the remaining sections of this dissertation. Briefly, under Directive No. 117 the EEC set the final date for the full introduction of equal pay among its member states for January 1, 1976. While Minister for Foreign Affairs Garret Fitzgerald signed the directive, guaranteeing Ireland's commitment to equal pay, on December 18, 1975 Michael O'Leary, the Minister for Labour, introduced an amendment to the Equal Pay Act proposing that Ireland postpone its implementation date. On January 8, 1976, IWU held a board meeting on the premises of FUE in Dublin and, in their own account of events in the first issue of *Banshee,* "forced the Vice-President of that organization, under the watchful eye of an Inspector of the Garda Siochana, to account for their denial of equal pay to women workers" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In their article in the first issue of *Banshee* entitled "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," which reports on the event in which members of the organization occupied the Federal Union of Employers offices in response to the government's postponement of equal pay legislation, IWU points to their radical direct action as forcing those in power to respond with some immediacy: "One hour after the occupation, the government went on national television to announce that they were giving equal pay in the civil service. We are not saying that there is a total connection between our occupation and government capitulation. We are saying that the time for soft shoe shuffling is over" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In her discussion

of equality and autonomy in German and U.S. feminist politics, Myra Marx Ferree[89] suggests

that many radical feminists felt that autonomy meant that, "pressure was to be brought from the

outside, where there was no danger of co-optation" ("Autonomy" 184). In this instance, IWU

similarly constructs a clear line between women's external or autonomous engagement with

static institutions of the state and responsive change. By forcing pressure from the outside,

women's interests are not co-opted by state interests and structures; instead, the state must

respond to the feminists or risk its own co-option. IWU's direct confrontational action

projected a radicalized image to the public, while also modeling modes of autonomous

participation and organization within the current state. Through their collective action and

mobilization, IWU attempted to complement the autonomous identity they constructed in their

journal.

Issues define the location of movement leaders, organizations, and activities within a

social movement, and IWU's early stance on divisive issues such as sexuality and radicalism

was important for establishing the organization's collective identity. Ryan suggests that such

points of conflict are crucial because "rather than maintaining unity by denying the existence of

controversial subjects, participants are led to consider the issues and organizations are forced to

articulate a position" (*Feminism* 45). And where denial was the source of IWLM's

disintegration, articulation was the foundation of IWU's identity. IWU hoped the issues it cited

in its charter would be a "valuable starting point in the development of a theory of sexual

politics" and also that its charter would inform "women outside of [its] organisation that issues

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[89] I draw from numerous works by Marx Ferree throughout this chapter to support my own arguments regarding women's autonomy in Ireland. Although her observations are specific to the autonomous women's movement in West Germany, I contend that there are numerous parallels between the West German and Irish cultural contexts, including the state prioritization of motherhood as a social function, the prominence of a socialist political agenda in the history of the state, and the public status of radical rather than liberal feminism that make Marx Ferree's observations relevant and applicable to the Irish context.

such as contraception and equal pay are only the tip of the iceberg as regards liberating women" (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive):[90]

> To summasrise [sic], the need for a charter rather than one or two single issue campaigns, grew out of the need to build an on going movement which combats the whole sphere of womens [sic] oppression in Ireland, and the need for that movement to have a clear programme to give its different tendencies a direction for action and resultantly for its growth. What has been important about our charter, was that women adopted the idea of the need for women to organize and to have a programme to fight on…It is a platform which will enable that broad layer of women whose consciousness extends beyond their own immediate and burning problems (such as contraception) to a new awareness of a whole series of problems and to fight a continuing campaign against womens [sic] oppression. (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive)

In their synopsis, IWU identifies their charter as a platform for providing a democratizing and centralizing ideology for the women's movement, one that aims to direct mass mobilization and unify women across varying ideological interests. Returning to her argument in *Bread and Roses'* "The Women's Movement as a Political Force in Ireland" (1976), Marion Connolly articulates that a certain level of unity, while challenging, is necessary in order to strengthen the women's movement because "there are some issues like contraception, divorce etc. which need a united front and which by their reformist nature should have one" (BL/F/AP/1517/4, Attic Press Archive).[91] I suggest IWU's charter was an attempt to present a set of expanded issues around which an united national women's front could be achieved, which articulated the initial series of issues they believed would raise consciousness, gain public consent, and motivate participation for women en masse.

Taking a closer look at one example of IWU's defense of its charter, points to the organization's chosen forms and issues of activism as intended for the mobilization of an

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[90] This information is taken from a discussion paper for a teach-in of Irishwomen United entitled "How to Build a Women's Movement" held on 8-9 May, 1976, and prepared through the collective efforts of Mary Purcell, Linda Hall, Anne Speed, Máire Casey, Ann O'Brien, Betty Purcell, and Jackie Morrissey.

[91] Connolly, Marion. "The Women's Movement as a Political Force in Ireland." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 5, 1976, p. 9.

autonomous women's movement. Prior to the impending Equal Pay Act, scheduled to go into

effect in January of 1976, IWU had been engaged in an employment workshop over the course

of several months working towards a critique of the impending equal pay legislation. However,

on December 18, 1975 Michael O'Leary introduced an amendment to the Equal Pay Act

proposing that its implementation be postponed in the private sector and that the marriage

differential scale be maintained in the public sector. Until the 1970s, marital status determined

the pay scale of civil service jobs. Joy Joyce explains that, "Generally, two pay scales [applied]

to Civil Service grades to which men and women are recruited, one for a married men [sic] and

the other = - 20% lower – for women and single men" ("Pay"). Women workers, trade

unionists, and single-issue pressure groups immediately organized an ad hoc committee to

"Save the Equal Pay Act," which IWU was notably not invited to join due to their radical

image (McAuliffe "Change" 93). Despite their exclusion from the coalition,[92] IWU proceeded

to collect signatures for the petition launched by the Equal Pay Campaign at the meeting at

Mansion House, which was attended by nearly 1,000 people. However, dissatisfied with the

meeting and the cautious progress of the ad hoc committee's activism,[93] IWU decided to take

direct and public action in the form of an occupation of the Federated Union of Employers

premises.[94] Importantly, while the event garnered national media attention and public

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[92] A coalition is a form of collaborative collective action. Holly J. McCammon and Minyoung Moon suggest that, "social movement coalitions occur when distinct activist groups mutually agree to cooperate and work together toward a common goal" ("Coalitions" 326). In this particular instance, various women's groups and trade unions organized around the issue of equal pay.

[93] In *Rebel Sister; time to fight,* Revolutionary Struggle relays IWU's specific qualms with the Mansion House meeting and the ad hoc committee, in general: "Most of the members of IWU were at the meeting and came away feeling disillusioned with its tone. Speeches which sounded more like platitudes were made by well-known names, none of whom were signatories of the petition, nobody from the audience was given a chance to speak and many felt that the campaign might go no further and wanted to get some further action taken" (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive).

[94] The FUE headquarters was chosen because it was the site of the employers' campaign to "diminish the importance of equal pay, to defeat the implementation of the Directive in their own economic interests, to deny the right to equal pay" (Speed ct. in McAuliffe "Change" 94).

awareness, none of the invited members and supporters of the ad hoc coalition were in attendance. Following the occupation, IWU organized an open workshop where women could ask informal questions regarding equal pay legislation; however, only approximately one hundred women attended and the ad hoc committee, again, declined to attend. Despite its participation in equal pay events, IWU was critiqued for its lack of leadership and for its negative activities (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive). Yet, if we examine IWU's response to criticism from women's trade organizations and socialist groups regarding their lack of leadership on equal pay activity, the organization maintains that their outlined approach was "correct for a womens [sic] movement, for trade women who are feminists we should say that these women should be working with the womens [sic] movement on forums but also to begin to build a charter-campaign as in Britain which would possibly involve men" because it is naïve to think that IWU, "which is an organisation composed of more than women workers can win equal pay at the present time. All we can do in this field at present is to, propagandize and initiate certain 'forms' of activity which women workers can partake and imitate themselves" (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive). IWU's response reveals an interest in forefronting gender interests, delineating boundaries around other intersecting categories such as class and religion in order to render gender visible.

While this distancing of the autonomous women's movement from traditional politics suggests an identity based on an exclusionary form of feminist solidarity, IWU does not deny the intersection of women's issues with labour issues, which is evident in the socialist bias of *Banshee*.[95] However, not unlike the observation Marx Ferree makes regarding the autonomous

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[95] Marx Ferree and Silke Roth suggest that it is incorrect to think of the women's movement as a bounded or unitary actor because the actions and collective identities of the movement are as much shaped by "interactions among movements as well as from dynamics within them" ("Interaction" 627). In this example, IWU's response demonstrates the way in which the labour movement interacted with the Irish

movement in West Germany, I also would suggest that what is important to IWU is that,

"autonomy is the crucial defining characteristic of the movement in its own eyes; it means that

the autonomous women's movement is not subordinated to male-defined needs of 'the whole

organization'" ("Autonomy" 183-4). If we remember, IWU was primarily the impetus of

women involved in traditional leftist organizations who felt the need to create their own

autonomous organization to pursue women's liberation. In the words of Anne Speed, one of the

editorial members of *Banshee* and IWU activist, "We could make common cause with male

colleagues on the left…but there were issues of feminism which only those who experienced

discrimination would be most determined to resist" (ct. in McAuliffe "Change" 90). According

to Speed, autonomy becomes a mechanism for creating a collective identity through distancing;

particularly, a distancing from traditional organized labour and institutional politics. This

notion is reiterated in members' responses to the formation of an ad hoc committee on the part

of women workers, trade unionists, and single-issue pressure groups to "Save the Equal Pay

Act" (McAuliffe "Change" 93). The editorial report for *Banshee* nos. 1 and 2 indicates that

some members of IWU considered the chosen tactics of the committee to be too reformist:

"The equal pay issue was considered by many to be revisionist and reformist, in that it

advocated alliance with trade unionism, which was considered to be less than revolutionary"

(BL/F/AP/1174/5, Attic Press Archive). Again, trade unionism is coded as a male form of

participation within the state, which means that it subordinates gender claims to institutional

politics. While I will analyze IWU's monological imperative later in this chapter and how it is

later challenged by its sister, *Wicca*, I contend that in their original articulation and praxis of its

charter that IWU attempts to explicitly maintain organizational and ideological autonomy in

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women's movement, continuing to shape both feminist identity and the framing of issues within the women's movement. The relation between the women's movement and the labour movement in the Republic will be addressed further in the following chapter.

order to reframe the matrix of gender interests, which is both a response to the concurrent socio-political climate as well as the historical challenges to the success of feminism in Ireland.

Theorizing Engagement with the Feminist Periodical

IWU aimed to produce autonomy in its self-organization and self-representation; however, the goal of social movement organizations is not only to align individual practices with movement ideologies, but also to reproduce ideological frameworks for change by creating opportunities for individual actors to participate in and, subsequently, build internal movement communities over time (Staggenborg "Cycles" 183). Apart from its protest actions, IWU used its periodical, *Banshee,* to build an autonomous community by both disseminating its autonomous ideologies and creating opportunities for individual readers to engage in activities to routinize autonomous actions, spaces, and identities over time; a task that was carried forward by its successor, *Wicca*. *Banshee*'s non-hierarchical politics of production and publication aimed to implement and model autonomous organizational structures, but it is its audience-building circulation and use practices that encouraged autonomous movement building. In order to situate *Banshee*'s communicative abilities, I draw upon Laurel Forster's study of magazine movements, in which she indicates that it is important to assess a magazine's relationship to its audience, both in terms of how it delivers messages and how it anticipates its imagined reader's responses (*Magazine* 6). Not only is the form of the magazine as a material object important in this definition, but also its strategies of communication and exchange with its readers. How, then, does *Banshee* engage its readers with autonomous feminist politics as a means of developing an autonomous Irish feminist movement, and how is this imperative taken up by its younger sister, *Wicca*? Again, Forster provides a useful starting point for discerning

the impact of the feminist periodical. According to Forster, feminist magazines are defined by three general forms of engagement, which can be summarized as the following: reader engagement with the periodical as a political act; engagement with other media; and engagement with feminist historicity (*Magazine* 6). These discursive and dialogic forms of engagement and their distinct forms in *Banshee* and *Wicca* – invitations for reader-writer contributions, advertisements for feminist cultural production, and Irish feminist historiography, respectively – demonstrate the ways in which textual, commercial, and editorial, features of the periodical format ideologically produce and sociospatially reproduce a place for autonomous feminism.

In what remains of this chapter, I analyze how different forms of engagement with the feminist magazine enabled autonomous feminist identities and ideas to emerge in and through print, paying particular attention to *Banshee* as an example of a movement magazine, while also considering how *Wicca* builds upon the movement ideology and periodical practices of its forbearer. First, I contextualize the alternative press's invitations to its readers to contribute to the periodical as a specific mode of political engagement, using *Banshee* as well as its related media to highlight this larger practice of knowledge production within the radical branch of the women's liberation sector. Then, I demonstrate how *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s engagement with other media, specifically through their advertisements (or lack thereof), further attempts to politicize their readership by both building an autonomous feminist community and redefining women's relationship to print consumption. Finally, I turn to the ways in which the trajectory of the women's movement is facilitated along autonomous lines through a rearticulation of the historical challenges to the success of feminism in Ireland and the autonomization of feminist forbearers in *Banshee*'s opinion-editorials, or op-eds. While the majority of this section focuses

on *Banshee* as an example of an autonomous feminist movement magazine, it is important to note that not all of the other periodicals discussed identify exclusively with "feminism"; however, all do tackle issues of feminism and autonomy, including *Wicca*. I suggest that these intersectional interests demonstrate the range of feminist ideologies and definitions of "women's issues" within the "autonomous" women's movement, which become more apparent in *Wicca*. These periodicals act as what Agatha Beins calls a "performative archive," a space in which feminist narratives formed and re-formed themselves ("Ephemera" 48). Similarly, while I do not mean to equate "autonomy" with vague notions about the "purity" of the specific movement in Irish feminism, the general unconcern with state and market forces in these publications enabled a diverse range of ideological positions to go relatively under-examined.

Framing Reader-Writer Contributions as Political Acts of Feminism

The multimodal form of the periodical invokes reader participation and engagement, both at an intellectual and a material level, and this engagement has a distinctly political character in the history of women's magazines. In the previous chapter, I examined how periodicals – as sites of both production and consumption – enabled the raising of women's consciousness by involving women in both the discussions and actions of feminism. In her discussion of American second-wave feminist periodicals, Kathryn Thoms Flannery notes the ways in which feminist periodicals both inform and incite by involving their readers on multiple levels:

> Feminist periodicals both celebrated and fueled the rapid growth of the women's movement by trusting to women's intelligence and trusting that women would know what to do with the proliferation of knowledge made available to them in print…The periodicals *invite* readers to involve themselves actively, to join in the work, not simply as consumers of the word but as creators of the word. (*Literacies* 50-1; emphasis added)

Flannery's employment of the word "invite" is particularly useful here. The verb "invite" carries several pertinent definitions: "to try to attract or induce," to unintentionally "bring on

(something) or encourage (it) to come," and to ask something "assumed to be agreeable."[96] In light of Flannery's characterization, we can see that periodicals – in the context of the women's movement – function as vehicles for movement through multiple acts of invitation to their readers, and these various forms of invitation, ultimately, work to reproduce feminism itself. The periodicals of the Irish women's movement implicitly or informally "invited" their readers to become educated and informed as individual consumers of the written word by inducing and encouraging them to become part of a process of consciousness-raising assumed to be agreeable to their status as women; however, they also employed formal invitations to their readers to engage in a culture of magazine consumption and production. In her examination of the early women's periodical, Kathryn Shevelow proposes that, "the periodicals' practice of encouraging a high degree of audience engagement with the text represented an attempt to establish a continuity between readers' lives and the medium of print, between extra-textual experience and textual expression" (*Women* 43). In the mid-century women's alternative periodical in Ireland, this continuity between reader and text is established through three forms of invitation: an invitation for readers to become feminists through reading; an invitation for readers to contribute to feminism through writing; and an invitation for readers to produce feminism through publishing. Each of these forms of reader and writer participation reinforces women's engagement with print as a political act in the reproduction of the autonomous women's movement.

From the earliest stages of the burgeoning autonomous women's movement to its dissolution, the editors of the radical press – from single-issue newsletters to serial magazines – first encouraged women to become feminists by reading and circulating the periodicals they

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[96] "invite, v." *OED Online.* Oxford University Press, Dec. 2016. 23 Jan. 2017.

encountered in their everyday lives, thereby participating in the assembling of feminist

consciousness. Forster, among other feminist media critics, argues that, "participation [with

feminist magazines] is crucial, as is the dissemination of information through the movement"

because "it builds confidence and involvement allowing women to name themselves, and to

advance the cause" (*Magazine* 208). In the discussion of *Chains or Change?* in Chapter One,

we saw the ways in which IWLM – one of the earliest women's liberation organizations –

invited their readers to use the pamphlet as a starting point for the dissemination of information

through informal means, such as group discussion. Similarly, the editorial collective of UCD's

student-run women's liberation magazine, *Bread and Roses,* echoes this desire for discussion

through print in their opening issue: "We see this magazine as a forum for opening up

discussion on this vital question [of women's liberation]" (BL/F/AP/1517/1, Attic Press

Archive).[97] According to Christina Murphy in her article "Bread and Roses" in the *Irish Times*

(May 1975)*,* a UCC women's group published a periodical called *Aware* and sold it for a low

price in order to ensure the circulation and accessibility of their material: "The U.C.C. group is

fairly newly formed and they decided that they would concentrate on making women aware of

the need for reform and raising people's awareness in general, so they have produced the

booklet. They wanted to keep it cheap and they sold 400 copies at 5p on the first day and had to

reprint" (BL/F/AP/1293/74, Attic Press Archive). As well, the collective of *Succubus* (May

1971) – the newsletter produced by the Sutton Branch of IWLM – states, "We hope this

newsletter will encourage other groups to publish their own periodical in order to promote an

exchange of ideas as well as keeping in touch with other's activities, etc." (BL/F/AP/1110/3,

Attic Press Archive). In these publications, an informal invitation to talk and discuss

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[97] "Editorial." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 1, c.1974-5.

encourages a culture of information exchange and dissemination amongst women's groups that is envisioned as agreeable to women's liberation. "We invite you to celebrate with us," *Banshee* proposes to its readership, because "the rising of the women means the rising of the race" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).[98] Here, an informal invitation to read, gather, discuss, and circulate the feminist periodical is envisioned as a means of enabling women to find a place to engage with feminism.

However, just as importantly, these feminist periodicals work through explicit invitations – formal requests – to their readers to contribute to feminism through the public writing and recording of their everyday lives. Margaret Beetham argues that, since its origin, one of the defining features of the periodical press is that it invited readers to become writers. This practice has had specific implications for female readers and writers. While by the end of the nineteenth century "such a reliance on reader's contributions had given way to a much sharper division between professional writers and their readers…most magazines for women, particularly from the 1850s onwards included a letters column or a space in which the community of readers was invited to share the journalistic space" (Beetham "Periodicals" 235). Such a space was important not only in the creation of imagined communities, but also in the activation of political realities. In their periodical *Fownes Street Journal,* the women of WLM hope to situate their journal as an interactive medium for their readership: "In our next issue of the *Fownes Street Journal,* there will be a Letter Page. We invite letters from our readers and also articles for submission" (*Fownes* 6).[99] *Wicca* expands upon this invitation to its readership in the opening editorial of its first publication:

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[98] "Editorial." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1976, p. 2.
[99] *Fownes Street Journal,* vol. 1, no. 1, May 1972, p. 6.

> WICCA is the brainchild of a group of women drawn together by the need we all felt for an Irish feminist magazine…Women in all parts of Ireland, of all ages, in all spheres of life – this magazine is for you. We want to publish your poetry, prose, drawings, photos, book reviews, non-sexist children's stories, thoughts on the Irish institutions that affect your life – in fact, anything that you're interested in sending us. We also hope to be an information source, keeping you notified of meetings, conferences, and other activities planned by feminist groups throughout the country. (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive)[100]

As the case of *Wicca* demonstrates, readers of feminist periodicals were invited to contribute letters, opinion pieces, work-shopped features or essays, poetry and short stories, book and film reviews, personal experiences and anecdotes, as well as art and photography. John Downing argues that, "If the true aim of publications is 'revolution' or 'liberation', then 'we cannot imagine them as liberating forces unless they are open to lateral communication between social beings, with their *multiple* experiences and concerns'" (ct. in Atton *Media* 104; emphasis in original). Feminist periodicals did not simply relegate their readers' contributions to delimited spaces on the page, thereby hierarchizing knowledge production; instead, they invited their readers into the same spaces as the editorial collectives, exhibiting what Atton describes as "a challenge to intellectual discourse as well as the opportunity to discuss the ideas in that discourse to an extent unknown in the mainstream media" (*Media* 111). Through their invitations for written contributions in any shape or form, the *Wicca* collective foregrounds its magazine as a collective endeavor and a space for lateral communication, both in terms of its form and content. If the magazine is to be *for* all women, then it must be shaped *by* "women in all parts of Ireland, of all ages, in all spheres of life." It is important to note that while this invitation for national contributions is significant in identifying the ideological impetus of the periodical; in reality, as Beins maintains, "most feminist periodicals did not circulate far from where they were created and included contributions primarily from local women [which] meant

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[100] "Editorial." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1978, p. 2.

that local issues and concerns had a significant impact on the content" ("Ephemera" 55).[101]

Similarly, final editorial and collective decisions regarding content tend to reveal the way in

which feminism as an ideology, community, and identity is impacted by local concerns (Beins

Free 12). Regardless, the *Wicca* collective does not require professional training for readers to

contribute to their periodical, nor do they require a theoretical or formal knowledge of

feminism; in fact, as the editorial indicates, they encourage women to send "anything that

you're interested in sending us." However, by inviting women simply to become recorders of

their quotidian lives, *Wicca* asked women to become conscious of their daily experiences; to

recognize that their personal encounters with everyday Irish institutions may, in fact, be

political encounters.

An examination of the first issue of *Banshee* offers another example of this invitation to

observe and record daily life as a means of materializing autonomous feminism, as both a

discourse and praxis. Under a heading titled "Boycott These Pubs!," the women of IWU write,

> Irish Women United intend to continue their campaign of protest against places who
> discriminate against women socially. In future issues of *Banshee* we will highlight and
> expose places of entertainment, sport etc. where women are banned or discriminated
> against. (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)[102]

However, this information exchange is not intended as a top-down process. While IWU lists

five public spaces that refuse women, it also expects its readers to become participants of their

recording and boycotting practices: "If you know of a place that discriminates against women

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[101] *Banshee* is a good example of a locally produced and distributed periodical. Around 3000 issues were
printed each run and, according to the collective's first editorial report, the first issue "resulted in the
distribution and/or sale of 2,500" (BL/F/AP/1174/5). However, an examination of the subscription, sales,
and postal records reveals that the majority of those issues were distributed in Dublin, along with a
minority number of copies in Waterford, Ballina, Bray, Sligo, England, and Scotland. Similarly, *Banshee*'s
offices were located in the Irish Women United Women's Centre in Dublin 2, meaning that the majority of
their editorial collective was comprised of local urban women. Of course these numbers do not account for
informal practices of distribution amongst women, but they do give an indication of the general geographic
location of *Banshee*'s readership and contributors.

[102] "Boycott These Pubs!" *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 1, 1976, p. 9.

just write down the name and address and forward it to Editorial Committee, Irish Women

United, 12 Lr. Pembroke Street, Dublin 2" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).[103] *Banshee*

offers its readers an opportunity to become active participants in the information sharing

process – all they need to do is write down a name and address. By the second edition of the

publication, four more Dublin venues had been added to the boycott list. In a similar invitation

to document the quotidian, *Fownes Street* calls on its readers to collect sexist terminology: "We

are making a collection of sexist terms – can you supply any definitions? We hope to add more

to the collection each month" ("Chicks" 10).[104] Compiling these observations in print enables

women to recognize their personal, daily, and local experiences of discrimination as part of a

larger pattern of systemic oppression. Consciousness is, thereby, raised through the collective

acts of contribution to the production of women's alternative print. By contributing to the

content of the magazine, *Banshee'*s and *Fownes Street'*s readers are not only shaping the

collective identity of the periodical, but also reproducing a place and identity for autonomous

feminism.

This invitation to contribute to feminism, textually, is stated in issues of *Anima Rising,*[105]

Bread and Roses,[106] *Fownes Street Journal,*[107] and *Wimmin,*[108] among others; however, the

invitation does not stop at individual contributions to already active periodicals, but also

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[103] See "More Pubs to Boycott." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 2, 1976, p. 15; (BL/F/AP/1515/2, Attic Press Archive).

[104] "Chicks/Dolls/Mots/Birds." *Fownes Street Journal,* vol. 1, no. 5, Sept. 1972, p. 10.

[105] "We'll keep you informed and please write to us 'cos' we love to hear from other women about themselves and what they're doing" (BL/F/AP/1139/17, Attic Press Archive).

[106] "We invite comments, contributions and criticisms from all those seriously interested in the women's liberation struggle" (BL/F/AP/1517/1, Attic Press Archive).

[107] "If you would like to write to us, send your letters to Women's Liberation Movement, Fownes St. Journal, 7 Fownes St., Dublin 2" (BL/F/AP/1110/1, Attic Press Archive).

[108] "Wimmin has come into being to facilitate and encourage women to write, share experiences and ideas. But most importantly to discuss those things which are important to us" (BL/F/AP/1508/1, Attic Press Archive).

extends to the production of new publications and, therefore, new knowledge producers. According to Atton, social movements engage in knowledge production by constructing identities and establishing meaning for themselves and their members (*Media* 105). If access to knowledge and the dissemination and creation of new knowledge is a key component of feminist practice, as Thoms Flannery suggests (*Literacies* 23), then providing women with access to tools of knowledge production is paramount. Part of providing access to such tools of knowledge production lies in rendering visible the practices of production that follow what Atton defines as a "hierarchy of access" in mainstream media (*Media* 111). These feminist collectives and organizations used their periodicals to bring women into the decision-making and practical processes involved in publication, and one of the ways in which they did so was through the presentation of an origin story, or a narration of the way in which the publication came into being. Let us examine *Anima Rising*'s first editorial (1972) as a case-in-point:

> So, one week-end, three of us isolated ourselves with a big bottle of wine and some six-packs to plan out what had become 'THE NEWSLETTER' – from that week-end came three severe hangovers, some beautiful photos (unfortunately the negatives got fucked up) of us dancing, standing on our heads, lying all over the floor and generally enjoying ourselves, lots of constructive talk (consciousness raising by any other name will get the mind as high) and…A PLAN! (BL/F/AP/1139/17, Attic Press Archive)

In the narration of the emergence of *Anima Rising,* the newsletter becomes a product of a weekend of female frivolity and bonding. This characterization is not meant to dismiss the endeavors of *Anima Rising,* but rather to indicate the ways in which the editors transform the notion of writing media. Not only is there an element of accessibility – "if we can do it, anyone can do it" – in the presentation of their newsletter's advent story, but also the women of *Anima Rising* identify print as a teleological product of female consciousness-raising. Consciousness-raising is not just predicated on the notion of sharing and identifying oppression; it is also

conceived as a strategy for inciting activism. Print, thereby, becomes a central tool in fostering the reproduction of feminism and mobilizing the women's liberation movement.

The slightly drunken, dance-filled weekend that gave rise to *Anima Rising* is not the narrative of every feminist publication at this time. For example, Irish Women United chronicles *Banshee*'s creation as an extension of the organization's desire to enact movement around its founding charter: "We are a group of Women's liberationists who believe that the best perspective for struggle against women's oppression in Ireland lies in an ongoing fight around the charter of demands printed here. We came together originally in April 1975 as a few individual women interested in the idea of building a conference to discuss a charter; what its demand should be and how a campaign should be built" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). *Banshee*, then, is imagined as a tool to develop a theory of autonomy, as well as a place to provide a centralizing ideology for the movement of women, an ideology written and produced by Irish women. However, periodicals from *Banshee* to *Wicca*[109] lay bare both their points of origin as well as their struggles for their readership, ultimately prescribing and proscribing successful models for knowledge production. These forms of invitation attempt to involve readers in the various processes of periodical reception, distribution, and production, while also enabling them to engage in the changing politics of feminist consciousness, identity formation, and activism of the movement over time. And, importantly, these invitations to engage challenged the delimiting, if complicated, envisioned role of the female "reader" within commercial and consumer women's magazines.

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[109] "Wicca is an open collective of about 12 permanent members. There is a floating membership and involvement of about 20 women. Each member of the collective has work and emotional commitments outside of Wicca. These commitments are tiring and time consuming, as a result no-one in Wicca can or does devote as much time and energy as they would wish into the magazine. Wicca meets once a week to discuss articles, layout of the magazine, distribution and financial matters – usually financial problems! There are no qualifications for joining the collective other than being a woman committed to the general principles of feminism." See in Boyd, Roisin. "Wicca views." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1979, p. 2; (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive).

Advertising Women's Cultural Production: Consuming as Building an Autonomous Network

The role of women as readers, interpreters, and consumers of the commercial and alternative periodical presses has been at the forefront of media studies for the better part of the latter twentieth century, and it was the second-wave of feminism in western Europe and America that witnessed women's heightened critical engagement with commercial constructions of femininities, particularly advertisements. In Ireland, as Caitriona Clear notes, reading women's magazines became more popular in the 1960s than it had been in the 1950s, particularly with the arrival of *Woman's Way,* the first Irish magazine to feature a readers' letters page (*Voices* 4). In spite of the mass appeal and distribution of *Woman's Way* in the early 1960s, it was not the first Irish women's magazine – the weekly was preceded by less widely circulating publications, such as *Woman's Mirror* (1951-56)*, Model Housekeeping* (1927-66)*,* and *Irish Tatler and Sketch*, and succeeded by *Woman's Choice* and *Woman's View.*[110] What made *Woman's Way* more successful was that it "belonged to a new consumer era with home-produced fashions and products and even home grown media celebrities from Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ);" and it was, in part, this alignment with new media, Clear argues, that made the weekly more popular and profitable "than its predecessors and competitors, to readers and advertisers alike" (*Voices* 4). While Clear's study of popular mid-century Irish women's magazines suggests that it was here women found sites to connect, either directly or indirectly, with the voices of other women, she also confirms what scholars before her have conceded about periodical readerships: "while women did not always slavishly follow consumer propaganda, advertising always influenced editorial content to some extent"

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[110] See Chapter One for more detailed descriptions of these women's magazines.

(*Voices* 2), and this content constructed real and imagined relationships between female readers and social and cultural ideals.

In the history of Ireland, the relationship between women's cultural consumption and production, particularly reading and writing, and state aspirations and agendas, has rendered "reading, popular and consumer culture" as distinct sites of gender negotiation (Meaney et al. *Reading* 1). As Gerardine Meaney et al. argue in *Reading the Irish Woman: Studies in Cultural Encounter and Exchange, 1714-1960,*

> The female consumer was a constant focus of official anxiety, but she also performed a key economic function. She was crucial to the modernization of Irish domesticity paradoxically promoted by the Irish state. On the other hand, women were urged to avoid the dangers of modernization and preserve what was presented as the indigenous purity of Irish womanhood. (220)

Ireland's historical trajectory toward modernity has been shaped by Catholic and nationalist cultural interventionist projects that have attempted to regulate and mediate the processes of cultural exchange and the consumption of cultural forms, specifically through the figure of "the Irish woman." Given the hegemonic representations of femininity mediated to and by women, historically, through dominant cultural forms, the Irish women's movement – its organizations and actors – developed a critical relationship to Irish cultural production, particularly print media. As Forster has suggested, this self-conscious relationship to print media also is a defining characteristics of feminist magazines, where "there is the linking with other mechanisms and outputs of the print media industry" (*Magazine* 210). In the autonomizing branch of the women's liberation movement, this "linking" is most apparent in *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s critical engagement with advertising.

As periodicals that span the ends of the autonomous women's movement, *Banshee* and *Wicca* both use advertising, strategically, as a means of discursively constructing an

autonomous space for women and realigning readers with the structural and cultural processes of consumption; however, while *Banshee*'s mode of realignment is dissenting, *Wicca*'s is consenting, ultimately reflecting the shift away from the separatist notion of autonomous feminist politics over the trajectory of the movement. According to Forster, one thing that often visually distinguishes feminist magazines from commercial women's magazines is that "less advertising and commercial backing lead to a more spartan appearance" (*Magazine* 209). Such is certainly the case with *Banshee*, which contains notably fewer visuals than its successor, *Wicca.* While photographs are often inserted with or without citation – particularly on covers or in news articles – and other graphics, when included, are hand drawn or cut and paste as collages, what is notably missing from *Banshee*'s visuals is the advertisements that populate popular commercial women's magazines of the time. As Ross Ballaster et al. have noted in their work on women's magazines throughout the twentieth century, "the shift in advertising toward increasing reliance on visual images points to another element in the complex interplay of the business of women's magazines and the work of femininity" (*Worlds* 117-8). *Banshee*'s editorial content is particularly critical of this visual targeting of women for profit in women's magazines in its editorial content. In the sixth issue, for example, the collective takes to task both magazines for girls, such as *Jackie, Annabel, and Seventeen,* and magazines for women – *Honey, Image, Harper's & Queen, Woman's Own, Vogue, and Cosmopolitan.*[111] In this scathing editorial, the *Banshee* collective argues against the "money making aspect" of this industry: "Huge companies in England or America often publish 2 or 3 of these magazines each. The profits must be juicy considering the advertisements fill anything from 10% to 50% of the total pages. These ads are perhaps even more powerful than the articles for reinforcing

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[111] "not our own choice?" *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 6, c.1976-7, p.15.

the stereotype image of women" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). Unlike the women's

magazines that use advertising visuals to sell women hegemonic feminine aspirations, the

Banshee collective uses their near complete lack of advertising to make it clear to readers that

profit is not part of their output imperative.

Throughout its run, *Banshee*'s approach to advertising challenges the visual connection

made in commercial print media between women and the marketplace. The first two issues

contain no advertisements; in fact, each issue contains what could be characterized as a

counter-ad. Within each section of "Rumblings" in *Banshee* nos. 1 and 2, there are outlined

boxes labeled "Boycott These Pubs!" and "More Pubs To Boycott…and a Chipper,"

respectively. There are no visual elements, but rather a list of places IWU has identified as

discriminatory towards women. In no. 1, the collective states,

> This issue we will begin by naming a few of the places who either refuse to serve
> women at all or who refuse to let them drink from pint glasses. Either boycott these
> pubs or else go in with a few friends and demand to be served the same as men are.
> (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)

The "ad" proceeds to list the names and addresses of public businesses in Dublin readers

should boycott or protest – Neary's, Brian Boro, Lowes, Searsons, and Scotch House.

Banshee's attempt to engage readers in the tactic of consumer protest invites them to

understand the ways in which their everyday consumption (or non-consumption) can be an act

of political commitment to the feminist movement. In naming and locating public places for

women to avoid or contest, the *Banshee* collective also is attempting to reorganize the

sociospatial practices by which hegemonic relationships persist in public space. *Banshee*'s use

of counter-advertising to reorganize women's sociospatial movement and consumptive

practices persists in nos. 3 through 8, where the collective uses slightly different modes of

framing to rewrite the discursive codes that dictate women's participation in the culture of consumption.

There are two trends that emerge in the remaining issues of IWU's monthly "advertisements" that will be further taken up by the *Wicca* collective after IWU's dissolution: the practice of naming places of feminism and the advisement of what products should be consumed by feminists. *Banshee* no. 3 no longer contains its former announcement regarding places to boycott; instead, it locates and names organizations and institutional resources for women to attend, use, or participate in throughout Ireland, including Family Planning Clinics and the single-parent organization, Cherish. Other locations of family planning clinics are amended in nos. 4, 5, and 7, thereby expanding the geographical terrain of the women's movement, and AIM and FLAC – sources of free legal aid or advice – are listed in no. 8. The use value of the "products" published here is practical rather than leisurely, and their mode of consumption is ideological rather than financial. In fact, the identification of places where women can drop-in and retain services *for free* undermines both the role of the periodical as an economic site, and the role of material consumption in the culture of the commercial women's periodical. *Banshee*'s revision of the process of feminine consumption is important in that it begins to build what Beins calls a "feminine infrastructure" (*Liberation* 9) for the autonomous women's movement – a network of resources, actors, and places where women could connect with other women, the practices, and the ideologies of the autonomous movement. While part of this revision process is educating readers where and when not to spend their money, thereby disrupting their participation in institutionalized and oppressive spaces, part of re-educating them into the cultural and structural sphere of autonomous politics is redirecting their habits of consumption.

Banshee relies on its advertisement to name itself as a place to invest in the future of the women's movement, both socially and materially. In the fourth issue of *Banshee*, the first labeled "Advertisement" appears – the only advertisement that is ever labeled as such in the periodical's run. The advertisement is for the following:

> Irishwomen United Women's Centre is in very bad repair – we need basic warmth and comfort for the long winter months ahead. Please contact us if you have information on the availability of cheap or free Carpets 20x22 and 13x10, tables, fabrics for curtains and cushions, wood for bookshelves and benches, or emulsion and gloss paints. (BL/F/AP/1515/4, Attic Press Archive)

IWU becomes its own advertiser, but rather than invite women to participate in the consumption of aspirational fantasies or cultural products of stereotypical Irish femininity, IWU invites its readers to participate in supporting the women's movement. Here, IWU does not simply ask their readers to invest in them, financially, but rather entrust their readers to communicate and connect them to the resources they need to keep the organization alive, while also continuing the work of building and extending the movement network; and, this building is both literal and metaphorical. The collective attempts to gain the trust of their readers by rendering visible what they need – paint, carpet, tables, bookshelves, etc. – and why they need it: to repair and maintain IWU's Women's Centre. By rhetorically visualizing the material processes that sustain periodicals, the ad allows readers not only to identify themselves as part of the culture of the periodical, but also to imagine themselves as materially building a location for feminism. While this ad indicates that readers need not invest in the movement at any financial cost to themselves – remember, the collective is looking for "information on the availability of cheap or free" items – *Banshee*'s final few ads also invite readers to stabilize feminist activity through their consumptive practices.

RUMBLINGS

The Cuckoo's Nest is finally a cop-out. What could have been a significant comment on society and the type of institutions it uses to 'cure' and 're-adjust' us turns out to be a harmless piece of escapism which offends nobody, rouses nobody.

The woman portrayed by Nurse R. is a classic in American literature – The Great Bitch (whom we all know from Norman Mailer's 'lit' rantings Superkid must put down and keep down) hard, cold, unsympathetic, loving and loved by no man. The other kind of woman portrayed is, of course, the converse – The Great-Hearted Whore – loved by and loving *everyman*. In fact, the more 'human' types in the film are totally weak and although there are stereotypes among them also, the whole effect is a sort of nice bunch of lads – God help them! thing.

The stereotyping of the women into dehumanised cliches plus the blatant antifeminism of action and dialogue obscured totally whatever criticism of our society the film was trying to make, and instead, the impression left with us is – if only Nurse R. had been more sympathetic, understanding, warm, kind (any word will do now you're on the right track) ultimately, of course, 'feminine', everything would have turned out hunkydory. Whereas, in reality, she was, poor thing, but a 'tool of the establishment' – a nurse, uninvolved in major policy and decision-making, and had she been sunshine itself McM. would still have been lobotomised.

And this, essentially, is the cop-out, by localising all the sicker aspects of psychiatry and the hospital system in general in Nurse R. our anger is diffused, our target obscured – and instead of rising up in fury against a society which dehumanises us we pray for better individuals. Don't be duped! Nurse R. was a cat's paw – she took the rap for the maniacs who make the decisions. In fact the film was filled with fall-guys/girls – McMurphy, who wasted his energy, finally his life trying to change things alone; Chief,

who thought he was winning and in the end was but a stereotype of the American Indian – a free, wild man of the forest who served to distract us from the horrors of lobotomy.

NUNS Marcelle Bernstein, Collins, London 1976 £5.44 inc. VAT

Nuns and Lesbians must be the only two groups of women to be the continual victims of a morbid fascination on the part of the public. *Nuns* claims to be an attempt to answer the most usual and facile of the questions generally put of either group . . . "But what do they do?" The answer, according to Ms Bernstein, is that female religious do a great deal – and that they also do very little. Ambivalence characterises the whole book. Its most depressing feature, in fact, is its author's ability to occupy some 350 pages in the making of revelations that reveal precisely nothing. Description there is, and plenty of it, but none related to any position of positive approval or criticism. The effect is that of a collage – intimate confessions pasted on the thin brown cardboard of historical fact and legend. The only solid propositions that emerge are that individual nuns may differ from each other in a practical and theoretical d'finition of their role – we know that already) and that a wind of change – of sorts – is sweeping over the convents (and we knew that too, or at least we gathered that things were beginning to happen when those butterfly veils were abolished and the Primate of All Ireland apparently took a daily block booking on the first three rows of the stalls at the Gaiety). For the rest, the book is a mixture of a slightly voyeuristic enquiry into cloistered sexuality ("I crawl under the wall"?) combined with a respectful and saccharine description of convent innocence and efficiency.

There is no doubt at all that convents have produced extremely able and dedicated professional women. There is equally no doubt that if a woman choses to become
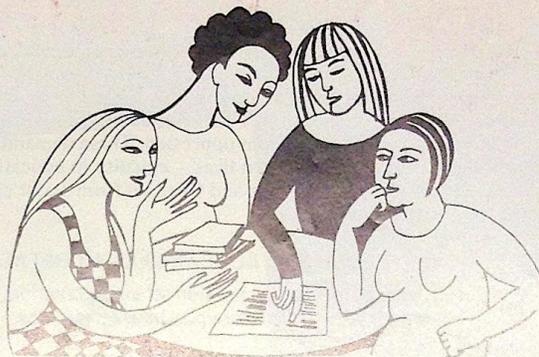
a nun this is her business and the right of criticism belongs to nobody. But it seems extraordinary that in a book that purports to be an analysis of religious life in general there is no examination of the convent as an institution. What doesn't emerge is that convents, like it or not, will tend to operate as exaggerated extensions of the social norms that apply in a given time and place. The nun is the servant of a patriarchal church in a patriarchal culture. An order is as 'free' as the world around it allows it to be, not as it determines it should be. Thus Spanish and Italian nuns (to whom Ms Bernstein only grudgingly refers) live a more enclosed existence because they are products of a more 'macho' culture than their freer American sisters. Even in the 'freer' orders sacrifices are defined in wordly – and extremely superficial – terms. Bernstein's nuns 'give up' the Identikit woman's magazine trappings of feminity – clothes, make-up, dances, lovers, husbands, children – but retain a basic

apprehension of the woman's role that appears to be singularly reassuring. "The nuns make formal and measured prayer, but they are as matter-of-fact about it as women in a kitchen . . ."

in the end, *Nuns* is a demystification of the convent, an approving exposition of the notion that "they're just like us" combined with an acknowledgement of a magical "something else" that inspires religious to abandon the rewards of feminity and assume only its burdens. Nuns are the support troops of Father Church – they continue to provide the essential practical services within the traditionally 'feminine' fields of social work, nursing and teaching, they enhance the caring image of Christianity. All this within a framework that firmly rates them the second-class citizens of the Church. Ms Bernstein's book would have been a better one if she had explored the role of nuns from the Church's and society's perspective as well as their own.

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Fig. 11 *Banshee*'s first and only labeled "Advertisement" in no. 4 (BL/F/AP/1515/4, Attic Press Archive).

WOMEN AND THE LAW

THE LAW AND US

Up to recently, a married woman had very few rights under the law. But since the passing of the Family Law Act 1976 and the Family Home Protection Act 1976, this has changed quite considerably and she now has a number of practical remedies, well worth her while knowing about, and, more unfortunately using, if the circumstances necessitate.

Maintenance

Under Section 5 of the Family Law Act, the Court may award Maintenance to the spouse (wife) where the other spouse (husband) "has failed to provide such Maintenance for the person applying as is proper in the circumstances". It will be appreciated that these confer a wide power on the District Justice. There is NO limit on the amount that may be awarded for either the married woman or the children, and the husband need NOT have deserted before the application is made. An important new provision under Section 10 is that if the husband is not complying with the order, the woman may apply to the Court to have his earnings "attached" This means, in effect, that the Husband's employer will be ordered to deduct so much from his wage-packet, and pay it to the District Court Clerk, where the woman can collect it.

Under the Maintenance Orders Act 1974, the married woman may now enforce her right to Maintenance in the U.K. Before this, if the husband fled the country, he was safe. The essential element of success here is the practical one of knowing where he is living. If she does not know where he is living, she cannot succeed. It will

be apparent this is not a legal weakness, but rather an unfortunate geographical obstacle.

ALLOWANCES

Under Section 21 any housekeeping donated by the husband, and in the unlikely event that some of it is saved over a period, is owned "jointly" by the husband and wife, and so also is any article e.g. furniture which is purchased out of this housekeeping allowance.

BARRING THE HUSBAND FROM THE HOME

Under Section 22 of the Family Law Act, a married woman can, by applying to the District Court, have her husband "barred", i.e. kept out of the home, if her safety and welfare or that of her children are in danger. As this is a new Act, it is not known precisely what sort of conduct will amount to endangering the wife's safety and welfare, but, an obvious example would be recurring drunkenness and outbursts of violence. The "Order" lasts for three months and may be renewed. If the woman wishes to stop the barring, she may do so at any time, by applying to the Court. The maximum penalty for the husband disobeying this Court order is a £200 fine, and/or six months in prison.

SALE OF THE HOME

Under the Family Home Protection Act, 1976, the husband may not sell the house, over the head, as it were, of his wife. Section 3 says the wife must give her consent, in writing; note that Section 4 provides that where the woman's consent is unreasonably withheld, the Court may dispense with her consent.

Under Section 9, if the husband intends to sell any "household

chattels" e.g. furniture, glass, books, cutlery etc., and the Court considers that the sale or removal of these items will cause hardship, the Court may order the husband to refrain from the sale.

Section 5 of this Act says that if the husband's conduct is such as may lead to the loss of the home the Court may make any order it thinks proper. No-one is really sure what this means, but conceivably it might cover the cases where the husband is a heavy gambler or a reckless speculator, then the Court might order the husband to stop these activities, or it might even order the husband's associates to stop dealing with him. However this remains to be seen.

All the above provisions are not an exhaustive list of the married woman's position in law, but may be regarded as innovations to her existing rights. Thus if the husband beats his wife, she always has an action for assault. However, this is a most unsatisfactory remedy, and I think that the barring provisions of Section 22 above would be more appropriate.

3 important overall points should now be made lest any misunderstanding arise:
(1) The three Acts of Parliament referred to contain the word "spouse", This word means BOTH husband and wife. Thus the husband

is entitled to these remedies also. Of course, practically speaking, these Acts will aid the married woman more, for the simple reason that in Ireland she remains the financially dependent partner in the marriage relationship.
(2) When dealing with Maintenance, one must remember that the Wife's rights are well nigh useless unless the husband is employed; and where the husband is self-employed, the provisions as to "attachment of earnings" obviously cannot apply because here the husband and the employer are one and the same man.
(3) Do not rely on an article like this, or on hearsay. The general advice for a woman with a legal problem should be 'when in doubt consult a solicitor', (see below for information about free legal aid) otherwise you run the risk of losing or delaying a perfectly good case through lack of experience.

CONCLUSION

I have tried in this necessarily short and skimpy article to indicate that there are now various remedies to which a married woman may turn. While the Law, and our Society still has a long way to go to achieve equality, the woman need not now feel that she is legally helpless. It is now up to the wronged woman, when the unfortunate situations arise, to enforce her rights.

E. O'S.
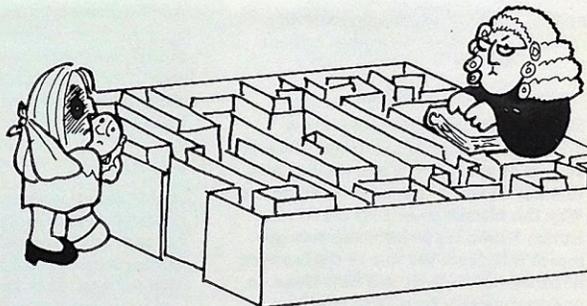
INJUSTICES POINTED OUT BY AIM

Domicile laws here deem a married woman to be domiciled wherever her husband is. This means that if the husband deserts and goes to England, she is deemed in the eyes of the law to be domiciled there too. He can, Under English Law, obtain a divorce after 5 years, WITHOUT THE WIFE'S CONSENT, and this divorce will be recognized in Ireland. The converse does not apply, since even if the wife deserts to England, she is still domiciled here. AIM

"Criminal Conversion" still exists in Ireland. Under this law, if the wife, who is still referred to as the husbands chattel, takes a lover, the husband may sue the lover for "criminal conversation" and the loss to him of her services during the period. This will be assessed in money terms, and the lover will have to pay. At least six of this type of case have been reported in the last few years. This law was abolished in

England in 1857. —AIM
During marriage if the wife commits adultery, the husband can sue and be financially compensated for loss of sexual service. The wife has no rights if the husband does same. — AIM

If a wife is suing for e.g. assault, her husband is entitled to free legal aid, since he is the defendant, while she is not entitled to free legal aid. However, the court has discretion in this area, and a husband will usually be held liable for costs incurred by the wife whether she is a petitioner or respondent, if she has no separate property of her own. This is so even if the verdict goes against her. — AIM

In the event of total marital breakdown, a Separation Agreement can be drawn up by the two parties' solicitors, and it is not expensive. The parties must be in mutual agreement, and this has no legal status other than a civil contract between the two parties. — AIM

SOURCES OF FREE LEGAL AID.

AIM is a pressure group who have had considerable success in getting the legal situation of women improved. They also provide free legal advice. Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 a.m. and Wednesday 2.30 – 4.30 p.m.   ph. 763587

FLAC is an organization which provides free legal aid, i.e. will provide solicitors and barristers etc. They have a number of centres:

MOUNTJOY SQUARE	Ogannon Hse., 53 Mountjoy Square.	Wednesday
MOLESWORTH ST.	ISPCC, Molesworth St., D2.	Tuesday
RIALTO	Rialto Parish Centre, 19 St. Anthony's Rd., Rialto, D8	Wednesday
BALLYFERMOT	The Dispensary, Ballyfermot Rd. D10	Wednesday
CRUMLIN	Social Service Centre, Armagh Rd.	Friday
BALLYMUN	Padraig Pearse Tower, Ballymun.	Thursday
MONKSTOWN	St. Mary's Youth & Community Centre Monkstown Hse., Monkstown.	Wednesday
FINGLAS	Community Services Centre, Wellmount Dr., Finglas West.	Tuesday
DUN LAOGHAIRE	36 York Rd., Dun Laoghaire	Tuesday

7.30 - 9.30

12

Fig. 12 "Advertisement" for sources of free legal aid in *Banshee* no. 8 (BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive).

While part of IWU's spatialization of the autonomous women's movement involves directing women away from the spaces and places sustained by hegemonic economic structures that isolate women, the other part involves redirecting readers where and how to take up spaces of autonomous feminism. In the final few issues of *Banshee*, IWU continues its trajectory of self-advertisement, but this time in the form of its cultural consumption. Nos. 5 and 6 both include advertisements for Irish Women United's education workshop pamphlet, "Education Widens the Gap," listed at 20p, which can be purchased by sending into *Banshee* for a copy at "12 Lr. Pembroke Street, Dublin 2" (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive). Again, the periodical becomes a vehicle for stabilizing a place for the women's movement through the repeated invocation of IWU's physical location in relation to feminist activity, but in its final issue, the collective makes a move to expand the movement's locational network by including an advertisement that lists the names of "Shops in which *Banshee* is Sold" (BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive). The majority of these shops are bookstores, along with a few other small commercial businesses. In her work on sexuality, contested space, and feminist activism, Anne Finn Enke argues that feminist interventions into public economies and social spaces "popularized women's movement throughout the public landscape, imprinting marketplaces, civic spaces, and public institutions with specifically feminist stamps" (*Finding* 7). In the case of IWU, the organization's feminist stamp is marked by the intervention of *Banshee* into places of commercial consumption. By providing readers with the locations in which they can purchase *Banshee*, the organization directly links women's consumption of print within civic space to participation in and creation of an autonomous feminist sphere.

While *Banshee*'s use of advertising is largely reactive, countering the use of visuals to fulfill the profit motives and sociocultural norms of commercial women's magazines, *Wicca*

builds on *Banshee*'s locational realignment of readers with consumerism by appropriating the strategies of the capitalist press. *Wicca*'s appearance is far less spartan than *Banshee*'s – the first four issues each feature between six to eight advertisements; however, the *Wicca* collective makes it clear from the title of its very first editorial criticism, that advertising is "$ The farce that fits the fashion $" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive):

> We can write letters of complaint to manufacturers who use sexist advertising and to the firms responsible for any particular ad. We can complain to and boycott newspapers, magazines, radio or television stations that publicize them. We can make it known once and for all that their stereotypes are not acceptable to us; and financially we can create real, alternative images for women. (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive)

Wicca's creation of "real, alternative images for women" begins by not focusing on images of women at all, but instead, offering its readers pragmatic resources to use in their everyday lives: advertisements for food stores, public transit discounts, and clothing and shoe shops are featured alongside women's centres, family planning associations, and contraception action programmes. According to Beins, "advertisements could politicize locations and give them feminist connotation" (*Liberation* 48), and the conjunction of what appear to be non-feminist locations with clear sites of feminist activity demonstrated to readers that "taking up place and taking up space was a political act, rewriting both the purview of specific places and also how these places related to the existing topographies of power" (*Liberation* 48). The *Wicca* collective further rewrites this relationship between places, relations, actions, and power through the text of the advertisements, itself.

Like *Banshee*, *Wicca* focuses more on text than visuals in its advertisements, and the information provided enables readers to understand why and how the ad fits into the politics of the periodical. For example, at the bottom of the ad for Green Acres Natural Foods, "This is an equal pay shop!!!" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive). Here, *Wicca* discursively

reinscribes a health food store as a feminist location, and this sociospatial marker writes into place Green Acres Natural Foods as a site on the map of the women's movement; however, this discursive transformation is probably most apparent on the back of each issue of *Wicca,* where a page entitled "Woman Space" is dedicated to a list of both institutional and non-institutional organizations, collectives, groups, associations, and other resources connected to the women's movement. Along with the name of each group, the address, primary contact information, and phone number are provided, enabling readers to imagine themselves as connected to a community of feminists, both North and South. While the list on "Woman Space" changes, slightly, from issue to issue, resources like AIM, Council on the Status of Woman, Employment Equality Agency, Family Planning Clinics, Belfast Women's Collective, and Women's Aid shelters appear frequently.[112] What is most interesting, though, is that listed amongst all of these social movement organizations and their extended network of activists are places of print consumption or production: Bookstall,[113] Dublin Women's Media Collective, *Wicca* Magazine, Irish Feminist Information, and Arlen House: The Women's Press are all included as actors in *Wicca'*s social movement community. And this connection between women's print and the women's movement does not stop at the resources page of "Woman Space;" this relationship also is imagined through *Wicca*'s construction of its readers as consumers.

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[112] It is important to note that in later issues of *Wicca,* particularly nearing the time of the dissolution and reformation of the periodical's collective, Trade Union Forums, Women Against Imperialism, and the Feminist Federation populate the pages of "Woman Space," indicating the increasing visibility of the ideological divisions and tensions that led to the dissolution of the autonomous women's movement. This issue will be further discussed in the final sections of this dissertation.

[113] Bookstall is listed as a site of "feminist and alternative literature" on "Woman Space" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive).

south.
    The R.A.C. work by open demonstrations, occupations and by leafleting Republican areas, explaining the situation which the press fails to do. They publish pamphlets for support groups to educate people on Northern events.   The Northern Womens Groups work closely with the R.A.C.

Women in West Belfast are becoming increasingly involved in the Belfast Womens Collective, which questions the roles into which women have been forced and recognises the importance of womens struggles. They have set up a number of creches, a service which is of particular importance to women who must make prison visits.

    The R.A.C. feel that while being affected so directly by the British army occupation of Northern Ireland (i.e. the fact that no young girl is safe from harrassment) they cannot work on issues of social equality and womens liberation until the main fight against British forces is won. It is obvious, however,that British army brutalisation of women is not the sole cause of womens oppression in the north; but rather it is one of the more ostensible and violent weapons of Imperialism against women. Therefore women in the South must not only fully support the R.A.C. struggle but must further try to develop with them a better understanding of the Northern problem with regard to women, given the fact that British army withdrawal is not the

final answer.
    The R.A.C. women asserted on their tour that they are not a support group but have taken up the struggle on an equal footing with men and as such they say they can never return to the old stance of merely supporting the struggle.They have rejected the position of passive, worrying women supporting the struggle from a home setting.   This surely marks an important change in their development as women, taking charge of their situation and also in the general development of the northern struggle; a change which women in the south must support and welcome whole heartedly.   The R.A.C. have not acted merely as another branch in the Northern struggle but, through initiatives such as the Coalisland Conference,they have attempted to unite all forces against British Imperialism in Ireland. It is through such initiatives that the potential for the defeat of British Imperialism in Ireland is being

recognised.   Revolutionaries recognise the importance of the concrete developments initiated by the R.A.C. women which has given a definite format to the part played in the Irish struggle by women who have been significantly written out of history in the past.
    The R.A.C womens tours have had the invaluable effect of educating women and men in the south on the unhappy conditions of northern people and also on provoking discussion on the domination of women,through which it is hoped the R.A.C. women will take up issues on the grounds of how and why women are doubly oppressed in the north.

The President of the 28,000-strong I.C.A., Ms Patsy Lawlor called for the establishment of a central research department for Women's Affairs. She suggested that the I.C.A. themselves take on the task. She said women were being ignored in modern economic planning. She also called for government action to introduce contraception.

Fig. 13 Advertisements in *Wicca* no. 1 for Green Acres Natural Foods and USIT Travel (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive).

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY AGENCY
Dept. of Labour,
Davitt House,
Mespil Road, Dublin 4.

Tel.765861

FAMILY PLANNING CLINICS:

DUBLIN
Cathal Brugha St., Dublin 1.
Tel. 744133

10 Merrion Sq. Dublin 2
Tel. 767852

67 Pembroke Rd., Dublin 4.
Tel. 681108

63 Lr. Leeson St., Dublin 2.
Tel. 789366/789504

59, Synge St., Dublin 8.
Tel. 682420.

BRAY
6 Eglinton Rd., Tel. 860410

CORK
4 Tuckey St., Tel. 021-502906

GALWAY
Merchants Rd., Galway.
Tel. 091- 62992

LIMERICK
4 Mallow St., Limerick
Tel. 061-42026

NAVAN
Trimgate St., Navan.
Tel. 046-21143

DUN LAOGHAIRE
off Patrick St., by
Everyman's shop.

CAP (Contraceptive Action Prog-
ramme).
8 Marlborough St.,
Dublin 2.
Tel. 746263
Also at Dandelion Market stall every
weekend.

WOMENS' AID SHELTERS:

DUBLIN
7-8 Harcourt Tce., D. 2
Tel. 681583
BELFAST
(084) 662385/662348

DERRY
69279/65967

PORTSTEWART
2932/2685/3964

CAMPAIGN FOR A WOMENS'
CENTRE
8, Marlborough St., D. 2
Tel. 746263

WomanSpace

COUNCIL FOR THE STATUS OF
WOMEN
27, Merrion Square,
Dublin 2.
Tel. 763448 (9.30 - 1.00)

TRADE UNION WOMEN'S FORUM
7, Ruben St.,
Dublin 8.
Tel. 781260 (p.m.)

AIM
44, Lr. Leeson St.,
Dublin 2
Tel. 763587

ARLEN HOUSE, The Women's Press
2, Grange Pk.,
Baldoyle,
Dublin 13.
Tel. 392520.

CHERISH
2, Lr. Pembroke St.,
Dublin 2.
Tel. 682744

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE
P.O. Box 1027,
Tel. 601470

FEMINIST FEDERATION
c/o Campaign for a Womens'Centre.

IRISH FEMINIST INFORMATION
c/o 8, Marlborough St., D.1.
or contact Mary Gordon at
971109.

V.D. CLINICS:

DUBLIN
St. Patrick Dunne's Hospital
Tel. 766942

Stephen's Hospital
Tel. 772606

Mater Hospital
Tel. 301122.

CORK
City Hall.

ENNIS
County Hall

MULLINGAR
County Clinic

SLIGO
Sligo Hospital

To contact 'WICCA' write to Liz Holmes
"Ehsa" Tivoli Road, Dun Laoghaire.

please SUBSCRIBE
£1.50 for 4 issues

NAME.................
ADDRESS..............
....
....
....

Please send postal orders
or cheques only made out
to WICCA magazine
LIZ HOLMES
"EHSA",TIVOLI ROAD
DUN LAOGHAIRE
CO. DUBLIN. IRELAND

RESOURCES CENTRE
35, Lr. Buckingham St.,
Dublin 1.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT
Basement, 38, Parnell Sq.,
Dublin 1. (Tues. 8.00 p.m)

GAY WOMEN NIGHT at
Hirchfield Centre,
10 Fownes St.,
Dublin 2. (every Wednesday)

FEMBROOK
Befriending for gay women
Bos J4049 at "In Dublin".

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUP
c/o Resources Centre. (Fri. 8.00pm)

WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
of the ICTU.
Congress House.
19 Raglan Road,
Dublin 4.
Tel. 680641.

WOMEN AGAINST IMPERIALISM
c/o Ann Marie Loughran,
7 Riverdale Drive,   Belfast.

the collective
Liz Holmes
Brenda Harvey
Margaret Sloan
Clare O'Connor
Mary MacNamara
Oonagh MacNamara
Mary Jones
Irmgard Löffler
Clodagh Boyd
Joy

Fig. 14 "Woman Space," a list of resources for women throughout the Republic and Northern Ireland, is printed on the back of each issue of *Wicca* (BL/F/AP/1498/11, Attic Press Archive).

Tony Tobin (Branch II, Dublin District Council) castigated male members for their general disregard for women's lack of experience at the rostrum. Such disregard was evident by less than discreet coughing, stage whispers, and a sometimes subtle, often blatant reading of form. Mr. Tobin spoke from his own experience of the unsung labours of women. Celebrating the early shift workers, he spoke with passion in reference to the older women workers who grace Dublin long before those in well-cushioned positions returned to their quietly cleaned offices. He condemned this virtuous Ireland which forces women over 65 years of age to supplement their meagre pensions by menial labour completed long before most of us rise to greet the day. He and the other men of his calibre at the conference were at least prepared to acknowledge male union complicity in women's lack of equality. The best of them were even observed reading the equality document - albeit furtively.

The document itself indicated the brief of those involved in it production - " our role is to make the right demands and exert pressure in the most effective way " (intro. page 5) . Some of the proposals, however , indicated an unwillingness to learn from the battles fought and the insights won by the Women's Movement. In calling for equal access to night work, the union ignores the well documented research done by women's groups and others recording the undesirable effects, physical and psychological, domestic and personal, of anti- social working hours. Is it so lacking in feasability to utilise new technology to limit night work - to fight for shorter , more socially productive hours for men and women, and to leave night work for that non-human labour which demands no rest ?

In further criticisms of proposed amendments to equal pay legislation, the document suggests a closing of the loophole which allows employers to refuse equal pay where there is no job comparability with work done by males. A change suggested in the document indicated that this loophole should be closed by means of a further clause "whereby women can claim

equal pay even though no men still perform the same job - as long as they once did so " (page 12. The new technology requires new job specifications and a different division of labour - there will be many jobs that have been done, in explicit terms, by neither men not women. A note of caution, however, ought not to be read as indicative of an unwillingness to consider other options.
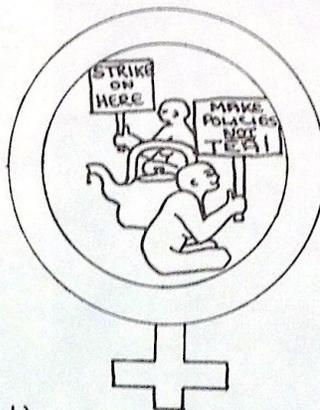
A number of motions were passed at the conference in regard to childcare and education facilities and it was proposed that the government be required to set down minimum standards for such facilities. The most contentious motion called on the national executive of the union to establish positive structures within the union to facilitate a measure of equality for women, and on the Minister for Labour to introduce legislation in line with the Working Women's Charter. The predicted 'hot' debate on the positive structures remained bubbling beneath the surface, and both motions were passed, unanimously , but not enthusiastically. It should be noted that the structures were not set up at this conference, and that in spite of the ITGWU's claims to being at least prepared to talk, the next year will be a crucial test of their capacity to act.

Women of the trade union movement are not passively waiting on the good will of their executive, and many continue their activism at branch level. However, the numbers of non-unionised women are legion, and those of us who are in unions cannot afford to be silent.

M.A. Jones.

Ms = ?

We all know M.R. stands for Mister
and that M.R.S. is his wife,
but what does M.S. stand for, sister?
Let's give those two letters life!

We hide behind this abbreviation
the meaning of which is quite blurred.
For the sake of emancipation, let's make it into a word!

In the meantime when asked the question:
"Is it Mrs. or Miss?"
I follow my friend Jo's suggestion
and answer quite simply

"It is!"

5

Fig. 15 *Wicca* no. 11 includes an advertisement for Ragged Robin Ltd., an all women co-op in Wales (BL/F/AP/1498/12, Attic Press Archive).

More than half of *Wicca*'s advertisements are for feminist and alternative bookstores, women's presses, and women's cultural products. If we return to the Green Acre Natural Food advertisement, for example, readers learn that amongst the household items they can purchase at the store, such as "Tamari, seaweeds, and over 100 herbs," they can also find an "amazing bookshop upstairs!" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). Irish Feminist Information's 1980 edition of *Irish Women's Diary and Guidebook, In Dublin* magazine, and International Contraception, Abortion and Sterilisation's (ICASC) newsletter are a few of the cultural products named and priced throughout the periodical. *Wicca*'s advertisements are an education in the enfranchising power of women's print. In their work on middlebrow Canadian women's magazines, Hammill and Smith propose that magazines "tied together the work of shopping, which involved self-education in an ever-changing marketplace," with the economic and social values that underpinned middle-class aspirations (*Magazines* 36-7). Rather than conscribe women's participation in the economic structures of the state like *Banshee, Wicca* appropriates the strategies of the commercial press to resinscribe women's practices of consumption, while simultaneously expanding the parameters of the women's movement network. This engagement with other media through advertisements re-aligns the female reader with feminist cultural consumption and encourages women to participate in the reproduction of the women's movement.

As the examples of *Banshee* and *Wicca* and their dissenting and consenting practices demonstrate, the link between feminist periodicals and outputs of the commercial press was not uniform across the movement. Forster notes that while feminists have critiqued women's magazines since the 1960s, "it was the magazine format, later in that same decade, that many women's liberation groups turned to when they wanted to express themselves and reach out to

potential new members," and these conflicts, differences, or dualities enabled by the magazine form "worked both for and against female politics" (*Magazine* 4). As the Irish women's movement's tools for knowledge production began to proliferate throughout the 1970s, periodicals opened up a material space for ideological debate, particularly regarding the present state of Irish feminism, and ideologically, and materially, shaped the real and imagined future structure of the women's movement.

"Feminism first – before all else!": Engaging with Feminist Historicity to Autonomize Feminist Forbearers

According to Forster, the medium of the periodical facilitates dialogue, exchange, and debate across a women's movement, enabling social movement actors to convey material that is relevant to their readership and to their given cultural moment (*Magazine* 5); however, this dialogic form also enables what Forster defines as the third form of feminist engagement the periodical invites: participation in "the dialogues and historicity of feminism" (*Magazine* 210). In Ireland, the trajectory of the women's movement along autonomous lines is facilitated in print through a rearticulation of the historical challenges to the success of feminism in Ireland and an autonomization of feminist foremothers. In the following diachronous reading of the Irish women's movement, I point to the ways in which print culture has enabled a transformative feminist politics and a space for the constitution of a distinctly Irish feminist history. As these periodicals work to recollect, reconstitute, and remobilize an Irish feminist historiography, they engage in particular discursive moves that are shaped by the socio-political context of their era: discussion of the present state of feminism in Ireland and missed opportunities to prioritize feminism in the prevailing public consciousness; historical validation of formidable feminist forbearers; articulation of the historical challenges to the success of

feminism, and how these successive movements have worked through those challenges; exploration of alternative routes forward for Irish feminism; and finally, the changing circumstances of the present and what these circumstances mean for the future of feminism in Ireland. In tracing the mechanisms through which feminists re-envisioned the histories of Irish women, responded to their present, and imagined their futures, I draw attention to the ways in which the autonomous women's movement eventually re-mobilized along fragmented lines through the use of women's print media, as well as theorize the formation and politicization of collective autonomous feminist identity and consciousness.

1976 is a year of historical, social and cultural significance in Ireland for the women's movement. The heightening conflict of The Troubles and the northern Civil Rights movement coincides with the sixtieth anniversary of the Easter Rising, and the simultaneous movements for Home Rule and women's suffrage. On March 1, 1976, Britain's new Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Roy Mason, revokes Special Category Status (SCS) in the northern state; a rhetorical and political move that reframed politically motivated counter-state activity as criminal rather than exceptional. At the time of Britain's withdrawal of political status, Armagh Gaol[114] houses over a hundred Republican female prisoners, [115] an issue that divided Northern women in the newly developed Northern Irish Women's Rights Movement (1975). In the South, the rapid upsurge in feminists' direct confrontation with the state and church, steer-headed by IWU, increasingly brings the women's movement into public consciousness. As Northern female prisoners' tactical responses to the change in political status radically challenges the notions of Irish femininity and feminism, Northern Irish Republicanism, and

[114]Armagh Gaol was the only women's prison in Northern Ireland. Built in the 1780s, the prison housed Republican women prisoners through the impending national liberation struggles in the Northern state until its closure in 1986.

[115] In the Republic, a small number of Republican women were also housed in Limerick Prison, including Marion Coyle, Marie Murray, Josephine Hayden, and Rose Dugdale (Quinlan "Imprisonment" 505).

British colonialism, Southern feminists are also forced to tackle the issue of their autonomous movement's relation to nationalism, Republicanism, and postcolonialism.

The conflicts between states and citizens, and women and men, brought the moment of partition back into sharp focus. As Seamus Deane notes in *Crane Bag*, "just as the scar-tissue of material development had begun to form [in the Republic], the old wounds opened again" – wounds inflicted by nationality, colonization, religion, and patriarchy ("Remembering" 82). What caused this contemporary intersection of gender and state to resurface was the fact that Ireland's historical trajectory toward its current two-state model had been molded by state nationalism: "Thus, while violence and martial law in the North became the most overt way that Ireland was occupied, the rest of the island was occupied by a conservative form of Irish nationalism that colluded with the Catholic Church in policing the borders of gender and sexuality" (Scarlata *Occupied* 4). The parallelism between anti-state movement in the North and the South – against colonization and Catholic nationalism, respectively – had overlapping implications in terms of gender. In heightened periods of national crisis there emerges a retrospective look to the past, and for Irish women, this retrospective gaze meant that they were confronted, again, with the ways in which "woman" is inscribed within nationalism – both as a product of Irish cultural history and state doctrine. *Bread and Roses, Banshee,* and *Wicca* all pay specific attention in their pages to the women's suffrage movement and its relationship (or counter-relationship) to the movement for Home Rule in the 1910s and 1920s, that comes into being through print in order to repopulate discourses on nationalism and feminism.

For Irish Women United, though, one of the first steps in enacting and inciting activism on behalf of both a personal and collective identity begins with "detail[ing], monthly and minutely, the oppression of women and the means of removing that oppression" and recording

"our pride and joy in being women and our strength in unity" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In terms of *Banshee*'s collective, understanding Irish women's current state of oppression requires re-narrating the history of women's oppression in Ireland. As previously mentioned, the socio-political period in which *Banshee* emerges on the cultural scene in the Republic is marked by conflict. The historical coincidence of the Troubles and its eruption on – or disruption of – the linearly-constructed timeline of modernization in the Republic is a reminder that the past is not as far removed from the present as postulated by the institutions of the state. Suffering from the culturally and politically conservative isolationist policies of the new state, Irish society turned away from its former brand of nationalism in order to "strive for an Ireland that was genuinely international, securely Irish, and non-provincial" (Whelan "Revisionist" 182); a "new" European Ireland. For example, beneath the unfolding narrative of Irish modernization we see how the post-Independent state begins to position itself in relation to Europe in an attempt to gain entry into the social and economic sphere of the European Community. I reach this far back into history to expound upon the ways in which colonial forms persist under the guise of progressive narratives of nationalism, then revisionism, then modernization, which replicate and transmute rapidly without recognition of their colonial stranglehold on Irish culture. Aaron Kelly's representation of the state's ideological imperatives is particularly illuminating: "One of the main endeavors of the new Irish State's cultural nationalism is to produce a nation that is consonant with the aesthetic and historical development of other 'normal' European states" (*Literature* 89). In relegating 'traditional' Ireland to an atavistic and backward past, modernization discourse "locates modern Ireland within an apparently self-contained Western European context and a foreshortened time-span in which the past […] acts as a barrier to progress" (Cleary "Misplaced" 20). This is to say, in

Ireland of the 1970s, economic crisis and sectarian conflict quickly shattered the revisionist narrative of modernization and revealed the resiliency of a recalcitrant form of Irish nationalism. Postcolonial nationalism in the South was built, as Begoña Aretxaga notes, on fratricide, not fraternity – "not on the affirmation of territorial sovereignty, but on the certainty of territorial fragmentation" (*Silence* 15). And, in the South, Irish sovereignty-won-through-fratricide colluded with a post-Independence nationalist project of engenderment.

In terms of the social position of Irish women, the discourses of nationalism and postcolonialism in the post-Independent state tasked the social identity category of the "Irish woman" – more specifically, the "Irish mother" – with maintaining the appearance of an authentic, racially pure, and natural Irish subjectivity or "Irishness." As Patricia Coughlan attests, the postcolonial identification of women with a form of maternity circumscribed by a Catholic nationalist ideology of the family whose "unmediated naturalness" linked them mimetically with the "natural" existence of an Irish nation, meant that women could only inhabit the category of "Irish women" in nationally prescribed ways ("Queens" 90). But, this was the state of Irish womanhood *after* Independence; this was the manner in which women had been represented in "national histories and symbolic repertoires" and whose lived experiences had been shaped by mainstream orthodoxies (Thapar-Björkert and Ryan "Mother" 303). Prior to the establishment of the Free State, the Irish women's movement was marked by events of militancy and sustained critique. What, then, caused the voices of feminist criticism to retreat into the folds of history? As the present recalled the past, Irish feminists found their politics subjected, again, to the interests of the same concurrent political movements and ideologies as their feminist predecessors. I contend that within the pages of their periodicals the Irish feminists of Irish Women United seek to rewrite the history of Irish women's feminist

politics in order to remobilize their sisters in the present, specifically in "How Irish Women

Won the Vote."

Case Study: IWU and "How Irish Women Won the Vote"

In Ireland, women made the mistake of trusting their male compatriots to treat them more justly than had imperialist power. We have suffered through this mistake for almost fifty years. Now that women are at last rising and fighting back, we must not allow ourselves to be sidetracked by male power battles. The new women's movement is autonomous and we must cherish our unity and singleness of purpose. Irish women won the vote by following a policy of – "Suffrage first – before all else." We will win our emancipation only when we also put Feminism first – before all else! – *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 6, 1976, p. 4; (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive)

"How Irish Women Won the Vote" appears in the sixth issue[116] of *Banshee* published

circa 1976, and is organized under the following subsections: "Beginnings," "Nationalist

Hostility," "Militant Action," "The Vote is Won," and "Feminism First." The subsections alone

indicate a two-fold correlation: the first, a negative or oppositional relationship between

feminism and nationalism; and the second, a positive or causal relationship between militant

action and direct change, both of which are pivotal to IWU's feminist praxis and politics. The

article opens with the following:

> Irish womens' [sic'] fight for the vote lasted a total of forty-six years from 1876-1922. Unlike their sisters in England, the Irish women's struggle has barely been recorded, the women involved, who did not make a name for themselves in nationalist politics, have been almost completely forgotten. The fight for national independence, overshadowed the women's struggle and many women were distracted and divided by it. (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive)

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[116] The contributors of the sixth issue include the following: Rosine Auberting, Maureen Cronin, Colette Cullen, Nora Ni Domhnaill, Mary Doran, Mary Dorcey, Mary Gallagher, Linda Hall, Monica Hughes, Mary Jennings, Bernadette McLeavey, Marie Mac Mahon, Anne O'Brien, Anne O'Donnell, Anne Speed, Saundra Stephen, AIM Group, and Sandmount Self Help Group (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive).

'How Irish Women Won the Vote'

Irish womens' fight for the vote lasted a total of forty-six years from 1876–1922. Unlike their sisters in England, the Irish women's struggle has barely been recorded. the women involved, who did not make a name for themselves in nationalist politics, have been almost completely forgotten. The fight for national independence, overshadowed the women's struggle and many women were distracted and divided by it.

However, many famous women of the period were involved, including Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Mary Colum, Louie Bennet, Helen Chenevix, Prof. Mary Hayden, Catherine Tynan, Eva Gore-Booth, Mary McSwiney, 'Somerville and Ross", Dr. Kathleen Lyn and Countess Markievicz. The majority of the women involved, of course, have vanished altogether from male-interpreted history.

Beginnings

In 1876 the first Suffrage society was founded by Anna Haslam, and named "The Dublin Women's Suffrage Association". Through a long campaign of public speaking, letter writing and popular education, it managed to have the votes for local government and the Poor Law Guardianship extended to women in 1896. The parliamentary vote was next in line.

In 1908 a group of young women formed the first militant association in Dublin. This group "The Irish Women's Franchise League" limited its membership to women. For four years the league attempted to win public support by non-violent means. They held public meetings, learnt to reply to hecklers, to avoid rotten eggs and tomatoes and to live with the scorn and ridicule They trained themselves to heckle at political meetings and to lobby M.P.'s and toured the country to advocate women's suffrage.

In 1911 an Irish women's suffrage federation was formed by Louie Bennet to link together the many different Suffrage societies. All the groups were united in their aim to win the vote but differed in these means chosen to obtain it. The Irish Women's Franchise League (I.W.F.L.) wanted "Women's suffrage – before all else". This policy brought them into conflict with the Irish party led by John Redmond who wanted "Home Rule – before all else" As Mary Cousins wrote "We were as keen as the men on the freedom of Ireland, but we saw them clamouring for amendments which suited their own interests and which made no recognition of the existance of women as fellow citizens."

Nationalist Hostility

By 1912 feelings were running high. The Irish party in pursuit of their aim to gain Home Rule, voted against the "Conciliation Bill" which hoped to extend the franchise to women. They also voted against the women's suffrage amendment to the Home Rule Bill. In June of that year irate women gathered in Dublin to protest. As Hanna Sheehy Skeffington put it — " Here were good Irish rebels (the Nationalists) many of them broken into national revolt with all the slogans of Irish revolution . . . . Yet at the whisper of 'Votes for Women' many changed to extreme Tories who urged women to wait till freedom for men was won". In fact when the suffragettes led a deputation to John Dillon he said "Women's suffrage will, I believe, be the ruin of our western civilization. It will destroy the home and challenge the headship of man laid down by God". Sinn Fein's excuse was that to include a demand for votes for women in the Home Rule Bill was to acknowledge British authority.

Our Irish male rebels haven't changed much, have they? Nowadays they tell us abortion is a British plot!

The policy of heckling British M.P.'s was also to provoke hostility from the Nationalists. When Churchill, then a Liberal, came to Belfast to address a Nationalist meeting, he was heckled continuously by women. This was too much for "The Freedom Fighters" who ejected them violently. As Hanna Sheehy Skeffington recalls, "Everyone was against us – the press, both National and Conservative, Official Sinn Fein, and the Clergy. Primarily because revolt of women for their own emancipation is always frowned on by organised males". Labour ridiculed Women's suffrage as 'Votes for ladies'. Doesn't it all sound so familiar!

Militant Action

When the women's demand to have women suffrage included in the Home Rule Bill in 1912 it was once again ignored by Irish M.P.'s The I.W.F.L , had had enough. Early one morning two bands of women armed with sticks set out to smash the windows of Government buildings. All eight were arrested and sentenced to prison. While they were in prison Asquith visited Ireland. In hot pursuit of the Prime Minister came two members of the English Suffrage Society, The Women's Social and Political Union, who attempted to set fire to the theatre Royal. It is also alleged that they threw a hatchet into Asquith's carriage. Both women were arrested. When imprisoned they went on hunger strike and were forcibly fed. The hatchet throwing incident aroused enormous hostility from the Irish public. Suffragettes were attacked whenever they appeared in public. But although the I.W.F.L. had not approved the English women's tactics they refused to repudiate their action considering their sister's – "Strictly within their rights".

Between 1912 and 1914, thirty six women were convicted for militant activities in Ireland. Many went on hunger strike and were the first political prisoners ever to do so. Sinn Fein, who as we all know later adopted this tactic, ridiculed it at the time as – "womanish". Hunger striking however, won a lot of sympathy for the suffrage movement from the public.

The Vote is Won

With the declaration of war in Britain, the majority of the English suffragettes devoted themselves to military work. Eventually in 1918 the vote was granted to women over thirty and elections were held. In these elections Countess Markievicz was elected but refused to take her seat in a British Parliament. And in the same elections the veteran Irish Suffragette – Anna Haslam voted for the first time. Irish women had continued their fight for the vote during the war years but the 1916 rebellion and its aftermath divided women and shattered the movement. In 1922 the new Irish Free State Government introduced universal suffrage. Women had won in spite of the opposition from male society, conservative and rebel alike. But as elsewhere the movement went into decline. In Ireland, women made the mistake of trusting their male compatriots to treat them more justly than had imperialist power.

Feminism First

We have suffered through this mistake for almost fifty years. Now that women are at last rising and fighting back, we must not allow ourselves to be sidetracked by male power battles. The new women's movement is autonomous and we must cherish our unity and singlenless of purpose. Irish women won the vote by following a policy of – "Suffrage first – before all else" We will win our emancipation only when we also put Feminism first – before all else!

Fig. 16 IWU revisits the Irish women's suffrage movement in "How Irish Women Won the Vote" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive).

Banshee immediately points to the ways in which the discourse of nationalism has co-opted *all* narratives in the history of Ireland, including the movement for women's suffrage. In this article *Banshee* postulates that the only women involved in suffrage who are remembered in the nation's history are those who also made "a name for themselves in nationalist politics." Importantly, this statement also positions Irish feminists in relation to their "sisters in England," a move that undermines the history of nationalist separatism in favor of feminist collectivity. As scholars, such as Maria Luddy, Tina O'Toole, and Margaret Ward, have evidenced, "from the 1860s Irish women were 'strongly influenced' by suffrage groups in the rest of the United Kingdom, with Irish suffragists copying their campaigning tactics and Irish and British women also campaigning together on many women's rights issues" (Ward "Voice" 24). However, while British and Irish feminists were united in their efforts to move the British government to back legislation for votes for women, the growing movement for Home Rule in Ireland made Irish suffragists' involvement with their British sisters contentious, despite many Irish feminists' anti-Home Rule sentiments. In an immediate effort to counteract that history of erasure and elevate the status of Irish feminists to those of their British sisters, the article goes on to list the women involved in the struggle for suffrage and their histories, including, "Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Mary Colum, Louie Bennet, Helen Chenevix, Prof. Mary Hayden, Catherine Tynan, Eva Gore-Booth, Mary McSwiney, 'Somerville and Ross', Dr. Kathleen Lyn and Countess Markievicz. The majority of women involved, of course, have vanished altogether from male-interpreted history" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). As the article progresses, it moves to identify a distinct feminist history apart from the male-interpreted version, while also rewriting the "messianic end point of [anticolonial] history" (Scarlata *Occupied* 3) – the nation – as the negation of Irish women's emancipation.

As the article begins to trace the origins of suffrage in Ireland, it only re-writes into history the autonomous efforts of suffragists; the events, figures, and acts that signified "suffrage first – before all else." *Banshee*'s narrativization of first-wave feminism begins with the establishment of The Dublin Women's Suffrage Association founded by Anna Haslam[117] in 1876, followed by the formation of "first militant association in Dublin" – The Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL)[118] – in 1908, whose membership was limited to women. These disparate suffrage organizations were united under an Irish women's suffrage federation formed by Louie Bennett[119] in 1911, all of which "were united in their aim to win the vote but differed in the means chosen to obtain it" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). Significantly, neither the Ladies' Land League (1880s) nor Inghinidhe na hÉireann – the Daughters of Erin (1900)[120] – are mentioned in the article. Neither organization was explicitly suffragist-oriented in their cause; however, the case can be made for their inclusion in a feminist historiography regarding women's suffrage, as both aimed to achieve equality for women *but* from within the realm of Irish nationalism. Margaret Ward argues that to frame first wave feminism in Ireland "only as a movement centred around campaigns for education reform, property rights and the vote," would be to obscure "what is distinctive about the Irish

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[117] Anna Haslam and her husband Thomas Haslam were key movers in the campaign for votes for women in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Dublin Women's Suffrage Society was largely a middle-class reformist organization that advocated on behalf of women's suffrage and the election and employment of women in public office (Quinlan "Onward" 39). Anna Haslam drew inspiration from the British suffrage movement and was a supporter of Unionism, believing women would stand a better chance at achieving equality under Westminster rule than Home Rule.

[118] According to Margaret Ward, "the IWFL was the only Irish group to take the militant path" ("Ulster" 228).

[119] Louie Bennett was an Irish suffragist who founded both the Irish Women's Suffrage Federation and the Irish Women's Reform League in order to link suffrage and working women's issues, later acting as General Secretary for the Irish Women Workers' Union (IWWU). Bennett was a staunch anti-militarist, which brought her into conflict with James Connolly and the movement for Home Rule, as well as radical suffragettes. Bennett was not necessarily anti-nationalist, but was more concerned with the nation-first movement and its subordination of women's suffrage (Ward "Rolling" 149-50).

[120] For example, as the first nationalist women's organization, Ward suggests that, "Indhinidhe na hÉireann were determined advocates of women's rights: 'our right to have a voice in directing the affairs of Ireland is…the inherent right of women as loyal citizens and intelligent human beings'" ("Voice" 27).

situation and marginaliz[e] movements that involved nationalist women, which also require

consideration" ("Voice" 26). I argue that while *Banshee* may fall into the tradition of anti-

national feminist criticism that continues to marginalize the emancipatory potential of

nationalism for women, its selective inclusion of autonomous suffrage acts and actors in the

rewriting of the past is an attempt both to reclaim Irish feminism as a transformative politics on

its own terms and not as a subsidiary concern of national or colonial interests, as well as to

implement a new interpretative frame of meaning to reconstitute and remobilize collective

feminist action in the present. According to Sidney Tarrow, a frame transformation occurs

when "a movement wishes to put forward a radically new set of ideas…which implies that

'new values may have to be planted and nurtured, old meanings or understandings jettisoned,

and erroneous beliefs or 'misframings' reframed'" ("Constructing" 188). In the context of this

case study, framing is relevant to thinking through the realities of movement dynamics and the

projected trajectory of the women's movement as envisioned by IWU in their periodical.

 Banshee's validation of Irish feminism as an autonomous historical player invokes a two-

fold process that rests on legitimizing *how* Irish women successfully accomplished the

teleological end-goal of the suffrage movement – women's right to vote – *and* vilifying all

those who became "distracted and divided" by the national question, which detracted from the

singleness of purpose. Throughout the article, militancy and confrontational, direct action are

linked to qualitative and quantitative change. For example, in the depiction of The Dublin

Women's Suffrage Association, "a long campaign of public speaking, letter writing and

popular education" is linked to the ascertaining of local government voting rights and the Poor

Law Guardianship for women by 1896 (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). Similarly, the

IWFL is listed as holding public meetings and educating themselves in non-violent tactics, such

as training "themselves to heckle at political meetings and to lobby M.P.'s and tour[ing] the

country to advocate women's suffrage" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). The

affirmation of these activist tactics in a cause-and-effect manner is significant in light of IWU's

own feminist praxis.

   IWU politicized a number of contentious tactics that eventually divided its members and

would continue to divide women's liberation and women's rights groups as the women's

movement progressed throughout the 1980s. Part of what makes collective action contentious is

the public manner in which it brings ordinary people into confrontation with opponents, leaders

and authorities (Tarrow *Power* 8). As Tarrow contends, "Collective action becomes contentious

when it is used by people who lack regular access to representative institutions, who act in the

name of new or unaccepted claims, and who behave in ways that fundamentally change others

or authorities" (*Power* 7). In the case of IWU, the new claim they are contentiously acting in

favour of is autonomy. In the editorial of the third issue of *Banshee,* IWU indicates their

commitment to radical collective action through the organization of publicized events:

> Irishwomen United is committed to fighting sexism. We swam at the Forty Foot, we
> played tennis at Fitzwilliam uninvited, we fought discrimination in pubs, we occupied
> the F.U.E. offices and successfully forced a confrontation with the employers'
> representatives. This strategy of direct action is linked to our other less publicised
> activities – a submission to the Law Reform Commission regarding the domicile law
> and addressing meetings held by other groups." (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press
> Archive)

As they further elaborate in their articles chronicling these public events, the organization was

met with extreme hostility, not only on the part of men and public authorities, but also on the

part of other women and/or feminists as well. In one such example, IWU staged a

demonstration at the Forty-Foot, an all-male swimming club on September 5, 1976. According

to the editorial collective in their "News & Letters" section of the fifth issue of *Banshee*, the

gentlemen of the club engaged in "violent tactics" against the female protesters: "So far these 'gentlemen' – otherwise known as the Sandycove Bathers Association have used fists, nails, towels and bags of flour in an effort to intimidate women and to keep the Forty-Foot an all-male preserve" (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive). The collectivization of Irish female bodies within and through their occupation of public space renders visible the "divisions and antagonisms between national and gender categories" that the category "Irish woman" enfolds (Ahmed ct. in Gray *Diaspora* 5). In "What are Social Movements and What is Gendered About Participation in Social Movements?," Benita Roth and Marian Horan point to this inherent threat of women's movements that employ autonomous, direct action in order to redefine social space:

> One of the recurring and most moving themes that one sees in stories of women's public protest is how their very participation in movements changes their conception of themselves and their role in their communities…Social space is remade and women's lives are remade by protest action, sometimes at great personal cost…And in many ways, it is women's movements, women in autonomous organizations, who constitute the greatest threat to order, as they disrupt the political field, and societal expectations of how women should act in that field through men. ("Movements" 5)

Part of what made IWU's collective organizing contentious was its transformation of a counterhegemonic subjectivity. As Cheryl Herr argues, the body, particularly the female body, in traditional, colonial, and postcolonial Ireland has "frequently been associated representationally with danger and has been scrutinized with an intensity that *stills*" ("Erotics" 7; emphasis in original).[121] Similarly, in her analysis of Frantz Fanon's "Algeria Unveiled," Anne McClintock pinpoints the female body as the visible site of the national body, and as such, becomes the territory subject to violent discipline: "Under the hallucinations of empire,

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[121] This bodily phenomenon is not specific to Ireland and is taken up by numerous postcolonial feminist critics in other contexts. For example, Veena Das discusses violence and the relationship of the nation to the oppression of women's bodies in the context of sectarian violence in India in the middle of the 20th century in *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (2006).

the Algerian woman is seen as the living flesh of the national body, unveiled and laid bare for the colonials' lascivious grip…In this remarkable essay, Fanon recognizes the colonial gendering of women as symbolic mediators, the boundary markers of an agon that is fundamentally male" (*Imperial* 364). In their public protestation, IWU are no longer stilled, but rather render visible women's bodies in motion. As the anecdote of the "gentlemen" at the Forty-Foot protest demonstrates, the united effort to reassert masculinity is an attempt to reinstate male rights to property, which is enacted by rendering women insecure within public spaces. This example typifies the way in which Irish nationalism employs traditional gender roles to negate the possibility of the existence of other forms of identity, particularly identities that may threaten the singular state-sanctioned form of national belonging. Here, both symbolic and physical violence towards visible female bodies in public spaces actually exposes men's fear of their own peripheral status as projected onto their mediated female subjects. Celebrating the ways in which past movements similarly collectivized female bodies in motion in "How Irish Women Won the Vote," IWU uses print to counteract the retroactive revisionist gaze that stills. This antagonism forces readers to witness the fractures in the state's deployment of ideologies concerning gender; revisionism's desire to equate Irish women's emancipation with separation from Britain, promoting a before-and-after narrative of women's progress, has, in fact, "failed to include women or any real sense of gendered history within what began as a radical attempt to write a new, more objective version of Irish history" (Pelan "Antagonisms" 129). Instead, IWU is re-imagining the confrontation of women with the state, through public, collective, and, therefore, visible militancy, as inextricably linked to material change.

IWU's reconstitution of social space both within the past and the present involves a strategic recollection of historical and cultural feminist traditions that validate the certainty of

change through militant direct action. Jane Jenson suggests that in the reclamation of discursive space, "communities are imagining more than their present and future; they also imagine their pasts. Therefore, social movements…write and rewrite history in order to justify contemporary definitions of interests and strategies" (ct. in Dicenzo et al. *Media* 47). In the aftermath of Independence, a period of abeyance followed between the first and second wave of the women's movements in Ireland where public feminist critique and protest were stifled by the conservatism of the De Valeran era, which was manifest in the form of restrictive legislation. In its framing of women's success in achieving suffrage, IWU points to the organization of autonomous, militant collective action as key to overturning restrictive legislation and compelling institutional change. Similarly, as the article later indicates, it is the fragmentation of this autonomous, contentious collectivity that is framed as instrumental to the dissolution of the women's movement and the origin point of conservative bourgeois nationalism:

> When the women's demand to have women's suffrage included in the Home Rule Bill in 1912 it was once again ignored by Irish M.P.'s. The I.W.F.L. had had enough. Early one morning two bands of women armed with sticks set out to smash the windows of Government buildings. All eight were arrested and sentenced to prison…Between 1912 and 1914, thirty six women were convicted for militant activities in Ireland. Many went on hunger strike and were the first political prisoners ever to do so. Sinn Fein, who as we all know later adopted this tactic, ridiculed it at the time as – 'womanish'. Hunger striking however, won a lot of sympathy for the suffrage movement from the public. (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive)

In this narration of action-induced change, nothing short of collective violence against the physical institutions of the state results in the political recognition of female activists. More importantly, militancy is not directed against British colonial power, but rather against anticolonial nationalists. Forms of anti-state protest that become associated with Republicanism – code for male political activity – in the history of anticolonial nationalism, such as hunger striking, are reconfigured as modes of feminist counterhegemonic activity. Significantly, this

form of direct action also results in public attention for feminism. *Banshee*'s discussion of

political prisoners and anti-state activism is particularly timely, given the events that followed

the revocation of SCS in Northern Ireland in 1976. SCS was granted to political prisoners in

Northern Ireland in 1972 as part of a negotiated deal between the Provisional IRA and the

British government. The status was won after the male Republican prisoners of Long Kesh

went on a hunger strike in 1971 over the introduction of internment, and was granted to all

prisoners who were convicted of criminal activity related to the Troubles (McEvoy

Paramilitary 206, 216). Following the revocation, male Republican prisoners in the H-Blocks

of Long Kesh engaged in a blanket protest in 1976, no-wash protest in 1978, and another

hunger strike in 1980. Female prisoners were to join the protests within a year of the

implementation of criminalization; however, their tactical responses were initially met with

limited political or public recognition.

Similar to *Banshee, Bread and Roses* explicates an important historical feminist precursor

whose direct actions against the state countered the victimization of women in national space.

In Teresina Russell's article "Emmeline Pankhurst: Portrait of a Militant" (1976), Russell

depicts British suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst[122] and her response to the rejection of the

Conciliation Bill. On November 18, 1910 the first Conciliation Bill was scheduled to appear

before the House of Commons. The bill would extend the right to vote to a narrow margin of

women in Britain and Ireland; however, Prime Minister Asquith did not allow for a second

reading of the bill during the scheduled parliamentary proceedings. Over three hundred women

and suffragettes protested Asquith's action, ending in police violence. The event, now known

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[122] Emmeline Pankhurst was a militant English feminist who was involved in the trade union and women's movements in England. She was a key figure in the suffrage movement, encountering both physical and symbolic violence in her visible protests in the public sphere. Pankhurst serves as a model for women's rights activism throughout numerous articles in Irish feminist periodicals, including *Bread and Roses* and *Banshee*.

as Black Friday, is captured by Russell: "Violence had only been done to the suffragettes, not by them, and now they hit out at property, smashing windows and doing such damage, but all the while fighting for human justice, and therefore never hurting anyone. They wished to re-establish true values, to emphasise the value of human rights against property rights" (BL/F/AP/1517/4, Attic Press Archive).[123] Not unlike the members of IWFL in *Banshee'*s article, "armed with sticks [who] set out to smash the windows of Government buildings," and the two members of the English Suffrage Society who allegedly "threw a hatchet into Asquith's[124] carriage," *Bread and Roses* also seems to signal a need to confront the state with other tactical and collective forms beyond socially acceptable modes of behavior. The proposition, then, I suggest is not to take a literal hatchet to authority, but rather to suggest that new and more extreme measures must be taken if material change is to occur. In their identification of social solidarity, IWU points to the efficacy of autonomous feminism in mobilizing public concern away from nationalist interests. Drawing on the "cultural artifacts, historical memories, and political traditions" (Tarrow *Power* 121) of their feminist forbearers in their periodical, IWU frames direct and militant radical action as essential strategies in the achievement of women's autonomous rights.

While reframing Irish feminist history is one component of *Banshee*'s practice, IWU also aims to shift the interpretive frame required to mobilize an autonomous collective identity in the contemporaneous women's movement. In her analysis of British suffrage periodicals, Dicenzo proposes that through the cultural dimensions of protest, social movements can shift the foci of public discourses through the construction and dissemination of new interpretative

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[123] Russell, Teresina. "Emmeline Pankhurst: Portrait of a Militant." *Bread and Roses,* vol. 1, no. 5, 1976, pp. 13-14.

[124] Herbert Henry Asquith was the Liberal Prime Minster of the United Kingdom from 1880 to 1916 who primarily opposed votes for women because he believed the move would benefit the Conservative party.

frames (*Media* 46). In "How Irish Women Won the Vote," the interpretative frame IWU seeks

to transform is the relationship of feminism to the national question. The question regarding the

link between Irish feminism and political nationalism has been taken up extensively by feminist

criticism, with a particular emphasis on the cooption of feminism by nationalist interests.[125]

This is not to suggest that nationalism has not enabled a feminist space in Irish society and

culture, for many women were actively involved in the creation of the 1916 Proclamation and

the 1922 Constitution of the Free State; [126] however, the limited focus on the conjuncture of

feminism and nationalism within Irish Studies, particularly within a postcolonial framework,

has often reproduced polarized, oversimplified and essentialized ideas about "Irish feminists,

'Irish women' and, more generally, Irish nationalism *itself*" (Connolly "Limits" 153; emphasis

in original). Many of *Banshee*'s articles take up the ways in which the post-Independence

discourse of nationalism turned into a state doctrine,[127] and it is this continuously transforming

recalcitrant form of state nationalism that relegates women to certain positions within the

nation. The problem, then, is not necessarily nationalism in and of itself, but rather, as *Banshee*

indicates in a numbers of its issues, the way in which the discourse in practice has mobilized

women away from autonomy and impeded the development of a national women's liberation

movement.

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[125] In recent years, there have been a significant number of scholarly works that have complicated the longstanding narrative of Irish nationalism's oppression of women, including Kathryn Kirkpatrick's *Border Crossings: Irish Women Writers and National Identities* (2000), Louise Ryan and Margaret Ward's *Irish Women and Nationalism: Soldiers, New Women and Hags* (2004), and Theresa O'Keefe's *Feminist Identity Development and Activism in Revolutionary Movements* (2013), among others.

[126] See Carol Coulter's *The Hidden Tradition: Feminism, Women and Nationalism in Ireland* (1993).

[127] The following articles from *Banshee* address the ways in which the narrative of state nationalism has delineated a narrow field of social agency for women, explicitly, although many other articles take up the issue implicitly, as well: "Women & the Constitution" (no. 1), "The Patriarchal Family" (no. 2), "40 Ft. 'Men Only'? (no. 4), "…And if you're black it's even worse" (no. 5), "Censorship – for or against?" (no. 8), "The Great Election Farce" (no. 8), and "Roots: Of Male Chauvinism" (no. 8).

Rather than seek to insert women back into a discourse whose history has impeded their

collective visibility, or inscribed it in restricted ways, I assert that these women writers choose

instead to express their subjectivity through a rejection of cultural narratives of identity

formation. In "How Irish Women Won the Vote," this transformation of the interpretive frame

of anticolonial nationalism as the great liberator of Irish women begins by positioning

autonomous feminism in opposition to all intersecting forms of nationalism. *Banshee* quotes

Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, the militant founder of the IWFL (1908), who was highly critical

of the failure of nationalism and nationalist organizations, such as the Daughters of Erin, to

support the feminist cause:

> Everyone was against us – the press, both National and Conservative, Official Sinn
> Fein, and the Clergy. Primarily because revolt of women for their own emancipation is
> always frowned upon by organized males.' Labour ridiculed Women's suffrage as
> 'Votes for ladies.' Doesn't it all sound so familiar! (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press
> Archive)

While, throughout this article, *Banshee* positions Sheehy-Skeffington in direct opposition to

nationalism, one of the slogan's of the IWFL was "home rule for Irish women *as well as* Irish

men," and numerous scholarly works have highlighted Sheehy-Skeffington's recognition of the

interconnected end goals of feminism and nationalism despite her vocal critique of the

contemporaneous form of nationalist organization (see Ward "Voice" and "Ulster"). In a letter

to the editor in the seventh issue of *Banshee* (1977), Betty Purcell responds to what she sees as

Banshee's problematic positioning of feminism in relation to nationalism in line with this

observation: "It is simplistic in the extreme to accuse Republican women of being 'distracted

and divided,' or 'sidetracked' by the struggle for National Independence…To see the struggle

for the liberation of women and the struggle of national liberation as mutually exclusive, shows

a complete lack of understanding of the effects of the latter on the former" (BL/F/AP/1515/7,

Attic Press Archive). In its reframing of Sheehy-Skeffington and, by extension, the movement

for suffrage and women's liberation as mutually exclusive of the movement for national

liberation, *Banshee* positions the suffragists' mobilization through negation: to fight for

women's autonomy in the movement for suffrage is to be anti-state, both conservative and

national forms.

Women's autonomy – in this case, the right to vote – is thereby positioned *alongside* the

simultaneously occurring movement for Home Rule, not in causal or mutual relation to

nationalism. In a manner of speaking, *Banshee* positions Irish feminists and their fight for

suffrage during the movement for Home Rule as excessive to, what they consider, the male-

dominated nationalist movement. Feminism, therefore, becomes delinked from nationalism and

is repositioned as existing outside the bounds of nationalist history, while existing in addition to

it. *Banshee'*s revisionist move is reminiscent of an observation Conor Carville makes in his

theorization of feminist criticism in relation to modernizing discourses in Ireland, particularly

the imperatives of nationalism and modernism: "If women can 'participate in…history' but at

the same time be recognized, albeit negatively, by that history as *excessive* to its 'masculine

terms,' this suggests an immanence which is not completely 'subjected' to male norms and

therefore potentially resistant to them" ("Hollow" 185; emphasis added). In her influential

deconstructionist piece "The Floozie in the Jacuzzi," Ailbhe Smyth similarly draws attention

the problem for Irish women in trying to insert themselves into a discourse of patriarchal

nationalism: "The problem is *not* how to negotiate entry inside, into a tradition, culture,

discourse which designates the Other as necessary alien, necessarily *outside*" ("Floozie" 25;

emphasis in original). It is through *Banshee'*s feminist interrogation of nationalism, that I

suggest IWU is attempting to maintain what Marilyn Reizbaum emphasizes is necessary in the

assertion of feminism's and women's interests against any monolithic narrative of nationalism that perpetuates patriarchal oppression (ct. in Kelly *Literature* 110). Perhaps, as *Banshee* advocates, resistance lies in choosing not to negotiate an entry inside the nationalist tradition. Despite the important engagement of women with nationalist efforts and the significant intersections of feminism and anticolonial nationalism, historically,[128] I propose *Banshee* seeks to remobilize women in the present along autonomous lines by reinscribing the successful autonomy of the past. In its surveying of a past where feminism's political orientation was altered, even disrupted, by the intervention of nationalism, *Banshee* reimagines a collective autonomous identity as part of the larger project of confirming a space from which feminists can mobilize and rewrite the mistakes of their forbearers.

"How Irish Women Won the Vote" ends by reinforcing the success of feminism as an autonomous practice and framing the dissolution of the first autonomous women's movement as a consequence of anticolonial nationalism: "Women had won in spite of the opposition from male society, conservative and rebel alike. But as elsewhere the movement went into decline. In Ireland, women made the mistake of trusting their male compatriots to treat them more justly than had imperialist power" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). In a move to signal and recall this specific past within the present, *Banshee* quips, "Our Irish rebels haven't changed much, have they? Nowadays they tell us abortion is a British plot!" (BL/F/AP/1515/6, Attic Press Archive). Nationalism, colonialism, and patriarchal oppression are linked together in a conflationary move of the rhetorical pen, or rather typescript. Intersectional interests, and

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[128] Scholars like Gerardine Meaney have signaled the important role of nationalism in opening a pathway for women's political participation in Ireland: "The campaign for women's suffrage shaped feminism into a self-conscious political movement…Women's extensive involvement in nationalism at the beginning of the period also opened up a heretofore unknown degree of political participation and offered the possibility of social and sexual change" ("Opposition" 976)

nationalism in particular, are re-scripted as the cause of the women's movement's devolution –

a forewarning to feminists in the present, of whom "many demands [are] being made"

(BL/F/AP/1498/14, Attic Press Archive). In a letter responding to the publication of "How Irish

Women Won the Vote" in the eighth issue of *Banshee* (1977)*,* the Belfast Socialist Women's

Group[129] asks the question to which current scholars of feminism and nationalism are

redirecting their attention:

> The IWFL sought to unite women of all political ends on the single issue of women's franchise, in no matter what context. This stand must be seriously examined by everyone in the women's movement today. Was it really possible to abstract the question of women obtaining the vote, from the political framework in which women would exercise that right?" (BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive)[130]

In a similar vein, in their article "Why the Vote Was Not Enough" the writers of *Fownes Street*

Journal de-emphasize the centrality of suffrage in the advancement of women's autonomy: "In

the four decades following [suffrage], little or no headway was made to improve the position of

women because the suffragettes had failed to carry their campaign to its logical conclusion.

This would have meant attacking the institutions on which the patriarchal society is based"

("Vote" 1). While more accusatory of the suffragettes than the Belfast Socialist Group, *Fownes*

Street similarly concludes that it is impossible to abstract suffrage from the patriarchal culture

in which it was enacted. Can a history of Irish feminism be abstracted from the history of

nationalism? To some extent, *Banshee* itself indicates the question is vexed. An examination of

both *Banshee* and its immediate editorial materials reveals ideological tensions surrounding

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[129] The Belfast Socialist Women's Group (SWG) formed in October 1975 after disputes within the Northern Ireland Women's Rights Movement (NIWRM) over the national question. In contrast to the NIWRM, which declined to take up the issue of sectarian divide, the SWG "took an anti-imperialist line, and, while critical of the IRA military campaign, believed liberation lay in a united Irish workers' state" (*Irish Left Archive* "SWG"). It is interesting that in the North, pro-nationalist (mainly Catholic) Irish women found it difficult to garner support and vocalize their interests amidst the broader NIWRM, which was hostile to both nationalism and Republicanism, and yet found a space to vocalize their nationalist interests in alternative women's magazines in the Republic.

[130] Belfast Socialist Women's Group. "Viewpoint." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1977, p. 6.

"the relationship of the autonomous women's movement to socialism, anti-colonialism and other political movements" (Connolly *Devolution* 133). For example, the editorial report on the second edition of *Banshee* highlights the precarious state of the magazine's ideological stance on autonomy from the earliest stages of printing:

> We should decide if it [*Banshee*] reflects only radical feminism and might therefore alienate some people – or whether this is exactly what is necessary, a good radical intellectual magazine, challenging the State, the Church, the Media ideologically. We should decide whether *Banshee* should take political stands i.e., supporting socialism, the national liberation struggle, against repression, torture, etc." (BL/F/AP/1174/5, Attic Press Archive)

And alienate some readers it did. In both the seventh and eighth issues of *Banshee*, letters to the editor indicate ideological dissent within *Banshee*'s readership on the women's movement's relationship to nationalism, particularly as women in the South were forced to reconsider their movement's relation to nationalist politics given the developing events in the North. As previously mentioned, in a letter to the editor in the seventh issue of *Banshee* Betty Purcell writes in response to "How Irish Women Won the Vote," which I quote in full here:

> It is simplistic in the extreme to accuse Republican women of being 'distracted and divided' or 'sidetracked' by the struggle for National Independence. Ireland's economic backwardness has been caused by Britains [sic] political and economic stranglehold over her. This has led to the inordinately strong position of the Catholic Church in education and in social legislation (such as contraception, divorce). To see the struggle for the liberation of women and the struggle of national liberation as mutually exclusive, shows a complete lack of understanding of the effects of the latter on the former. (BL/F/AP/1174/7, Attic Press Archive)

Similarly, the Belfast Socialist Women's Group responded with their "Viewpoint" on "How Irish Women Won the Vote," which received a full page in the eighth issue of *Banshee.* The article begins with an acknowledgment of some of the pitfalls of nationalism under the movement for Home Rule, but ends with a rhetorical questioning of what is meant by women's

autonomy: "Does this autonomy entail having a view of the national question as yet another manifestation of 'male power battles'?":

> We read with great interest your article (*Banshee* No. 6) on the Irish suffrage movement, but we feel that your stress upon the difficulties faced by the women and your (implicit) insistence that everyone outside the suffrage movement almost by definition must be 'the enemy' distorts political reality and the very real dilemma that many people found themselves in. It is an unfortunate fact that due to the national crisis many sincere people felt unable to commit themselves to the Irish Women's Franchise League (IWFL) – but it advances our understanding not one iota to simply condemn; rather we must critically analyse the political situation in order to understand their reasons. (BL/F/AP/1174/8, Attic Press Archive)

However, *Banshee*'s attempt to reframe feminism beyond the constraints of nationalism is a strategic effort to shift the frame for motivating collective action on behalf of the autonomous women's movement in the present. The reasons for motivating collective action are important because they define the trajectory of the movement and, in the Republic, in a growing movement where the commercial and national media capitalized on women's confrontational events, IWU used their own periodical to control the narratives of the women's movement. While direct confrontation drew immediate public attention, it was often reduced to media spectacle and met with public hostility. "How Irish Women Won the Vote," reveals the ways in which the control of narratives, both past and present, is a central concern of long-term organizing efforts.[131] As Carville suggests, "the transformation of the past in and by the present is seen to open up pathways for emancipatory projects" ("Hollow" 200). I propose that *Banshee*'s rhetorical emancipation of feminism from the discourse of nationalism signaled to its readers an opportunity to move feminism forward into the present.

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[131] I want to thank Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika for his talk on "The Revolution Reality Show: Storytelling and Activism in the Trump Era" at the University of Alberta on February 28, 2017 for this particular insight on the framing of storytelling, media, and movement organization efforts.

The Dissolution of IWU and the Limits of Imagined Autonomy

Irish Women United, formed in 1975, tried to solve all the political problems in one group; it had detailed positions on every issue, was very active for two years and then broke up due to all the tensions and disagreements caused by differences in politics as well as an unfavourable political situation outside. However, there is still a great need for unity, women are still oppressed and divided and we have to recognise what we have in common as well as our disagreements. – *Report to the National Women's Conference,* 1979; (BL/F/AP/1142/5, Attic Press Archive)

Banshee attempted to mobilize women's participation through a discourse of autonomy, essentially relying on women's engagement on the basis of their collective identity as women and their desire for a level of ideological and organizational independence from the state; however, this strategic framing relied on a narrow agenda of gender interests that attempted to maintain solidarity by transcending divisions rather than rendering those divisions visible in order to understand the ways in which difference operates in Irish society. Not unlike its framing of the dissolution of the autonomous efforts of the first-wave feminist movement as a consequence of anti-colonial nationalism in "How Irish Women Won the Vote," *Banshee* dissolves when its imagined autonomy is threated by seemingly intersectional or competing ideological interests. Ryan suggests that for social movements, "competing theories become demobilizing factors as disputes over ideological purity override common political concerns" (*Feminism* 60). And, as Connolly reveals, this conflict "over ideological purity and between those who promoted what was termed the 'revolutionary struggle' and adherents of radical feminism which many believed was the original purpose of the organization" was inherent in IWU from the start (*Devolution* 133). IWU's charter framed autonomy as constitutive of the movement's identity, and autonomy – as defined by the organization – was imagined as placing women's rights and liberation above all other interests; however, the rigidity of this form of identity formation proved dangerous because it homogenized otherness in order to fit an

exclusionary, collective hierarchy of oppression. In the case of IWU, the organization's attempt

to structure *Banshee* through an autonomous editorial board in order to extend the scope of

IWU's mission ultimately facilitated the presence of intra-group divisions and revealed the

limitations, or at least difficulties, of an autonomous praxis, which became apparent in the

pages of the periodical and subject to inter-group criticism.

As the editorial committee report for the first two editions of *Banshee* indicates,

"although everyone in theory seemed to want to have articles written collectively, or through

workshops they didn't appear to understand or want to put it into practice" (BL/F/AP/1174/5,

Attic Press Archive). In reality, the majority of articles were written by individuals as opposed

to groups enacting consensus decision-making. Workshops were often unwilling to respond to

requests for articles, and editorial committees were frequently forced to ask individuals whom

they thought would be a good fit or else take those who volunteered to write as stand-ins for the

larger organization. As Revolutionary Struggle elaborates in their overview of IWU:

> Without the workshops functioning, the articles in the journal tend to be the views of
> individuals rather than the views of the organisation. This problem is intensified by the
> fact that the editorial board has developed a sort of parallel structure to the
> organisation. The membership of IWU does not see or discuss the content of the
> journal before it is produced…This situation is dangerous for IWU, as without
> democratic structures the organisation can very quickly become fragmented and
> maybe fall apart. (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive)

Part of this discrepancy between theory and practice was the result of a lack of resources, as

indicated in *Banshee*'s self-advertisements; however, the other part of the problem was that

while the journal and organization were garnering consensus, they were struggling to motivate

active participation. According to Brennan in the April issue of *Magill* (1979), the structural

problems of the editorial board and organization on the whole led to "cries of elitism and

charges that each issue of *Banshee* was as much a surprise to the IWU members as it was to the

general public" as the periodical continued its publications (BL/F/AP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive). While *Banshee*'s democratizing and rotating structure was intended to reflect the politics of IWU, it reproduced the internal divisions of the organization and resulted in shifting frame narratives that enabled mobilization regarding particular issues but diminished movement-based action mobilization.

Other women's groups also perceived IWU's intragroup tension as decentering and demobilizing. Just after the second edition of *Banshee,* Revolutionary Struggle points to the crisis inherent within the journal:

> IWU has produced a journal, *Banshee.* To date two issued [sic] of the journal have been produced, 3,000 copies each run. However, the journal was produced at a time when the organisation was in crisis and this crisis is reflected inside *Banshee*…it does not represent coherent ideas of IWU as the organisation still has confused positions towards the TU's, the Government, the Church, the Police, the family and other women's groups…The journal has been sold at all large meetings, to other women's groups and in working-class housing estates and shopping centres. But the journal can be effective only if it complements action and mobilization, or else presents coherent theoretical articles. *Banshee* does neither of these two. (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive)

While the initial aim of the journal was to represent the collective voice of IWU, the problem of representation became apparent by the fifth issue when a disclaimer was added to the editorial page stating, "The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Irishwomen United" (BL/F/AP/1515/5, Attic Press Archive).[132] The paratextual device allows for the distancing of the organization from views expressed in the journal, suggesting a level of incompatibility between the organization and its ideological location, *Banshee*. As *Rebel Sister* continues, it was during this time of crisis that "general meetings of IWU fell from an average

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[132] As the articles were more often than not the product of individuals as opposed to the product of group workshops – and often individuals who were not necessarily well acquainted with the subject matter but rather were the only ones willing to write the article – it was more likely for there to be a higher level of theoretical discrepancies from article to article because the checks and balance system of a group were not in place.

of about 50 women every week down to about 20 women. At the same time workshops, which were the centre of the planning of organizational activities have almost stopped functioning" (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive). On the one hand, radicalism itself proved alienating for many of *Banshee*'s readers, as the Letters pages of the periodical demonstrate. For example, in a letter to the editor in the eighth issue of *Banshee*, Frances Burns writes in to vocalize her discontent with *Banshee*'s article on "The Natural Superiority of Women": "I would like to voice my disagreement with the article: 'The Natural Superiority of Women.' I cannot dispute the validity of the claims of 'Female Superiority.' But what I do fail to see is the point of the article. What do these various claims prove?...This type of article is self-limiting to the cause of women's liberation and thus the liberation of society as a whole. Most women do not wish to be 'superior' or to be seen as so, if this is our aim our hoped for condition would be no better than our present one" (BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive). On the other hand, while IWU, as a separate organization, was able to mobilize a general public consensus through their episodic confrontational actions, their magazine did not mobilize greater women's participation within the larger women's movement.

Conclusion

In the case of *Banshee,* "autonomy" became a means of avoiding open discussion of disruptive questions and issues, which only served to delay the very real presence of categories of difference. In the midst of a broader women's liberation scene characterized by proliferating ideological orientations and a divisive socio-political climate, IWU disintegrated because it was confronted with its inability to accommodate its inherent difference. However, as the former members of IWU point out, there is still a great need for unity amongst women in spite of the

ways in which society divides them. Throughout its eight publications, *Banshee* continued to cover a wide range of issues pertaining to women's rights in relation to and beyond those stated in IWU's charter, but the autonomous movement efforts of both the organization and periodical were increasingly tested by socialist and nationalist interests. [133] The eighth and final edition of *Banshee* was published in the summer of 1977, and IWU disbanded shortly after. While the final publication includes articles on censorship, women and the law, body image, the election in relation to women's rights, and rape, as both Revolutionary Struggle and Pat Brennan point out, the journal does not complement the perceived action and mobilization of the organization.[134] McAuliffe and Connolly both argue that IWU's political activism and theorization around single-issue campaigns helped gain significant ground for the movement towards women's liberation in the Republic: "Despite the sometimes negative responses to direct action IWU succeeded in positioning issues such as contraception, equal pay, reproduction and sexuality at the centre of feminist debate and activism in Ireland" (McAuliffe "Change" 99). However, I also would suggest that this form of success was what prevented IWU from mobilizing an autonomous women's movement. Ideological division demobilized IWU as the civil rights movement in the North pressed forward, trade union activism increased, and gay and lesbian voices gained visibility. In spite of its perceived tensions, *Banshee's* attempt to provide alternative ideological frames through which to mobilize women was a strategy taken up by burgeoning feminist periodicals towards the end of the 1970s, particularly

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[133] In a critical forum reflecting on Irish feminism in the Republic published in *The Honest Ulsterman* 83 (Summer 1987), Anne Speed, Pauline Jackson, Caroline McCramley, and Ailbhe Smyth all indicate that issues of class, nationalism, and to a certain extent, sexuality, were the major dividing lines in the women's movement.

[134] As Revolutionary Struggle suggests, "The only consistent activity that the organisation has been involved in is going to speak on the platform of other women's organisations and speaking to women's groups on the demands of IWU laid out in the Charter" (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive). However, as I have demonstrated, IWU's public activism was primarily oriented around single-issues, such as contraception and equal employment.

through discursive forms of engagement. More importantly, the desire for a broad-based or national women's movement was carried forward at a time when the effects of partition were more visible than ever. While ideological proliferation fragments and demobilizes IWU, particularly around class and the national question, *Banshee*'s successor, *Wicca,* is founded on ideological difference, especially in its devotion to trade unionism and anti-colonialism, and call for a 32-county women's movement. The following chapter will begin to take up the material representation of labour, class, and ideological difference within the women's movement, as both autonomous and non-autonomous women's groups worked to (re)evaluate their identities and interests alongside the concurrent trade union movement in the Republic and the contemporaneous political, economic interests of the state.

Chapter Three: Inscribing Genres of Feminist Resistance: Navigating Equal Pay through

Service Journalism

Introduction

It is commonly promoted that the initiative for equal pay came from the EEC or the authorities or the top trade union leadership. But this is totally false, it was the mass movement for women's rights over a period of years mainly within Ireland, but also internationally which not only forced some development in actual wage rates *before* the legislation was enacted…but also had forced the ruling class and its governments to change its public attitude to equal pay for women. – *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1979, pp.11-12; (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive; emphasis in original)

As the augmenting women's movement enters the latter half of the 1970s, its development is marked by a combination of historical socio-cultural circumstances that both shape its unfolding and also render visible its central tensions. At the intra-movement level, the split between reformist and radical tactics amongst Irish feminists as women's groups and organizations rapidly grew, conjoined with debates over what did and did not qualify as a feminist issue, continued to contextualize autonomous efforts. The continuity of consciousness-raising and collective action events across the earlier years of the decade contributed to the development of diverse collective identities central to social movement processes, and it is this stability that not only provided public visibility for feminist platforms, but also enabled a space for ideological reflection in order to unpack the past and direct the future stages of feminist thinking. While the women's rights sector sustained its focus on reformist achievements, which were perceived by many within the movement as too narrow-minded, conservative, and middle-class-oriented in their interests, the women's liberation sector concentrated on consciousness-raising and direct action tactics, which were similarly critiqued as elitist and leftist, as well as detrimental to the success of the movement, publically. In spite of autonomous feminists' concern with ideological boundaries and organizational independence

within the liberation sector, particularly in relation to organized labour and institutional politics, and reformists feminists' general desire to work with(in) the state, both sectors were forced to re-evaluate their identities, tactics, and ideals as the Irish state negotiated the unfolding consequences of its 1973 entry into the European Economic Community (EEC); ultimately, this political move created an anxiety for which Irish women "paid."

It is important, first, to contextualize the socio-economic conditions that brought autonomous feminists into both cooperation and conflict with labour, socialist, and reformist politics at this time before turning to the ways in which these conditions impacted the modes and means feminists used to engage their various readerships through their periodicals; beginning with the Republic's application for EEC membership. Since the 1960s, the economic and social agenda of the Republic has been inseparable from the term "modern," which Joe Cleary identifies as a vague process of integration with other Western societies ("Introduction" 14). After suffering the consequences of a protectionist economy in the 1950s – in the form of "economic stagnation, poverty, and large-scale emigration" (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 84) – the eventual move to apply for membership in the EEC was pegged by state actors as the best route to address the challenges of economic modernization in the aftermath of decolonization. However, as Cleary continues, while modern Ireland "emerges in the same orbit of capital as the Western European imperial states, its social development and functional role within that orbit seems in crucial respects" different than its primary European counterparts (*Outrageous* 36). While the nation rapidly moved towards a country of "complex cosmopolitans, Irish-Europeans, [and] citizen-consumers" in a global market place (McCarthy *Modernisation* 6), the Republic's membership in the EEC, as well as the coinciding economic

and, subsequent, labour crises, also demonstrated the social inconsistencies of the Irish State with its European neighbours, particularly along the lines of gender equality.

Socially, Ireland's entry into the EEC revealed the state's social experience of underdevelopment, particularly in the forms of sexual conservatism, as well as the co-option of church and state that differentially impacted the position of Irish women in relation to their European sisters. According to Pat O'Connor, it was Ireland's "traditional stance" on particular issues such as reproductive rights and the role of women in the labour force that demonstrated its belated investments in patriarchal social institutions among other European nations: "the 'peculiarities' of Ireland, insofar as they exist, are said to arise from the dominance of the church and from state employment policies which inhibited women's participation in paid employment" (*Emerging* 3). What entry into the EEC revealed, was that Ireland remained deeply divided around the political and cultural concern with women's relationship to paid employment outside the home. In many ways, the political movement to expand the Irish economy fostered an atmosphere of public social critique regarding the state's treatment of Irish women, as external pressure applied through EEC initiatives was reinforced, simultaneously, by internal pressure already being applied by the Irish women's movement. EEC policy directives, such as the Equal Pay Directive of 1975, "provided the women's movement with political currency in areas that complemented the state's modernization project" (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 90); however, as the women's movement was soon to discover, this political currency for women did not extend to economic currency. The introduction of the EEC Directive on equal pay coincided with an economic recession and a crisis in labour, bringing the women's movement into conjunction with a "working-class offensive" primarily led by male trade unionists (BL/F/AP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive), and a

conservative state agenda, both more interested in defending full-time (male) employment than diminishing the gender pay gap.

Economically, the Republic's bid to become part of the greater market was an effort to stabilize a domestic economy that many deemed to be overly susceptible to external economic influences.[135] While the nation's economy grew, rapidly – after Lemass's incentive-based economic reforms of the 1950s and 1960s – the government decided that European economic integration would enable the Republic to "achieve its principal economic objectives," which included "full employment, the cessation of involuntary emigration and a standard of living comparable with other Western European countries" (Government of the Irish Republic ct. in McCann *Economic* 149). Ireland's entry into the EEC signalled a shift in the organization and working conditions of the labour force, resulting in significant job losses. These losses were exacerbated by the global oil crisis that struck the island in 1973 and accompanied by a sharp rise in inflation, both of which furthered the crisis in unemployment that rose to an approximate 10.5 per cent (Ayres "Equal" 92). As Mary Jones elaborates, this dramatic increase in inflation "massively eroded the purchasing power of wages," resulting in a debate on the value of National Wage Agreements throughout the trade union movement, "particularly as far as the lower paid workers were concerned" (*Obstreperous* 314). While these seismic shifts in the Irish economy would be felt across a number of sectors over the coming decades, my primary interest in what follows is in how the resultant labour crisis intersected with the EEC Directive for Equal Pay, bringing the problem of the value of women's labour to the forefront of Irish labour, feminist, and nationalist politics and revealing the fractured relationship between gender politics, labour struggles, and state formations in the history of Ireland. The

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[135] For more information on Ireland's history of underdevelopment post-colonization, see Raymond Crotty's *Ireland in Crisis: A Study in Capitalist Colonial Underdevelopment* (1986).

"peculiarities" of Ireland's social and cultural reality – the forces of Irish conservatism – emerged with renewed vigour as a recalcitrant structure, and "gender resurfaced as an area where reassurance could be sought" (Meaney "Virgin" 127) by the institutions of the state against the rapid modernizing social changes and destabilizing positions of state (and church) authority. Consequently, the Irish woman worker became the key body tasked with assuaging fears regarding shifting relations in capital, a phenomenon that became evident in the aforementioned NWA in 1972 leading up to the Equal Pay Directive of 1975.

The events leading up to the ratification of the 1972 National Wage Agreement highlighted the affective labour women in the workforce were expected to perform during the crisis in (men's) labour. Scholars, such as Yvonne Galligan, Mary Jones, and Pat O'Connor, note that during the 1970s unions did not campaign for equal pay but rather a male-female wage differential – a motive that was supported by both government and employer actions. The increasing demand for equal pay amidst the increasing recession resulted in a situation wherein "the concern was to protect men's wages rather than to secure equal pay for women" (Galligan *Margins* 73). Within the labour movement, for example, O'Connor indicates that unions wanted to regulate the labour market to ensure "the creation of full-time 'male' jobs in manufacturing industries" (*Emerging* 40), and, as Jones expands, this curtailing of women into low paying occupations was reinforced by employers who, during this time period, appeared to invite women into the industrial workforce while also facilitating a new role within the labour force: "the irregular, generally married, part-time woman worker" (*Obstreperous* 310). The contributors of *Fownes Street Journal* (1972) drew attention to this union-employer targeting of working women for patriarchal self-gain in both their protest and discursive actions:

> On June 24 [1972] we picketed the Congress of Trade Unions which was meeting to vote on the proposed National Wage Agreement. Although it was almost a foregone

conclusion that the agreement would be rejected, we decided to go ahead with the picket in protest against the Unions [sic] continual refusal to accept that cost of living increases should apply equally to all, regardless of sex; and this especially in the case of lower paid workers into which category 90% of Irish working women belong" ("Picket" 5).[136]

It appeared that if women were to be accepted into the labour market, then their labour would be used to aggrandize men and the value of their labour. As O'Connor elucidates, these patriarchal interventions in paid employment attempted to both affectively and materially mitigate any form of direct competition between men and women in the labour market (*Emerging* 14), and the events of the NWA were only a hint of state forms of involvement to come. As women's labour increasingly became the target of the contemporaneous political, economic interests and anxieties of the state, the Irish woman worker also became a mobilizing and dividing figure within the autonomous women's movement.

What the issue of equal pay brings to light within the women's movement is the mounting tension, as Pat Brennan surmises, between "feminists, socialists and reformists" (BL/F/AP/1139/34, Attic Press Archive). This tension has already been narrated in relationship to ideological mobilization in the previous chapter, but it is the spatial and material formation of this tension, particularly in relationship to issues of equal pay, in which I am interested in this chapter. The spatial and material format of the alternative periodical exposes the increasingly divisive socio-spatial and ideological tensions emerging within the women's movement in the Republic during the 1970s. These tensions are evident, predominately, within the textual form and content of *Banshee* and *Wicca,* specifically their article genres. While *Banshee* initially attempts to posit a feminist praxis, identity, and movement from the outside – either against or alongside institutional structures – in its visual and editorial practices, an

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[136] "Our Picket on the Unions." *Fownes Street Journal,* vol. 1, no. 3-4, Aug. 1972, p. 5.

examination of its generic forms of direct action reveals a trajectory towards feminist tactics invested in converting or adapting state structures from the inside, which becomes even clearer in its sister, *Wicca;* therefore, in what follows I take my cue from rhetorical genre theory as a methodological framework to unpack the fraught dimension of Irish labour, generally, and Irish women's labour in the Republic, more specifically, in relation to the autonomous women's movement.

Case Study: Situating Genres of Equal Pay in *Banshee*

I situate my use of the term "genre" in the field of Rhetorical Genre Studies. In her foundational work, "Genre as Social Action," Carolyn Miller reconceptualises genre as more than a mere container for ideas or a tool of communication; rather, it is a "point of connection between intention and effect, an aspect of social action" ("Genre" 153). Anis Bawarshi builds on the notion of genre as social action when she observes that, "genre allows us to study the social and the rhetorical as they work on one another, reinforcing and reproducing one another and the social activities, the roles, and the relations that take place within them" ("Function" 357). Genres, therefore, provide spatiotemporal frames for social action, regulating movements and interactions in recurrent social events through discourse (Fairclough *Discourse* 65) – as Bawarshi contends, "genre is the 'actualizer' of discourse" ("Genre" 349). As discursive practices that both constitute and are constituted by social relations, genres also serve an ideological function, particularly in the formation of identities; in other words, "genres locate or position individuals within the power relations of institutional activity" (Paré "Genre" 59). It is this ideological action of genres – the reproduction of "situations, actions, relations, and identities" across time and space (Bawarshi "Genre" 351) – that sustains the institutional

structures of societies. While genres enable institutions to construct both ideological and discoursal subjects (Fairclough *Discourse* 41), they also are sites of ideological and discursive struggle, and are responsive to the social conditions, communities, and contexts of their use. As Irish feminist groups competed for ideological supremacy with both the institutions of the state and with each other on the genres of women's labour, the places of feminism and the narratives of resistance for women evolved away from a discourse and praxis of autonomy. In order to analyze the prescription of movement across *Banshee* and *Wicca*, I will contextualize both periodicals' constructions of equal pay discourse across their periodical genres. Borrowing from Michael Buozis and Brian Creech in their proposed guidelines for performing genre analysis, I align my own analysis of genre and the alternative periodical in this section with the premise that "a textual approach that focuses on the construction of genre helps us understand texts in relation to each other, as well as their conditions of production and the audiences that consume them" ("Reading" 1436). By dissecting the conventions of feminist action-based narratives across a time period of economic crisis, political upheaval, and global modernization, we can begin to understand how autonomous feminist actors attempted to negotiate the competing demands of state-driven values and adapt their ideological pathways in order to ensure the movement of women forward into the present and future.

Directive No. 117: The Equal Pay Directive of 1975

Although equal pay was not a new concern of women's organizations both inside and outside of the women's movement, the events surrounding the Equal Pay Directive of 1975 offered a concrete moment of economic and ideological collusion within the state, and materialized the textual relations and social practices of the report genre. The *Interim Report on Equal Pay* was published in October of 1971 at the request of the Minister of Finance, George

Colley. In her analysis of state policy in the 1960s and 1970s, Eileen Connolly notes that the CSW undertook the publication of the report with the understanding that "the government already accept the principle of equal pay and we do not, accordingly, consider that it is part of our mandate to make a case for the acceptance of that principle" (CSW ct. in *State* 138). Consequently, the report focused on recommendations and suggestions for removing legislative barriers to equal pay, such as the marriage bar and pension entitlement, and establishing equal pay for "like work" claims, rather than defending the principle itself. In this published interim report, the Commission recommended that the implementation of equal pay legislation be phased in over five years by December 1977;[137] however, this date was brought forward following Ireland's membership in the EEC. In February of 1975, the EEC set the final date for the full introduction of equal pay among its member states for January 1, 1976 under Directive No. 117. Then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Garret FitzGerald, signed the directive, guaranteeing Ireland's commitment to equal pay, in the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act; conversely, on December 18, 1975 the Minister for Labour, Michael O'Leary,[138] introduced an amendment to the Equal Pay Act proposing that Ireland postpone its implementation date to December 31, 1977 – the initial *Report* timeline – thereby postponing equal pay legislation in the private sector and maintaining the marriage differential in the public sector.

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[137] It is important to note that some women's groups and trade unions immediately protested the initial five-year proposal because "the manifestly long-term recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women, did not augur well for working women" (Jones *Obstreperous* 305). Mary Jones points out that IWWU, in particular, "rejected the Commission's timetable out of hand and declared that in the future it would look to legislation rather than to the agreements as a mechanism for change" (*Obstreperous* 305). I will further consider the relationship of trade unions to the women's movement and equal pay reform in the latter sections of this chapter.

[138] In *Banshee* no. 1, the collective quotes O'Leary on March 5, 1974 as fully supporting the implementation of equal pay: "I have given careful consideration to the question of the date for full implementation (of Equal Pay) before deciding that the Act should be in operation on 31st Dec. 1975. As a Government, we are convinced that there should be no further delay…While the implementation of equal pay will involve additional costs, I do not think that this problem must stand in our way" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

The government's justification of the deferment was the current crises in the economy and employment. As Margaret Ayres recounts, both employers and unions, such as the FUE, applied pressure through extensive campaigns and Labour Court reports advocating for deferral on the basis that if equal pay were implemented it "would lead to loss of employment" in the private sector ("Equal" 92). Similarly, they proposed that while civil service sex-differentiated grades should be implemented immediately, conveniently "affecting only about 300 women," marriage differentials should be "retained until economic conditions improved" (Ayres "Equal" 90). An application was then made to the EEC Commission for permission to derogate from the principle of equal pay. It was in the Irish government's strategic search for a loophole and exemption from equality legislation that Irish feminists found that their participation in the discursive structures of the state had led to the subversion of their aims, as both the top recommendations of the *Report* – removal of the marriage bar and the phasing in of equal pay for work of equal value – were the very legislative acts the Irish government proposed to defer. Under international judicial pressure, the generic convention of mediation under the *Report of the Commission of the Status of Women* materialized in the form of a delaying mechanism, and this discursive means of evading intention did not go unnoticed by either the women's rights or women's liberation sectors.

"Equal Pay Forum": Ireland v. EEC

Clearly perceiving the centrality of labour law and state policy in the redefinition of Irish femininity and society, *Banshee* treats these issues head-on in its first issue. In no. 1, the *Banshee* collective offers a two-page feature entitled, "Equal Pay Forum" in its table of contents. On the left page of the forum is the news report "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United" and on the right page is an editorial entitled, "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries." In

the middle of the two adjacent news articles is a timeline labelled, "Progress Towards Equal Pay." The timeline displays two lists placed side-by-side – one labelled "Ireland" and the other "International" – that chronologically document Irish and International legislative acts and events surrounding equal pay reform from 1950 to 1976. As the timeline proceeds, *Banshee* continues to render visible the discursive interventions of the governing bodies in conjunction with their aims towards the principle of equal pay. Both timelines begin at the year 1950, but their differences are made clear in their conflicting points of origin. For example, in 1950 the "Principle of Equal Pay was first declared in Directive 100 of the International Labour organisation," a principle to which all European members of the United Nations agreed except Ireland, whom "alone…refused to ratify [the] ILO directive on equal pay" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In this narrative timeline, Ireland's exceptionalism from Europe hinges upon its refusal to sign a directive, a legal act that requires the achievement of a specific result or outcome. A directive is causal in that it mandates action, or rather the enaction of legislation by a particular date – in this case, the principle of equal pay. *Banshee* immediately sets up a dichotomy between action and inaction (or the deferral of action). As an effect of these opposing intentions, Ireland and its EEC counterparts continue to develop and utilize different genres of governance for securing their respective values and goals regarding equal pay, which are elucidated in their divergent trajectories.

As the "International" timeline unfolds, readers can see how the EEC moves to enact, respond to, and re-enact legislation in order to discursively regulate social and political activities and relations in line with equal pay reform. From International Labour Organization (ILO) Directive 100 to the EEC Treaty and the implementation of Article 119, the EEC's discursive trajectory culminates in EEC Directive No. 117, which "gives legal backing to the

equal pay principle as set out in the EEC Treaty" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). Here, there is a correlation made between recurrent situations of legal reform and the rhetorical forms of action made possible by the treaty genre. In contrast, Ireland's timeline is one of constant deferral of action through discursive means. In *Banshee*'s narration of Irish events, the Fianna Fáil government – after refusing to sign the ILO directive on equal pay – established the CSW to "examine" the implications of equal pay, which then proceeded to produce a report that "recommended" equal pay. In 1972, National Wage Agreement provisions endorsed a reduction in wage differentials between men and women workers, and these recommendations were followed by the establishment of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, which moved forward the original date for equal pay by two years; however, the Act's implementation date was amended and postponement was proposed. *Banshee*'s placement of the *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women* within a larger system of institutional discursive activity enables its readers to situate the government report within a specific set of interrelated genres in Ireland used to defer change in equality legislation, thereby continuing to reproduce the values of those in power. This realization also emerges, in part, from the physical location of the International equal pay timeline adjacent to Ireland's on the pages of *Banshee*'s article. In both of these chronologies, repetitions and patterns in discursive forms become visibly linked to their use function by intra- and inter-state institutions, and the side-by-side comparison of International and Irish legislative acts over the same temporal span demonstrates the discursive forms genres of governance can take to pursue or prevent changes in institutionalized gender pay disparity practices.

In "Progress Toward Equal Pay," the physical emplacement of Ireland next to Europe along parallel-but-out-of-sync temporal lines spatially inscribes Ireland's new relationship of

proximity to Europe upon its membership in the EEC, while simultaneously highlighting the

state's exclusion from the space-time of the European community; however, while both

proceed along divergent trajectories after 1950, their discrete sequential paths converge again

with the EEC Directive on Equal Pay in 1975. At this juncture, Ireland is brought back into

spatial-temporal alignment with Europe. The article visualizes the EEC Commission's refusal

to approve Ireland's application for postponement of equal pay as a break in Ireland's

independent sequence of events – a break in the spatial syntax of the article – and,

consequently, both timelines end at the year 1976 with same event conjoining the ends of the

formerly separated timelines:

> 1976: 18th February, Ritchie Ryan, Minister for Finance, says "Commission must pay" for the cost of introducing equal pay. Responsibility for ensuring the introduction of equal pay, previously undertaken by Michael O'Leary, as representative of the Coalition Government, is thus transferred to the EEC. (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)

Banshee's textual narrativization and visualization of Ireland's equal pay "progress" is

significant in terms of the material connection it presents between genre and social formation.

The textual merger of Ireland's timeline with the adjacent International timeline marks a

physical shift in the patterns acted and re-enacted by institutional genres, as well as a shift in

the former distanciated socio-spatial relations of the two political bodies. This circumvention of

Irish discursive practices of equal pay by EEC rhetorical interventions indicates a disruption in

the genre's ability to discursively reproduce the conditions that made its continuity possible,

formerly. Anthony Paré indicates that the routines of genres and their "illusion[s] of normalcy"

may be unsettled in certain situations or contexts, such as the following:

> when an event occurs that does not match the anticipated, social construed exigence to which the genre responds; or, in a related situation, when the genre is stretched too wide, and its forms and actions are inappropriate or ill-suited to the occasion…when newcomers first begin to participate in a genre and find it 'unnatural' or counter to their own discourse habits and aims. ("Genre" 61)

FUE OCCUPATION BY IRISHWOMEN UNITED

On January, 8th, Irishwomen United held a Board meeting in the premises of the Federated Union of Employers, in Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin, and forced the Vice-President of that organization, under the watchful eye of an Inspector of the Garda Siochana, to account for their denial of equal pay to women workers. It was the first and only occasion on which the F.U.E. publicly answered questions on the issue. They admitted, in the presence of the national media, that no section of industry had submitted any information to them on whether or not they could afford equal pay; that only one sector of the shoe industry had stated that equal pay would result in the loss of jobs; that the shoe industry was facing disaster whether or not equal pay was implemented; and that, without any information or proof, they had nonetheless advised the government to deny equal pay to women workers.

When Irish Women United suggested to the F.U.E. that their denial of equal pay to women workers was both immoral and illegal, the F.U.E. replied that it was up to the government to enforce EEC regulations; and that they had always given the unions what they wanted. Until January 1976, the unions, the F.U.E. said, had not asked that women workers be given the same pay as men.

> "F.U.E. often finds itself in a position where it feels compelled to oppose, comprehensively or in detail, socially desirable legislation".
> **Federated Union of Employers Annual Report 1974**

They answered questions unwillingly, of course. When Irish Women United first occupied the premises, the F.U.E. stated that under no condition would they talk with us. They then sent for the police. Irish Women United told the Gardai that they were willing to go to jail rather than leave the premises without having the Board meeting. The F.U.E. was faced with the prospect of prosecuting women in the Courts, who were protesting against the refusal of state and industry to implement EEC law on equal pay. The subsequent

> **1st February 1975**
> "With Mr. O'Leary as President of the EEC Council of Ministers for Social Affairs, and Dr. Hillery responsible in the Commission, it seems that Irish women can be assured of full representation in Brussels".
> Liam Cosgrave at R.D.S. seminar on Equality, Development and Peace

international publicity would have done women a world of good.

Then — in no time at all — the Vice-President entered the board room and answered every question he had earlier refused to even comment on.

One hour after the occupation, the government went on national television to announce that they were giving equal pay in the civil service.

We're not saying that there is a total connection between our occupation and government capitulation. We are saying that the time for soft shoe shuffling is over.

Get into the Labour Court and Fight!

> **5th MARCH 1974:**
> "I have given careful consideration to the question of the date for full implementation (of Equal Pay) before deciding that the Act should be in operation on 31st Dec. 1975. As a Government, we are convinced that there should be no further delay . . . While the implementation of equal pay will involve additional costs, I do not think that this problem must stand in our way."
> Michael O'Leary, Dail Eireann

> **3rd December 1975**
> "The greatest contribution we can make as a Government (to advancing the status of women in Ireland) is the enactment of progressive legislation . . . A satisfactory start has been made during International Women's Year . . . As from 31st December 1975, the legislation ensuring equal pay for like work will come into operation".

☆

PROGRESS EQUAL

IRELAND

1950: Ireland, alone of all the European members of the United Nations, refused to ratify ILO directive on equal pay.

1969: Fianna Fail Government established the Commission for the Status of Women, whose brief involved an examination of the implications of equal pay.

1972: Report of the Commission on the Status of Women recommended December 1977 as the target date for implementation of equal pay.

1972: National Wage Agreement made provision of a 17½% reduction of the earnings differential between male and female workers doing work of equal values. This was followed, in the 1974 Agreement by provision for a further reduction of 33 1/3rd%. Only a small proportion of firms acted on these recommendations.

1974: Anti Discrimination (Pay) Act brought forward the date for implementation of Equal Pay from December 1977, as proposed by the Commission for the Status of Women to 31st December 1975.

1975: December 18th, Michael O'Leary, introduced by proxy, an amendment to the Equal Pay Act, proposing that its implementation date be postponed in certain cases in the private sector. Application was later made to the EEC Commission for permission to derogate from the principle of equal pay. In addition, it was proposed that, in the public sector, discrimination between women and men of the same marital status, be removed, but that the marriage differential be maintained.

1976: 18th February, Richie Ryan, *must pay" for the cost of introducing equal the introduction of equal pay, previously representative of the Coalition Government*

Irish Women United confront directors of the F.U.E. during their occupation of the F.U.E. H.Q.

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Fig. 17 The first of *Banshee*'s two-page "Equal Pay Forum" in *Banshee, Journal of Irishwomen United,* no. 1, 1976 (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

...S TOWARD ...L PAY

1950: Principle of Equal Pay was first declared in Directive 100 of the International Labour Organisation.

1957: EEC Treaty article 119 obliged member states to 'ensure and maintain the principle of equal pay for the same work undertaken by men and women'.

1962: Implementation of Article 119, due in this year, was postponed to 1964. Full application of the principle of equal pay was not achieved by this date in any of the members states.

1975: January 1st marked the start of International Women's Year. In Ireland Michael O'Leary took up Chairpersonship of the Co-ordinating Committee for International Women's Year. During this year, he reiterated, on several occasions his commitment to introducing Equal Pay in Ireland, come what may.

1975: EEC Directive No. 117 of 10th February, set the final date for the full introduction of equal pay as 1st January 1976. This directive gives legal backing to the equal pay principle as set out in the EEC Treaty. It was signed by Garret Fitzgerald, then President of the Council of Ministers.

1976: EEC Commission, in a statement made by Dr. Patrick Hillery (Commissioner for Social Affairs and ex-Fianna Fail Minister) refused to consider Ireland's application for the postponement of Equal Pay.

Minister for Finance, says "Commission ... equal pay. Responsibility for ensuring ...sly undertaken by Michael O'Leary, as ...ment, is thus transferred to the EEC.

EMPLOYERS UNITE ON CRISIS INDUSTRIES

The Government's acrobatics on the Equal Pay Bills implementation in the Public Service sector, would make a cat laugh! Their most blatant attempts to deny women in the public sector their right to equal pay, have been obvious to all. They are not however the only characters on stage in the current drama. Also in the ring we have, the Federated Union of Employers (F.U.E.) representing employers in the private sectors. And their antics have gone on, largely unnoticed until very recent times. It was the picket and occupation of their national headquarters (see article on F.U.E. on this page) by Irish Women United, that were largely instrumental in exposing the propaganda of the F.U.E.

And just what have they been up to? Well, at a Press Conference held in Dublin during February, Mr. John Dunne and Mr. Eugene McCarthy, two divisional directors of the F.U.E., lamented the fact that the government's inactivity on the F.U.E.'s proposals *"made to it for the past 18 months"*. Isn't it interesting to find the F.U.E. preparing for the last 18 months to defer Equal Pay and not preparing as they should have been, to implement it?

They also went on to say: *"... that there were major other problems in firms and industries other than those engaged in footwear manufacture" ... "any aid programme would have to cater for the needs of industries such as Suar, Confectionary, Radio and T.V. assembly, Ligh Engineering and Electronics, Printing and Pottery, Textiles and Clothing, Food Processing and certain areas in the Service and Distributive industries ... "* Surprise! Surprise! So now its not only an industry in which women are employed but practically all the industries that cannot afford equal pay! The Sugar Confectionary industry employs about 2,390 women workers;

Radio and T.V. Assembly:	3,050
Light Engineering and Electronics	1,216
Printing and Pottery	2,608
Textiles & Clothing	24,606
Food Processing	5,100
Footwear	1,500

Much of the F.U.E.'s arguments have centred on the footwear industry; the I.C.T.U. have challenged the analysis made of the footwear industry and the Vice-President of the F.U.E. Mr. Dempsey admitted publicly to Irish Women United, that apart from ONE SECTION of the shoe industry, NO other sector of industry had submitted detailed documentation of their reasons for a deferral of equal pay. The "apparant" crisis in the footwear industry is definitely not helped by the continuing importation of cheap foreign footwear.

Only a couple of weeks ago in the Dail, Conor Cruise O'Brien was challenged over the importation of 400 sports boots for the Irish Army! The closure of certain factories within the industry and the reasons for these closures should be more closely examined. In mid-January, over 80 workers were let go at the Cork Shoe Company and a further 107 had their employment extended on a week to week basis until orders in hand were completed.

These redundancies of nearly 200 workers, who will have very little chance of re-employment, have been questioned by the workers leaders, ...

" ... "What is bitter about this closure is that there is no shortage of orders, no contraction of markets and no lack of skilled workers" ... "a director of our biggest Irish customer has told us that he wrote to the Minister to tell him that, because of the closure his company will now have to import a quarter of a million slippers from overseas."

Similar developments are occurring in the textile industry. Many factories, workshops etc. are closing down – laying off half their employees – while imports of cheap clothes and cloths continue to grow, especially from countries like Taiwan, formosa whose industries thrive on cheap sweated female labour.

Familiar arguments which blame rising wage –rates for the high level of unemployment, must be cast aside, particularly in regard to equal pay. Years of profits and low costs have seen the employers in the footwear and textile industries grow rich and mean. The underdevelopment of the plants concerned, lack of investment, the bosses failure to prepare adequately for foreign competition, has led the way to the present collapse.

And to correct this situation and enable the payment of equal pay what are the F.U.E. and employers proposing:

a. a reduction in the employers contribution to Social Security (which would mean workers would have to pay more!)

b. aid from the unemployment premium scheme

c. a transfer of funds from Anco the Industrial Training Authority (this would mean a reduction in funds for training/retraining workers)

Over 100 member companies of the F.U.E. have already informed the labour court of their inability to pay! Women workers who are organised in unions and are working in the companies concerned, should insist on the male rate for the job! If their representatives pursue the fight through the Labour Court, instead of fighting on the shop-floor through militant action, they should insist – that these hearings are public;

i the company open the books not just for the lean years but also for the profit rich years and insist that these are the production plans; purchase/ sales records

ii that no redundancies (which are usually among the women) are accepted as part of any package deal between the unions and employers

The chronic state of unemployment in the textile and footwear industries which is being used to deny women workers in these sectors of their right to equal pay, must be challenged. Women workers in these industries should raise the demand of placing embargoes on the cheap imported goods which directly threaten the security of their jobs. The workers concerned themselves should maintain these embargoes until their jobs are guaranteed.

To win Equal Pay for women is a struggle which cannot be won by women workers alone. It implies fighting for job security against redundancies. The women in the textile and footwear industries have a hard fight ahead of them.

18th December 1975

EQUAL PAY LEGISLATION TO BE AMENDED

SAYS COSGRAVE – MINISTER (FOR LABOUR) FACING QUERIES BY EEC

Irish Times Headlines

Fig. 18 The second of *Banshee*'s two-page "Equal Pay Forum" in *Banshee, Journal of Irishwomen United,* no. 1, 1976 (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

The merging of Ireland's timeline with the adjacent International timeline denotes a break in the connection between intention and effect of discursive forms of Irish governmentality. While the Irish government's use of the report genre attempted to stabilize socio-temporal practices and interactions that worked against the interests of women's organizations and feminist groups who demanded institutional transformation, these ideological actions were exposed when the interim (and final) report recommendations failed to ensure an "appropriate" response on behalf of the government to the EEC Directive. As these two communities intersected, the crack in the report's illusion of normalcy deepened as the responsibility for ensuring an appropriate response to equal pay demands was transferred from one governing body to another, further signifying a shift in the hegemonic relations of institutional discourse and action.

The shift in Irish discourse practices surrounding equal pay in "Progress Toward Equal Pay" spatializes how genres discursively assemble new social formations. In his analysis of power, discourse, and policy, David Howarth argues that social formations are relational regimes "predicated on the division of social spaces" through the delineation of political boundaries, which are constructed through social antagonisms ("Power" 313). These antagonistic relations help disclose the limitations of certain regime practices, thereby offering opportunities for the "construction of new discourses that can win over subjects to a particular project or coalition, whilst disorganizing and marginalizing opposition coalitions" ("Power" 319). In *Banshee*'s timeline, Ireland's proximity to an oppositional relation exposes the limits of its discursive governing structures by rendering visible the ideologies that construe the spaces of paid labour in the Republic, and this visible moment of "structural undecidability" presents an opportunity for engagement with a new discourse. This discursive interaction, in the form of the EEC Directive, challenges the space-time movement of the Irish state. In the

timeline, as discursive governance of equal pay reform is rhetorically transferred from Michael O'Leary – the representative of the Irish state – to the EEC, the Irish and International timelines physically amalgamate, reorganizing formerly antagonistic relations into a hybrid discourse community. *Banshee*'s textual and visual representation of the convergence of Irish and International equal pay timelines illuminates the ways in which these shifting socio-spatial arrangements can expose the routines of genres, particularly those used to maintain a gendered hierarchy of spatial, and by extension, economic relations in the state. Here, the alignment of Irish with European space-time disrupts the discursive boundaries of the state, revealing the inherent threat proximity to Europe presents to the sociospatial order of "Ireland." As the state moves from a position of identification with Irish exclusivity to European inclusivity, the means and sites of assemblage made available through institutional genres enable new forms of political subjectivity for Irish women.

While the "Progress Toward Equal Pay" timelines demonstrates the ways in which discourse communities can reshape genres to produce favorable outcomes in response to politically fraught situations, it is the timeline's place within the larger "Equal Pay Forum" in *Banshee* that functions to assemble situations through the performance of discourse by social actors. Collin Ross argues that if actors are to be able to draw from genres and "locate the rhetorical actions they can and should perform" in a given situation, they must be able to interpret events, circumstances, and relations as "recognizable situations with recognizable types of motives" ("Genre" 81). And, as Ross elaborates, "by acting on and adapting the motives offered by the genre" actors can build a situation and "alter, materialize, and recirculate the genre and its ideologies" ("Genre" 83). In "Progress Towards Equal Pay," the EEC's refusal to consider Ireland's application for "postponement" for action on equal pay

reframes Ireland's request as one of denial of action, and this confrontational act leads to the

reorganization of the generic space of Irish legislation so the discourse sustained in that space

aligns with the discourse of the EEC. Readers learn to read the present mediating genres or

genres of deferral in Ireland, such as the government report, as recognizable situations of

institutional resistance tied to the recognizable motive of denial of equal pay reform; however,

readers can only learn to "locate" the rhetorical actions they can and should perform in future

or subsequent situations – genres of direct action – by reading EEC rhetorical actions in

conjunction with the adjacent articles in *Banshee'*s forum, "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen

United" and "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries."

In learning these genres of deferral, readers also learn to recognize the identities,

locations, potentials and means for action, and ends available to them. Both the news report and

the editorial that border the equal pay timeline call readers to recognize and construe

institutional responses as linked to the deferral of change in equal pay legislation, as well as

identify the appropriate means to disrupt the hegemonic spatial and relational structures

sustained by discursive techniques of governance. In "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries,"

Banshee pinpoints government rhetorical practices as habitually delaying the reorganization of

conditions that would sustain the implementation of equal pay for women workers, as well as

the ways in which other institutional state actors continue to use this genre of deferral in order

to organize and act in similar contexts:

> The Government's acrobatics on the Equal Pay Bills implementation in the Public
> Service sector, would make a cat laugh! Their most blatant attempts to deny women in
> the public sector their right to equal pay, have been obvious to all. They are not
> however the only characters on stage in the current drama. Also in the ring we have,
> the Federated Union of Employers (F.U.E.) representing employers in the private
> sectors. And their antics have gone on, largely unnoticed until very recent times.
> (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)

Banshee's metaphorization of equal pay legislative implementation as a drama is a useful device for elucidating the relationship between discourse, genre, and social action for its readership. A drama is a narrative genre, a written composition in which formal elements of the genre, such as dialogue and action, culminate in a conflict and succeeding resolution, which are the causal or logical outcomes of the preceding actions. In other words, there is a correlation between situation, motive, and discursive action. In a drama, actors enact discursive practices, adapting those practices for a different setting – the stage – and these discursive practices organize their actions and relations in a new space and time in accordance with their generic type – a form linked to a recognizable motive. *Banshee*'s representation of both the Government and the Federated Union of Employers as "characters" or actors in the current drama of equal pay implementation – a drama of "acrobatics," "antics," and "propaganda" – suggests that their discursive responses to social situations perform the motives, or the ideologies, of remediation, deception, and deferral (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). As *Banshee* asks, rhetorically, in the next paragraph, "Isn't it interesting to find the F.U.E. preparing for the last 18 months to *defer* Equal Pay and not as they should have been, to implement it?" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive; emphasis added). The stage has always been set for a drama of deferral. In this example, and in the remainder of the article, the *Banshee* collective typifies the relationship between genre, discourse, and deferral, evaluating government and employer generic practices in light of women's exigencies for equal pay action. At the end of the editorial, the collective recommends that government and employer rhetorical actions must be confronted: "The chronic state of unemployment in the textile and footwear industries which is being used to deny women workers in these sectors of their right to equal pay, must be challenged" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). Not unlike the

framing of the EEC's decision to act, directly, and shift the terrain of discursive power as a

means of denying Ireland's application for the postponement of equal pay in "Progress

Towards Equal Pay," the *Banshee* collective frames a parallel situation in which direct action,

as a form of refusal, must also occur.

Reporting on the Status of Women

By the 60s and 70s the various governments and main parties had been forced to change [their] attitude and at least verbally support equal pay or they would have lost all credibility. The facts show that the resistance to equal pay now took other forms – by delaying tactics, commissions, discussions etc., particularly when active struggle was breaking out, i.e., was it just a coincidence that the government decided to set up the Commission on Status of Women just at a time when the Civil Service and others were putting in claims for equal pay? – Wicca Collective. "Women at work = low pay." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1979, p. 12; (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive)

In an effort to both come to terms with changing gender dynamics in a belatedly

modernizing Ireland and also to obviate the speed of change with which Ireland's economy and

society were evolving, the government commissioned the *Report of the Commission on the*

Status of Women, which precipitated the Equal Pay Directive. The CSW *Report* was a

discursive response to a set of social and political circumstances that created opportunities for

the advancement of women's rights. Prior to the EEC directive on equal pay, the women's

rights sector – spearheaded by the CSW – "inherited a constituency and repertoire of collective

action" that prioritized persuasive and non-confrontational tactics as a means to push for

change in the status of women in Irish society, specifically demands for policy reform

(*Devolution* 105). As Connolly has historicized, the CSW in Ireland formed after traditional

women's groups, such as the IHA and Association of Business and Professional Women,

applied institutional pressure through political lobbying and campaigning in response to a

directive made on behalf of the United Nations (*Devolution* 94). In 1967, the UN's

Commission on the Status of Women appealed to "women's international non-governmental

organizations to ask their affiliates to examine the status of women in their respective countries

and encourage their governments to set up a National Commission on the Status of Women"

(*Devolution* 95). Political and organizational pressure, both international and domestic,

facilitated an institutional response to Irish women's demands for gender equality; a response

that manifested in the establishment of the First Commission on the Status of Women.[139]

One of the first major public acts this government-sanctioned body took was to publish a

full report on the equal treatment of Irish women in the *Report of the Commission on the Status

of Women* in 1972, which was preceded by an interim *Report to the Minister of Finance* on the

issue of equal pay in 1971. The process of compiling the report was voluntarily undertaken by

thirteen committee members – seven women and six men – who received submissions from

over forty individual women's organizations (Stopper *Mondays* 129). Submissions varied on

everything from matters such as the status of women in the Irish economy to discriminatory

practices in social welfare for women. The goal of the reports, according to the CSW,

> was to examine and report on the status of women in Irish society, to make
> recommendations on the steps necessary to ensure the participation of women on equal
> terms and conditions with men in the political, social, cultural and economic life of the
> country and to indicate the implications generally – including the costs – of such
> recommendations. (*Commission* 7)

Situating the CSW *Report* within the social context of its production enables us to better

understand the state's sociorhetorical (re)action to the mobilization of women's interests within

the women's rights sector. I argue that the genre of the "report" functioned to regulate feminist

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[139] Anne Marie Goetz and Rob Jenkins argue that, "identifying the ideal governance conditions for
successful claims making is a long-standing objective of feminist scholars and policy practitioners"
("Activism" 717). While it is not necessarily the goal of this dissertation to extrapolate the conditions of
Irish policy reform, my analysis of the state's response to demands for gender equity policies can contribute
to a further understanding of policy-making processes within countries that fall into the category of
"universalizing" political traditions.

activism during a time of sociopolitical and economic tension by reproducing hegemonic

relations between state actors and women's rights activists. Connolly aptly reminds us that, "it

is inaccurate to dismiss entirely the use of 'insider tactics' as a conservative form of activism,"

such as in the case of the CSW (*Devolution* 106).[140] It is not the intention of the remaining

sections in this chapter to critique the modes of one sector of the women's movement over the

other, but to clarify the relationship between genre, feminist ideology, and social movement

history in terms of how they are reflected in the shifting genres used by feminists in response to

situational demands for mobilizing and affecting change. So what modes and means of

ideological interaction did the CSW's report make possible, rhetorically, for feminists and

women's groups? I want to return to a discussion of the discursive codes of the CSW *Report*.

Pam Carter argues that it is imperative that we examine "how governmental techniques and

discursive technologies are enacted in practice in particular sites" ("Governing" 5) in order to

understand the socio-spatial relationships of government and governance in (neo)liberal

societies; therefore, in examining the report as a site or location of governance, we can

understand the ways in which the institutional discursive codes of the report genre –

specifically, mediation or recontextualization – attempted to regulate the action potential of the

nascent women's movement through its subject formations during a time of socio-political and

economic upheaval.

    The Irish government framed its initiative to undertake an evaluative recommendation

"report" on the status of women in Ireland as an invitation to those invested in women's rights

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[140] In their work on tactical repertoires of social movements, Taylor and van Dyke differentiate between insider and outsider tactics. While insider tactics are non-confrontational modes of action, such as "boycotts, dramaturgy, leafleting, letter-writing campaigns, lobbying, petitions, and press conferences," outsider tactics include confrontational interactions between social movement actors and their opponents, such as "sit-ins, demonstrations, virgils, marches, strikes, motorcades, symbolic actions, boycotts of classes, blockades, and other illegal actions such as bombings" ("Tactical" 267).

to reshape the discursive field of politics, requesting action through non-confrontational, institutional means. A report is a form of recount used to account, evaluate, and recommend in relation to a situation or an event ("report, n."). Government reports are often intended as the basis for various forms of action and, therefore, necessitate a decision-useful framework. The emphasis, then, is on the provision of sufficient information and analysis to enable decisions regarding subsequent recommendations and implementations. As a means of gathering information for their report, the Commission on the Status of Women "sought submissions from trade unions, employers and women's organizations" (Connolly *Devolution* 98). Both written and oral submissions were made to the Commission between 1970 and 1971 and their content re-circulated in the final publication of the Report. As Yvonne Galligan recounts, of the forty-four organizations that made submissions, only twenty-three were from women's groups – just four of whom could be identified with "the new phase of feminist politics"[141] (*Politics* 50).[142] What is important to note in this process is the discursive incorporation of submissions from women's organizations. Few of the submissions, in their original written (or oral) form, were reported or recorded in the final *Report*. Rather, the *Report* subsumed the multifarious and relevant voices of women's groups under the monological voice of the "the Commission" – choosing to represent women's experiences through the "we" of the CSW and translating their submissions through bureaucratic rhetoric. I suggest that this discoursal constraint contains an ideological imperative. In their call for action, or participation, from women's groups in the form of submitted reports, the government-appointed CSW relies on the generic convention of

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[141] In her account of the women's movement, June Levine suggests that even though none of the organizations were "radical in a feminist sense," the notion of "such a body would have been radical before the activities of the early seventies" ("Movement" 179).

[142] Although the submissions do not solely reflect the positions of those involved in the women's movement, this diverse mobilization around the issue of women's rights demonstrates early evidence of the overlap between "individual activists, and autonomous and reformist organizations" across the incipient movement (Connolly *Devolution* 98) – a point I will return to later in this chapter.

remediation to redirect the language and ideas of the women's movement and bring the oppositional discourse of feminism under governmental control. Although this process appears to reduce the gap between local women's groups and the national government, seemingly joining two groups separated by physical time and space within discursive space, it also recontextualizes the discourse of women's groups through institutional discourse; thereby relying on mechanisms of governance beyond the state to reinscribe hegemonic relations.

The *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women* gave the CSW a material presence, more specifically, through the report genre. If we return to the concept of place employed in earlier chapters, we can understand the *Report of the CSW* as offering a meeting point – a place – for the interaction between women's organizations and institutions of the state. As the "inter*face* between individual and community" (Hyland "Genre" 3; emphasis added), genre rhetorically enacts structural relations between two actors, groups, or communities. Not unlike IWLM's *Chains or Change?,* the *Report of the CSW* acted as the "face" of the Commission, mediating the form of interactions between the government and individual women's groups and shaping the way in which women's groups and feminists could conceptualize and experience institutional politics in the future. In terms of the *Report,* the CSW called upon individual subjects, women's groups, and feminist organizations to purportedly occupy and enact the role of authority or expert, generically "valuing" their submissions as testimony, evidence, and advice on the subject of women's status. This invitation into a textual "relationship of proximity" (Carter "Governing" 10) with the national government appeared to offer individual women's groups and feminists an opportunity to shift the power relations of institutional activity by symbolically and materially reducing the social distance between the two social actors. According to R.J. Rummel, as a concept, social distance

"captures the idea of social differences and similarities between people, and of their relative location in social space" (*Conflict*). Under this definition, social distance is defined by the sociospatial relations between two or more groups whose interactions based on status, power, and class define their relative locations to one another. Some of the most pressing challenges of modern forms of governmentality arise in the processes of maintaining the power, authority, and legitimacy of state institutions among increasingly de-centered, informal, unstable and distant localities. Norman Fairclough indicates that this phenomenon is particularly apparent in social relations where communication between two social agents is marked by a high degree of social hierarchy and social distance, such as the communication between organizations and individuals (*Discourse* 75). As a case-in-point, one of the main difficulties the Irish state faced during the mobilization of the women's sector was how to respond, at a national level, to the oppositional demands of individual and local, non-governmental organizations. Cue the government report.

While offering a strategic site to alter the social and textual interactions of institutionalized power relations, the *Report of the CSW* also allowed for governmental action at a distance through the sociospatial practices of governing genres. As a means of public information, government reports often, as Christopher Eisenhart suggests, "enter into climates of public contention over a disputed past, attempting to create rhetorical *presence* for certain aspects of an event while simultaneously silencing others" and, retroactively, bring "these types of events back under governmental and bureaucratic control" ("Reporting" 59; emphasis in original). Eisenhart's points regarding silencing and bureaucratic control are particularly relevant to the Irish context. The *Report* granted rhetorical presence to the historical problem of the status of women's rights in Ireland, as well as symbolically affirmed the presence of a

current network of contestation regarding women's rights; however, the location of women within the discursive space of institutional activity also offered the government an opportunity to surveil ideological opposition and govern the social practices of specific localities from a distance – selectively including and excluding specific discourses, social identities and relations over others. Scholars in sociology borrow from Bruno Latour's notion of "action at a distance" to account for the ways in which domination, particularly in the form of governance, occurs beyond the macro structures of the state. Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller, for example, suggest that modern governance is made possible by mechanisms that "link calculations at one place with action at another;" and it is when "persons, organizations, entities and locales which remain differentiated by space, time and formal boundaries can be brought into a loose, approximate and always mobile and indeterminate alignment" that the production, alignment, and regulation of social life with socio-political objectives can occur (*Governing* 34). These calculation mechanisms, essentially, make it possible for the national to govern the local from a different spatial and/or temporal location. Through the generic codes employed in their interactions with women's and feminists groups for their report, the CSW rendered calculable the discursive demands of these contentious social actors, only to re-edit and, in doing so, recontexualize the individual submissions of diverse contributors. This appropriative practice "filtered out" (Fairclough *Discourse* 34) the specific discourse habits and aims of these non-governmental groups in order to privilege the language of the institutionally-approved CSW, effectively removing the submissions from the distinct spatiotemporal conditions of their production.

Similarly, the repeated assemblage of locales – individual women, women's groups, and feminist organizations – through the discursive and social actions codified through interactions

with the Commission stabilized the perceived sociorhetorical responses to situations that involved communication between women's rights activists and institutional bodies, particularly in relation to issues on the status of women. In a genre that requests participation from interested parties, the report's socially- and rhetorically-sanctioned practice of mediation meant that women learned to actively reproduce the very situation that necessitated their action in the first place. Under the pretext of mutual resolve to examine, expose, and implement change on the status of women, the report genre functioned to re-align the sociorhetorical actions of women's rights activists with the ideological aims of institutions of the state and constrain the increasing "movement" of Irish women. Miller and Rose propose that governance networks are assembled not through force, but rather through acts of persuasion, intrigue, calculation, and rhetoric. For example, an actor is able to act from a distance by "constru[ing] their problems in allied ways and their fate in some way bound up with another" (*Governing* 34). Once associations between actors or groups are established, any one of these diverse forces "can be enrolled in a governmental network to the extent that it can translate the objectives and values of others into its own terms, to the extent that the arguments of another become consonant with and provide norms for its own ambitions and actions" (*Governing* 35). It is exactly this quality of "simulation social relations" that enables genres of governance to "mystify social hierarchy and social distance" (*Discourse* 76). As a liaison between "government departments, the commissions of the European Community, women's organizations and the council" (Levine "Movement" 178), the CSW was constantly involved in these processes of mediating and translating genres between distant relations and assembling governing networks through, what Connolly identifies as "the politics of persuasion" (*Devolution* 105). The formation of the Commission and the compilation and publication of the *Report of the Commission on the Status*

of Women made the government's response to a call-for-action on the issue of women's rights materially observable, accountable, and reportable; however, this site of sociospatial proximity was also used to reproduce relations of social hierarchy by reconstructing, re-inscribing, and routinizing self-regulating subject positions, specifically through the practice of mediation.

While the *Report of the CSW* offered the women's rights sector a discursive means of pressuring for social change through legal reform, its specific genre function within the women's rights sector ultimately proved ideologically and tactically incompatible with the expanding autonomous women's movement. As the 1970s progressed, the broader women's movement continued to decentralize, which Connolly maintains was a contributing factor in "preventing the CSW's leaders from controlling the tactics of local activists in new affiliate groups" (*Devolution* 104). The problem of governance from a distance for state actors also became more challenging as feminist consciousness was assembled, both formally and informally, across divergent locales at different points in time and space. From a historical perspective, the publication of the *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women* has been hailed by legal scholars as "a watershed in the gendered basis of Irish public policy" (Connolly "State" 139),[143] and yet as a rhetorical response and conceptual frame for social action during its time, the document received a limited reception from both the mainstream media and the women's liberation movement. In her biography of IWLM, Anne Stopper notes that the tone of the Report was received by the women's liberation as "moderate" (*Mondays* 129), a term Connolly reiterates in her documentation of the revolution and devolution of the women's

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[143] For a fuller examination of the extensive changes in policy presaged by the *Report of the Commission on the Status of Women,* see Richard B. Finnegan and James L. Wiles's comprehensive political history, *Women and Public Policy in Ireland: A Documentary History, 1922-1997* (2005).

movement.[144] Stopper expands that while one of the co-founders of IWLM, Mary Maher, "bore no grudge against the thirteen Commission members who 'slogged away compiling the thing,'" she also "appealed to Irish women to take action themselves" (*Mondays* 129). Maher's comments on the *Interim* and final *Report of the CSW* point to the relationship between genre and social action. Paré reminds us that genres are sociorhetorical customs or routines that "'work,' that get something done, that achieve desirable ends" ("Genre" 60). Here, Maher recognizes that, while it is not the fault of the CSW, the "desirable ends" of the government reports are not to "get something done" for autonomous feminists, but rather to delay "doing," so to speak; or, perhaps to "get something done" that appeases government authorities and makes modest concessions for women without fundamentally altering social conditions. While women's groups and feminists called the government to action, the government's response in the form of the recommendation report was to call others to action. The outcome or effect of the reports was not to take action, but rather to recommend, advise, and propose that action be taken. This mediating discursive strategy, effectively, aimed to defer social (inter)action; an outcome that was made all the more clear with the *Interim Report* on equal pay and the attempted delay of the EEC Directive on equal pay.

The Politics of Feminist Citation: Rewriting the Sociospatial Relations of Genre Knowledge

　　It was, in part, the effects of this discrepancy between Ireland's and the EEC's response to proposals for equal pay, and subsequent application of the principle, that provided the women's movement with the opportunity for tactical collective action; specifically, discursive acts of resistance. If we return to *Banshee*'s "Equal Pay Forum," for example, we can see that the collective's reporting goes beyond the evaluation and categorization of situations and forms

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[144] "The *moderate* tone of the document made it broadly acceptable to both the public and government" (*Devolution* 98; emphasis added).

of deferral; it also invites readers to rewrite and reenact the genre-defined motives of women within situations of deferral by both rewriting *and* reenacting the "appropriate" sociospatial relations of discursive practices. While *Banshee*'s readers begin to accumulate knowledge of motives and situations as they read "Progress Towards Equal Pay" and "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries," they also learn how to contest, disrupt, and adapt the routines of these genres to serve their own feminist motives. Just following the passage on government "acrobatics" and employer "antics" in "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries," the collective writes the following: "It was the picket and occupation of their national headquarters (see article on F.U.E. on this page) by Irish Women United, that were largely instrumental in exposing the propaganda of F.U.E" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). The intertextual reference "(see article on F.U.E. on this page)" serves an important structural and ideological function here. In an editorial that documents the problem of institutional discourse – in the forms of legislative acrobatics and union propaganda – and recommends confrontational action, this citation provides information regarding a source where an answer or successful method of solving can be found: the adjacent page of *Banshee.* This textual transmission is interactive in that it moves readers from one place in the periodical to another, directing readers to proceed through a particular order of items. Latham and Scholes suggest that material within a periodical is usually organized as part of an "autonomous print object" ("Periodical" 529), in which the ordering of material does not solicit specific patterns of reading; therefore, I propose that *Banshee*'s use of a directive discursive marker performs an ideological imperative. In her critical work on feminist citational practices, Sara Ahmed explains that the act of citation is an organizing structural practice; it is "how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because we deviated from the

paths we were told to follow" (*Feminist* 15-6). Ahmed's spatialization of citation enables us to think through its relationship to feminist discourse, genre, and place. If we understand Ahmed's "paths we were told to follow" as an analogy for hegemonic genres, then citational practices can become a means of aiding feminists to forge new paths, new genres of resistance, and build sense-making structures to help them navigate their way through spaces already comprised of a "multitude of overlapping texts that try to place [them] within their areas of sense" (Juvan "Spaces" 92). When readers follow the path of citation beginning at "Employers Unite on Crisis Industries," they traverse across the terrain of the "Progress Toward Equal Pay" timeline to end at the news report "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United." This discursive mapping technique locates *Banshee,* a radical feminist periodical, as a "source" of knowledge, an area of sense-making, and a definitive place of information gathering for women on the means and modes of feminist action.

    Banshee's reference to itself as a site of reference is an act of self-promotion and self-politicization. To self-cite is to reappropriate a patriarchal genealogical tradition when and where men cite other men as a form of intellectual authority and knowledge production, and, in the case of *Banshee*, to re-orient both knowledge assembly and knowledge dissemination around women's experiences. In order to cement *Banshee* as a reliable source, the women of *Banshee* first cite men as a means of destabilizing hegemonic techniques of knowledge production and, as Ahmed suggests, the generic practices that reproduce an institution ("Shelters"). In "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," the *Banshee* collective cites the words of institutional officials and reports – Liam Cosgrave, Michael O'Leary, and the FUE Annual Report of 1974 – in boxed sections throughout the news report. While these quotations appear sporadically as the text of the report progresses, they never disrupt the spatial syntax of

the article. Instead, the boxes marginalize and isolate the citations, containing the voices of male authority figures and preventing them from intervening in or altering the spatial boundaries of the periodical form. In each of these quotations, institutional discourse allegedly supporting the implementation of equal pay is rendered visible prior to the date the postponement amendment was made – December 18, 1975. For example, Michael O'Leary is cited in his address to the Dáil Éireann on March 5, 1974:

> I have given careful consideration to the question of the date for full implementation (of Equal Pay) before deciding that the Act should be in operation on 31st Dec. 1975. As a Government, we are convinced that there should be no further delay…While the implementation of equal pay will involve additional costs, I do not think that this problem must stand in our way. (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive)

While these quotations would seem to contradict *Banshee*'s critique of institutional bodies as employing practices of mediation to delay the execution of equal pay legislation, the side-by-side comparison of government discourse with government actions on equal pay in the adjacent "Progress Toward Equal Pay" timeline only serves to strengthen the collective's typification of situations, motives, and practices of deferral. In their discursive representation of institutional space as exclusionary, the collective materializes the limits of hegemonic discursive formations. Similarly, the physical demarcation of the citations excludes them from the space and spatial relations of the rest of the text*,* indicating that an antagonistic relationship exists between government and social movement actors.[145] In *Banshee,* women citing men becomes a subversive regulatory tactic, a means of destabilizing the generic structures that construct the terrain of hegemonic authority.

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[145] As Howarth suggests, "It is the construction of antagonisms – in which the presence of an 'Other' blocks the identity of a subject – that discloses the *limits* of a practice or *a regime of practices.* The construction of antagonism involves the drawing of boundaries and the creation of political frontiers" ("Power" 313; emphasis in original).

In contrast to their citation of "men," *Banshee*'s self-citation – women citing women –
becomes both a discursive and relational means of creating space for feminists, space to
assemble and reproduce knowledge. At the discursive level, self-citation enables *Banshee* to
function as a site for the assembly and collection of stocks of knowledge. Ross states that
stocks of knowledge "are based on types generalized from group-normed experience" from
which "actors draw generic practices" in order to organize and respond to situations ("Genre"
85), and these stocks of knowledge are central to the development of social movements. As I
demonstrated in the previous two chapters, in order for social movements to mobilize
ideological and action participation, they need to align public discourse with their own
interpretive frames of knowledge that also motivate tactical repertoires of action. *Banshee*'s
reference to "FUE Occupation by Irishwoman United" as an example of contentious direct
action that results in both the exposition of union propaganda and also government capitulation
discursively locates, identifies, and labels a frame for collective action – a genre from which
feminist actors can draw typified practices – and readers need look no further than the headline
for the collective action frame: the *location* of feminist direct action is "FUE" headquarters at
Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin, the actors *identified* are the male board members of FUE and the
female activists of "Irishwomen United," and the tactic of contentious action *labelled* is
"occupation." *Banshee* defines the places, the actors, and the methods of direct action,
informing women how to adapt their responses to events and situations of patriarchal
institutional operation, such as board meetings. Whereas citation of men in the article becomes
a means of unsettling authority by exposing the discrepancy between discourse and action,
Banshee's self-citation advances its credibility by aligning its discourse with its action – as the
collective reminds its readers at the end of the article: "We're not saying that there is a total

connection between our occupation and government capitulation. We are saying that the time for soft shoe shuffling is over. Get into the Labour Court and Fight!" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In this forum, *Banshee*'s self-citation of its self-reported, self-created action event relies on the appropriation of hegemonic discursive conventions in order to suit the motives of the women's movement: the mobilization of feminist direct action. Through their act of self-citation, the *Banshee* collective creates and locates the alternative periodical as a space for the production, acquisition, and dissemination of feminist knowledge, particularly in the form of generic practices.

But the spatial politics of citation are not only discursive; they also are relational. Returning to Ahmed who argues that citation is a "rather successful reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain bodies" ("Making"), we can understand citation as a discursive mechanism or practice that locates bodies in space. The reproduction of those bodies in space over time, ultimately leads to the establishment of place. According to Mary Jo Reiff, writing always "takes *place* in genres" ("Spatial" 208; emphasis added), which means that genres are discursive structures that reproduce and maintain the ideologies that construe space, materially. In the enactment of a genre, "writers and readers are both 'taken up' by genre and its social relations and, in turn, 'take up' the material and spatial conditions surrounding it" (Reiff "Spatial" 208). If the citation "(see article on FUE on this page)" provides readers with directions through the symbolic landscape of *Banshee* to "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," then we have to look at both the kind of space this genre of resistance maps for its readers, and also around whose bodies this reproductive act takes place. By inviting readers to "take up" the genre of direct action in "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," the *Banshee* collective locates the actions and relations they should perform within the workplace. If we

recall from my discussion in Chapter One, "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United" detailed the protest tactics of picketing and occupying employed by members of the *Banshee* collective during a board meeting on the premises of the Federated Union of Employers. By literally giving women a seat at the table of the FUE board meeting, IWU drew attention to the material conditions that excluded or obstructed their participation in the genres embedded in institutional sites of economic activity. Ultimately, IWU reorganized the discursive activity that produces hierarchies and social relations by transgressing the hegemonic spatial boundaries of FUE headquarters – "it was the first and only occasion on which the F.U.E. publicly answered questions on the issue [of equal pay]" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). The narrative of "FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United" informs readers that the members of IWU were able to disrupt and adapt the performance of routine practices in the workplace and shift the path of institutional discourse by collectively employing direct action tactics to assemble their bodies in different space-time formations.

Banshee's politics of citation is organizational, in that it "locates" alternative discursive forms of authority for feminists within the space of the periodical, as well as instructional, in that it assembles new actions, rhetorically. Citation, in this context, lends authority to the periodical through what would appear to be a hegemonic practice of knowledge making; however, what makes IWU's citational structures different from those used to build patriarchal institutions is that they materialize the bodies they reproduce and render visible their "techniques of selection" (Ahmed "Feminist"). As a directive or instructive tool, citation routinizes readers' movement through the layout of narratives within *Banshee*'s Equal Pay Forum, mapping out the activities, relations, and locations of IWU's movement and creating a visible trail that women can find their way back to again and again. And, when readers arrive at

"FUE Occupation by Irishwomen United," they meet the faces of the members of IWU in the photograph at the bottom of the news report (see Fig. 17), whose bodies carved spaces for them to follow. This politics of visibility and accessibility is inherent to *Banshee*'s categorization of its two-page fold as a "forum." A forum is defined as a "place of public discussion" and, historically, it also has a legal function as a "place of assembly for judicial and other public business" ("forum, n."). In situating their periodical as an alternative public site for the assembly and adjudication of juridical affairs, particularly on matters relating to the oppression of women, the *Banshee* collective positions themselves as their own authority, their own commission, tasked with examining the status of women in the Republic. Unlike the semi-institutional body of the CSW, however, IWU performs each step of its investigation, discussion, and recommendation publicly, inviting readers to witness its processes of deliberation. More importantly, though, IWU also *enacts* its own recommendations. While the CSW only recommends or advises action, IWU takes action to both pressure and apply justice for women. Through their forum, IWU is able to "negotiate shared understandings of some problematic condition or situation, discuss and articulate alternatives and solutions, and urge others to act in concert to affect change" in order to constitute collective action frames for the women's movement (Allern "Frame" 94). The use of citation within the alternative periodical forum is a tool for gathering women and for assembling new formations for social action.

In positioning the alternative periodical as a vehicle for delivering interpretive frames on women's rights to the public, the *Banshee* collective and members of IWU use their publication to compete for meaning on women's rights, at the level of public discourse, with patriarchal organs of the state. As the *Banshee* collective confirms in their discussion paper for a teach-in

on "How to Build a Womens[146] Movement," one of the only ways for women to fight the

"propaganda" of the FUE and "acrobatics" of the government on the issue of equal pay, is by

disseminating and propagating their own propaganda:

> By taking a militant initiative designed to break out of the parliamentary orientated level of the equal pay bebate [sic], that even the trade union leadership responded to, we spelt out one important lesson, that *action* on the part of women themselves was very important and that equal pay would be won in this way… All we can do in this field at present is to *propagandize* and initiate certain '*forms*' of activity which women can partake and imitate themselves. (BL/F/AP/1178/1, Attic Press Archive)

Institutional discourse on equal pay must be combated by women's movement, and those forms

of movement must be recommended, organized, and directed through methods produced,

circulated, and reproduced by women themselves. We need only look to *Banshee*'s opening

editorial to understand that this prescription of movement is a larger pattern within the feminist

periodical, as well as its sister publication, *Wicca:*[147] "Our magazine will detail, monthly and

minutely, the oppression of women *and* the means of removing that oppression"

(BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive; emphasis added). This statement is *Banshee*'s macro-

genre contract between its collective and its readership concerning the forms of the periodical

they can expect to find – detailed, publicized show-and-tell approaches to events and practices

of oppression, as well as the methods or courses of action to remove those forms of oppression.

But how is this contract represented, serially, in *Banshee* and *Wicca*? What are the specific

forms of this macrogenre? How are frames of action assembled through specific forms of the

genre, and what kinds of action do these forms of the genre assemble? Returning to *Banshee*'s

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[146] Throughout *Banshee,* the possessive apostrophe is more often than not missing from the word "women's." While this lack is most likely a typographical error, there is an interesting way in which *Banshee's* typographical blip articulates a feminist politics by denying the possessive.

[147] "We also hope to be an information source, keeping you notified of meetings conferences, and other activities planned by feminist groups throughout the country, so any related news is welcome! We are a collectively run magazine, dedicated to ending sexism and capitalism" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive).

"Equal Pay Forum" is a useful starting place for thinking through serial patterns and continuities in the periodical's relationship to genre, form, and movement.

As *Banshee*'s first feature article, the collective's choice of events, people, and places to cover in-depth sets the tone for the periodical's imagined or perceived audience. The aggregate components of the "Equal Pay Forum" prescribe movement through space, both real and discursive space, and they do so by reappropriating or adapting hegemonic practices within comparable ideological contexts to achieve new ends for feminists. The interaction of adjacent items on the pages of the forum link situation and motive to action, formulating a pattern for readers for *how to* navigate the spatial boundaries of institutional deferral of equal pay implementation by refusing to remain obstructed and, instead, take alternative *paths* of direct action to transgress, reshape, and generate heterogeneous *sites* of feminist activism to pressure for the establishment of pay equity. Furthermore, the *Banshee* collective delivers this "pattern" through three distinct textual modes including the following: the provision of a personal narrative as means of feminist identity formation; the creation and identification of places for women to locate and practice feminism, both discursively and spatially; and the performance and modelling of discourse in a situation, assembling a frame for repeated social action. More broadly, these modes teach readers *who* can move, *where* to move, and *how* to move through textual genres, more specifically, testimonials or profiles, instructional graphic devices (i.e., timeline, photograph), and expert advice, respectively. These textual modes are devices and techniques of service journalism or, what James Autry – the editor of *Better Homes and Gardens* from 1970 to 1981 – describes as "action journalism" ("Service" 5). As an autonomous unit, the Equal Pay Forum, provides one example of how the *Banshee* collective employs service journalism to deliver collective action frames for the autonomous women's

movement around the specific issue of equal pay; however, it is the larger trends in these

specific textual conventions across a genre concerned with who moves, where and how over

time in both *Banshee* and *Wicca* that provides us with insight into the material conditions of

"conservative cultural, social, political and religious values" (Galligan *Politics* 64), specifically

in relation to women and labour, that limited the mobilization of an "autonomous" women's

movement in the Republic. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I detail the upsurge,

continuity, and transformation of forms of service journalism across the production of *Banshee*

and *Wicca,* as a generic form of the discourse of the women's movement and a (de)mobilizing

frame for collective action.

"Women + Work = Discrimination": Service Journalism and Advising New Paths for

Women

It will not be their [CSW] fault that the Interim Report's recommendations, or even the
eventual Final Report's recommendations aren't implemented…The only people who can make
this report a reality are the women it concerns…We had better start *moving*, though.
Considering that only 44% of us have even bothered to join a union, sisters, we have a lot of
work to do. (Maher ct. in Stopper *Mondays* 130; emphases added)

I want to return to Mary Maher as a starting point for the following section concerning

the whos, wheres, and hows of Irish feminist "movement." Previously, I analyzed the ways in

which the generic conventions of the government report, specifically in the form of the Report

of the CSW, attempted to constrain women's movement by mediating action and producing

self-regulating subjects, but it was less the discourse of the CSW than the performance of that

discourse that feminists and women's groups took issue with upon the Report's publication.

According to Connolly, "radicalizing the mobilizing issues of the CSW and Report of the First

Commission on the Status of Women" was actually central to the ideological discussions of

IWLM and its successors, including IWU (*Devolution* 114-5). So what did it take to radicalize the issues and recommendations of the CSW Interim and Final Reports and make them a reality? As I began to examine in the preceding section, and as Maher indicates above, radicalization began with "movement." What is more important about Maher's observation, though, is her stipulation regarding which action a fellow sister should choose in order to enact feminist movement: join a union. This selection of both the place and action of feminist movement is essential in the organization and mobilization of a feminist identity and praxis. Essentially, within Maher's prescription lies a formula for who can practice feminism, where, and how: Irish women workers can practice feminism by joining their local trade unions and participating in the collective and established processes of organized labour. Maher's recommended path to feminism points to one of the patterns, as well as tensions, that emerges across the discursive structures of the autonomous women's movement: women's engagement with the existing patriarchal institutions of the state – or, more broadly, the relationship between feminism and reformism. While these generically prescribed paths moved feminists beyond autonomous boundaries into new ideological and political positions, they also demonstrated autonomous feminism's need to meet a social imperative that was a reality rather than a discourse and serve its readers materially as well as ideologically.

In their opening editorials, both *Banshee* and *Wicca* identify their periodicals as reader-writer produced information sources on the means and matters of feminism, indicating that service is at the core of their delivery. Service journalism is action journalism, otherwise known as "news you can use" (From and Kristensen "Rethinking" 722). As Autry explains, it is "journalism that goes beyond the delivery of pure information, [and] includes the expectation that the reader will *do* something as a result of the reading" ("Service" 4; emphasis added). In

other words, movement or action is essential to the effect of the genre. Unni From and Nete Nørgaard Kristensen indicate that service journalism emerged out of a demand for "advice on social and moral issues of everyday life" during a time of "increasing complexity and reflexivity of modernity" ("Rethinking" 721). Service journalism replaced the traditional role of institutions, offering citizen readers guidance towards the achievement of greater autonomy in an era of political and social disillusionment. In spite of its general emphasis on "potentialization, striving and self-empowerment" (Eide and Knight "Public" 533), service journalism also has been critiqued, historically, for its practice, particularly in commercial and popular women's magazines, as a means of targeting readers as individual consumers and collaborating with advertisers in order to shape and guide readers' lifestyle choices. However, journalism and media scholars, such as Martin Eide, suggest that by nature of its bottom-up "problematization of the everyday life-world,"[148] the genre of service journalism can actually enable collective, political action that is inherent to the core of social movements ("Culture" 198). In a social movement context, then, service journalism is concerned not only with simply influencing or advising individual or personal lifestyle choices for profit or gain, but also with transforming the way readers think and act for social change. In this manner, service journalism is a responsive genre; responsive to complex socio-historical conditions and problems of everyday life that require identification and explanation, but also require direction, advice, and solutions on how to navigate specific problems in the social world. It is this problem-solving function of service journalism – the guiding of forms of action to achieve specific ends – that also can facilitate the actions that validate (or invalidate) movement discourses.

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[148] In his theories of communicative action, Jürgen Habermas distinguishes a "lifeworld" from a "system." A lifeworld, according to Habermas, refers to the genres of social action that organize social actors in recognizable ways, including "shared cultural systems of meaning, institutional orders that stabilize patterns of action, and personality structures acquired in family, church, neighbourhood, and school" (Bohman and Rehg "Habermas").

I propose that the development of forms of service journalism in *Banshee* and *Wicca* across the latter half of the 1970s assists in moving the periodicals beyond the terrain of identifying problems and raising consciousness and into the realm of mobilizing action. What, then, are the routinized services *Banshee* and *Wicca* provide for their readers? What are the problems to which they provide solutions? To paraphrase Autry, what do the periodicals (and their editors and writers) expect the readers to *do* as a result of their reading? In a genre concerned with everyday actions and solutions, we must first examine the actions used to accomplish the successful transition to service journalism in both *Banshee* and *Wicca*. In what follows, I analyze patterns in the forms of service journalism developed in the sister periodicals, as well as contextualize the specific historical social and cultural conditions to which the periodicals respond as a way of tracing the emergence of a reformist strand of feminist thought in the Republic that ultimately contributes to the dissolution of the autonomous faction of the women's movement.

Anti-Discrimination, Employment Equality, and Unfair Dismissals: How-To Navigate Legal Loopholes in Mid-1970s Ireland

Four fifths of all women in this country working outside the home are employed (1) Industry (2) As shop assistants (3) As clerks (4) Maids (5) Typists. It appears that the nuns read our futures quite accurately. However the main deterrent is not this conditioning alone but the blatant discrimination against the working woman in every aspect of employment…That women marry and leave their employment is often not due to the wishes of the women themselves but to the policies of the employer. There is a great lack of child care facilities and semi-state bodies still pay a marriage gratuity to women who leave their job on marriage. The Irish Constitution specifies that a woman's place is in the home. Rather than helping married women this provision is designed to ensure that women stand behind men in the job queue and are drawn on only as subsidiary labour underpaid and denied even basic rights. The privileges won by the rights established by the unions over the last century cater mainly for men. Consequently we find that the pregnant woman is required to live on a pittance of social welfare while on maternity leave. – "Women + Work = Discrimination." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 7, 1977, p. 7; (BL/F/AP/1515/7, Attic Press Archive)

In its first issue of *Banshee,* IWU focuses on identifying, explaining, and interpreting the current legislation, and lack of legislation, that impacts women's lives in the Republic. Articles on contraception and proposals for family planning bills, the dole (or unemployment benefits), workers rights and unionization, equal pay, and the Constitution – specifically marital and maternal rights – comprise the content of the periodical and highlight, inform, and advise readers on what they need to know, or rather what the collective thinks they should know, about the legislation. What is important about this first issue is that it frames the relationship between employment equality and legislation as key to women's liberation, pinpointing both capitalism and patriarchy as the sources of women's oppression. Mary Daly argues that this was a time when "employment, not a higher birthrate, was the primary Irish concern, with priority given to creating jobs for men rather than women" ("Free" 110), and *Banshee*'s Equal Pay Forum confirms this phenomenon; however, the Forum also indicates that in spite of the Irish government's attempt to defer the implementation of equality legislation, the latter half of the 1970s ushered in a series of governmental acts seemingly designed to challenge the normative gendered socioeconomic function of women in Irish society. Pressure from the EEC and the domestic women's movement forced the state to uphold the establishment of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, which eventually came into operation on December 31, 1975. The Act was Ireland's first employment equality legislation and "established the right of men and women to equal pay if they were employed in like work by the same (or an associated) employer" in both public and private sectors (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 87). The enforcement of the Act fell to the Labour Relations Commission, which implemented the Equality Office of the Labour Court to deal with disputes over claims to equal pay. Then, in 1977 the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act was supplemented by the Employment Equality Act.

The act replaced the Labour Court with a statutory body, the Employment Equality Agency (EEA), tasked with three main objectives: to "work towards the elimination of discrimination," to "promote equality of opportunity between men and women" in relation to employment, and "to review the workings of the equal pay and equal opportunity legislation and make proposals for their amendment" (Employment Equality Act, section 35). 1977, then, ended with the Unfair Dismissals Act, which prohibited employers from dismissing pregnant employees, barring exceptional circumstances. All three acts appear to offer women not only greater access to employment opportunities, but also greater access to channels of participation within structures of the state, specifically the Labour Court (via equality officers) and the Employment Equality Agency. As the legal genres of the state began to offer women different means to navigate the workplace and employment opportunities in the Republic, feminist discourses in *Banshee* and *Wicca* concerning how to uptake[149] the material and spatial conditions of these discursive structures shifted from recommending confrontational forms of collective action to strategic or non-confrontational forms of action, predominantly.

As demonstrated, *Banshee* no. 1 (1976) begins with the occupation, assemblage, and creation of feminist spaces. Prior to 1976, more specifically the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, IWU's involvement in public events and acts of protest, at least according to their self-presentation, involved contentious direct action – marches, occupations, strikes, pickets, rallies, and demonstrations. Direct action is motivated by a desire to solve social problems through acts of obstruction, which prevent or impede the normative movements, routines, practices, and relations of political institutions. As I argued in the previous two chapters of this dissertation, IWU and other women's groups used their protesting

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[149] I borrow my definition of genre "uptake" from Dylan Dryer, who defines the term as "readers' and writers' enactment of acquired dispositions toward recurrent textual forms" ("Taking" 503).

bodies in motion to obstruct and redirect the progress of the nation-state, which is best

exemplified in *Banshee*'s listing of the "Activities of Irishwomen United – May 1975-May

1976" in their third publication (see Fig. 19). While IWU challenges sexism, exploitation,

discrimination, and oppression of women in all forms,[150] what is clear in the list of activities

presented is that nearly fifty-per cent of IWU's confrontational direct action events pressured

for a change in discriminatory practices in Irish law, particularly in relation to women's

employment, through means other than law reform itself. While confrontational forms of direct

action comprised the majority of IWU's early activities, the *Banshee* collective also indicates in

their third editorial that, "this strategy of direct action is linked to our other less publicised

activities – a submission to the Law Reform Commission regarding the domicile law and

addressing meetings held by other groups. Major campaigns have been mounted on equal pay,

contraception and social welfare" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). IWU's statement

concerning their dual-movement approach of feminist activism is important because while it

acknowledges that the propagation and imitation of disruptive forms of women's activity is

essential in adapting the routines and arrangements of political institutions, it also identifies the

need for discursive institutional genres to reshape the sociospatial reproductive sites of the state

in order to bring about sustainable social change.

    Although disruptive protest events act as sites of discursive interaction between women's

movement activists and political actors, the continuity of the women's movement – or at least

the goals and claims of the movement – requires that institutional genres both adapt and

legitimize movement discourse. However, the relationship between social movements, law, and

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[150] In the Irish Women United Charter printed on the back of each issue of *Banshee*, IWU states that, "We pledge ourselves to challenge and fight sexism in all forms and oppose all forms of exploitation which keep women oppressed. These demands are all part of the essential right of women to self-determination of our lives – equality in education and work; control of our own bodies; an adequate standard of living and freedom from sexist conditioning" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

society is not unidirectional. According to Cary Coglianese, the conventional view of the

institutionalization of social movements posits a correlation where "social movement

organizations seek to secure law reform; in turn, changes in the law bring about changes in

society" ("Social" 85), but the law does not simply effect social change. The law's ability to

enact social change pertaining to women's rights, in part, depends upon the genre's "ability to

articulate the conditions of its possibility" (Dryer "Taking" 522). The function of laws to bring

about change in the public sphere, in this instance as it pertains to women's rights, is contingent

upon the material and social conditions of its uptake, particularly the framing of who has access

to the law; furthermore, there is the equally important condition that those who do have access

to the law must recognize what the law enables them to enact and not enact in certain

situations. In other words, genre users must have an understanding of the who, how, and where

of the law. In their analysis of "Equal Pay" in *Banshee* no. 3, IWU begins to appropriate this

genre awareness and knowledge for its readers.

Banshee and "Equal Pay": Knowing an Ireland in Transition

"Equal Pay" is divided into two sections with question headings including, "Have You

Got Your Rights?" and "Have You A Case For Claiming Equal Pay?" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic

Press Archive). Question headings direct readers' attention to the content to follow, as the

question implies that an answer or response will succeed the query. After a brief explanation of

the Act, under which IWU identifies that, "a woman worker is entitled to the same pay as a

man employed by the same employer, if both are doing like work" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic

Press Archive), the collective paraphrases the three ways in which "like work" is defined under

the law. What is more important about *Banshee*'s definition of "like work" than the

paraphrased section it succeeds, though, is the interpretation of the definition that follows: "The

third definition of like work is open to wide interpretation. To be of equal value, the work done by a woman need not in any way resemble that done by a man. For instance, a typist in an office is just as much a machine operator as a man on the shop floor" (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). One of the many critiques of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act made by socialists, feminists, and trade unionists alike was its ambiguous definition of "like work," which allowed for a narrow interpretation of its qualifying criteria by employers.[151] As the procedure for initiating a pay claim fell on the shoulders of female employees and required them to compare their work to their male comparators before bringing their claims forward, both the ambiguities and lack of specific criteria concerning "like work" acted as a barrier to accessibility for female employees, particularly those employed in positions where "skill, physical and mental effort, responsibility and working conditions" were equivalent but different (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). Amidst the lengthy, ambiguous and technical language of the legislative document, the *Banshee* collective interprets and translates what it perceives to be important for its readers to know about the law, providing specific examples of positions of "like work."

In his research on the genre system of zoning codes, Dylan Dryer makes a similar comparison regarding zoning codes and the ways in which the conventions of zoning codes, such as legalese, can contribute to a reader's sense of exclusion or out-of-placeness from the genre by "sharply delimit[ing] readers' ability to make meaning in ways that deviate from authorized readings" ("Taking" 517). It is this ability for institutionally entrenched genres to

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[151] The *Irish Statute Book* defines "like work" between two persons as follows: "(a) where both perform the same work under the same or similar conditions, or where each is in every respect interchangeable with the other in relation to the work, or (b) where the work performed by one is of a similar nature to that performed by the other and any differences between the work performed or the conditions under which it is performed by each occur only infrequently or are of small importance in relation to the work as a whole, or (c) where the work performed by one is equal in value to that performed by the other in terms of the demands it makes in relation to such matters as skill, physical or mental effort, responsibility and working conditions" ("Anti-Discrimination").

Beyond the fringe
— a view of sexuality

Womens' sexuality has been demythologised at a biological level at least. Research has shown that we may be as sexually active and responsive as any man is allowed to be. The phases of arousal from initial excitement through to orgasm are similar in women and men. However, we alone are capable of having multiple orgasms and we have a clitoris whose only function is pleasure.

Sexuality is more than a physiological process. It also involves our heads, our feelings and the culture and society in which we live. A combination of all these factors affect how and with whom we choose to behave as sexual people.

The Marriage Bed

Irish society sanctions only one form of sexual behaviour: marital sex. The Catholic Church explicitly condemns all other forms of sexual self-expression: masturbation, homosexuality, extra marital and premarital sex, any and all of which we can and could enjoy. The Church and State, however, refuse to allow that sexual activity is for anything but procreation since we are denied contraception and abortion.

We are taught that sex is dirty and disgusting and unmentionable and so to fulfil. the demands of our religion we inhibit, sublimate or even deny our sexual feelings and needs. These are allowed only in the marriage bed. But marriage is made into a life-denying institution: lacking contraception we are deprived of the right to work in the most creative and self-actualising way we can choose for ourselves. We are made dependent on another human being for bread, protection, shelter, status and self-esteem.

The Need to Express Ourselves

Deprived of permission to express ourselves as individual people through our chosen work, we begin to feel inferior, unequal and lose our self-esteem which is so crucial to our sense of well- being and to expressing and enjoying our sexual needs, feelings and activities. It is hardly surprising then that we feel used, dissatisfied and inadequate in sexual incounters in the one permitted place.

Sexuality is part of our identity (as our genitalia are part of our bodies) and one cannot substitute one for the other. Attempts to establish an identity through sex result in a desperate goat-oriented activity. This manifests itself as a sort of genital gluttony which quite forgets sensuality and depends for satisfaction on "a good performance" or on more world-eclipsing orgasms.

Sexual Liberation

Sexual liberation is part of our total liberation as women. The former is not portrayed between the covers of "Playboy" nor is it manifested by being available to anyone at anytime to please them rather than ourselves. Sexual liberation is about liking ourselves, understanding our bodies and being responsive to our own needs and pleasures. Sexual liberation is also according other people the same freedom and it is learning to listen to ourselves and like what we hear; it is learning to be deaf to the messages shouted from council chambers, pulpits and Playboy.

1975	ACTIVITIES OF IRISHWOMEN UNITED – MAY 1975–MAY 1976
MAY 1st	May Day March to the G.P.O.
MAY 12th	Picket on the British Embassy in protest at the new rape laws in Britain
MAY 24th	Picket on the Pro-Cathedral in protest at the pastoral letter – 'Human Life is Sacred'
JUNE 8th	Charter Convention in Liberty Hall
JUNE 27th	Picket on Contraception in O'Connell Street
JULY 4th	Protest at Fitzwilliam L.T.C. (men only)
JULY 6th	Protest at the 40-Foot (men only) bathing place
JULY 11th	Picket on contraception in O'Connell Street
JULY 12th	2nd protest at Fitzwilliam L.T.C.
JULY 13th	40-Foot invaded again
JULY 25th	Protest to central labour exchange at unequal social welfare benefits
JULY 26th	Journey to Limerick for IWU sponsored meeting on discrimination
SEPT. 15th	Picket on the IPA and protest (Pat Cobey) to Cosgrave
SEPT. 16th	IWU public meeting in Wynn's Hotel – 'Women and Trade Unions – The Right to Join?'
SEPT. 22nd	IPA – protest to the Minister for Justice, Patrick Cooney, by Mary Dorcey
OCT. 29th	Contraception Picket on the Archbishop's Palace, Drumcondra
NOV. 12th	Contraception Rally in Liberty Hall
DEC. 2nd	IWU meeting in Power's Hotel – Evelyn Reid on 'Women's Evolution and Human Nature'
DEC. 19th	Picket on the Dail over the postponement of Equal Pay
1976	
JAN. 21st	FUE offices picketed and occupied by IWU
FEB. 13th	IWU – Equal Pay Forum in the Mansion House
MARCH 6th	International Women's Day March
APRIL 7th	Picket on the Dail over the Contraception Debate
MAY 1st	May Day March
MAY 8th/9th	IWU Teach-in in .CD
JUNE 15th	Unemployment March in O'Connell St. to Dail Eireann

Fig. 19 List of "Activities of Irishwomen United – May 1975-May 1976." *Banshee,* vol. 1, no. 3, 1976, p. 12; (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive).

Strike for Equal Pay

Employees at RTE Rentals recently staged a marathon 3½ week strike in protest against the discriminatory conditions within the Company. The strike was initiated by members of TASS, the Technical and advisory Services Section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, and later supported by three other unions (ITGWU, ATGWU, and IEUWC).

The strikers demands fell under three main headings. (a) Equal Pay – the Company was called upon to introduce equal rates of pay for people doing like work. (b) Equal Working Conditions – Technicians within the Company worked alternate Saturdays, while other employees had to work on Saturday of every week with no overtime apyment. The strikers called for removal of this form of discrimination and the extension of the technicians privilege to all employees. (c) Equal opportunity to enter the company and equal opportunity of access to managerial positions for all employees. Before the strike, management positions within the Company were exclusively a male preserve, while restrictions were placed on school leavers entering as apprentice technicians.

Two attempts at conciliation were made. The first set of talks broke down. The second meeting was convened at 10 a.m. on Tuesday 11th May and dragged on until 5 a.m. the following day – a total of 19 hours! The bargaining was tough, but when agreement was finally reached, the strikers had gone a long way towards achieving their demands – equal pay scales have been introduced for like work; equal work conditions as regards overtime are being gradually phased in for allæmployees; managerial positions now have to be openly advertised and apprenticeships within the company are now open to school leavers of both sexes, making it possible for the first time for girls to become T.V. technicians.

Equal Pay

HAVE YOU GOT YOUR RIGHTS?

Under the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974 (commonly called the Equal Pay Act), a woman worker is entitled to the same pay as a man employed by the same employer, if both are doing like work.

"Like work" is defined in three ways:—

WHERE THE WORK DONE IS THE SAME

WHERE THE WORK DONE IS SIMILAR AND DIFFERENCES ARE INSIGNIFICANT

WHERE THE WORK DONE IS EQUAL IN VALUE

This means that the demands made on both workers in terms of skill, physical and mental effort, responsibility and working conditions are equivalent.

The third definition of like work is open to wide interpretation. To be of equal value, the work done by a woman need not in any way resemble that done by a man. For instance, a typist in an office is just as much a machine operator as a man on the shop floor.

HAVE YOU A CASE FOR CLAIMING EQUAL PAY?

If you think you have, under any of the above headings, you should bring your claim to your employer. If you belong to a trade union, you should seek the advice and backing of the union before doing so. If you don't belong to a union, the Equal Pay section of the Department of Labour will advise you on how to proceed.

If the boss disputes your claim, you should get in touch with the Equal Pay officers in the Department of Labour. (Two such officers have been appointed). An investigation will be carried out by one of these officers, who then makes a recommendation on your case.

If you don't agree with the recommendation, or if the boss doesn't pay up, you can appeal firstly to the Labour Court, and later, if necessary, to the High Court.

Forthcoming legislation relating to women in employment.

(a) Anti-didcrimination (Employment) Bill.

The main focus of this Bill is the issue of discrimination between the sexes in access to employment and in promotion and training opportunities.

When and if the Bill is enacted, it will be unlawful for anyone to refuse to employ, promote or train a woman (or a man) on the grounds of sex alone. It will also be against the law to discriminate in relation to conditions of employment other than pay (which is covered by the Equal Pay Act). "Conditions of employment" by the way, include such things as access to overtime and shift-work, dismissals, transfers, layoffs, redundancies, etc. Interesting to note, the Bill forbids "counselling or procuring" of discrimination. This means, f or instance, that people like Brother Vivian Cassells will no longer get away with counselling discrimination against married women who work outside the home. Sexist advertising will no longer be allowed – no more ads for "curvacious girls" or "bright young men."

Master O'Leary, who was due to introduce the Bill in the Dail last December, now "hopes to be soon in a position to do so". Keep hoping, Michael!

(b) Unfair Dismissals Bill

This Bill has not yet been published. As far as we know, it will cover such things as dismissal due to pregnancy or marriage, under the umbrella of the individual's right to security in employment.

Dear Sisters,

I enclose a cutting which might interest "Red Biddy" for inclusion in some form in her column. I think it is the ultimate in sex discrimination-just don't allow girls to be born at all. Sad to say, but it appears that this form of sex discrimination is practised by our own sex who still cling to the ancient belief that a girl-baby is a burden on the family and so undesirable from an economic (and social) point of view. Medical science bears some part of the blame, however, in allowing its research to be used in this way. This is not freedom, merely licence.　Evelyn Brown

Dublin 2.

.... "The idea that parents can choose whether to have a boy or girl may sound aberrant, but some specialists believe medical science has now made it a realistic and relatively safe option... Of 100 pregnant women recently screened to ascertain the sex of their unborn children, a female fetus was detected in 46. Twenty-nine of these mothers elected to abort. Of the 53 found to be carrying males, only one woman chose to terminate her pregnancy. In one case, it was not possible to predict fetal gender. This experimental sex prediction service relied not on amnio-centesis but on first-trimester noninvasive sampling of chorionic villi sloughed into the endocervical canal. The nuclei of such fetal cells, stained by the Papanicolaou method, reveal sex (X) chromatin, the Barr body of the female genome." *(Medical World News)*

Dear Banshee,

I found the last issue of 'Banshee' most interesting, particularly the article on the Patriarchal Family. I would like to suggest, however, that it would give an article such as this more credibility if the sources of material were included.

Good luck in your future issues.

Deirdre Mac Mahon
4 Upr.Fitzwilliam
Street, Dublin 2

Fig. 20 "Equal Pay" in *Banshee* no. 3, 1976, p. 3; (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive).

constrain readers in their uptake, Dryer continues, that can lead readers to unknowingly

reproduce the conditions of their constraint, inscribing them "within networks of social

relations that forestall change" ("Taking" 522). How can readers use genres to enact change?

Or, to paraphrase Dryer and Reiff, how can readers gain practical comprehension of genres to

gain access to situations ("Spatial" 215)? The second question heading of "Equal Pay" attempts

to narrate the conditions under which filing a claim for equal pay is possible for women

workers – "Have You a Case for Claiming Equal Pay?":

> If you think you have, under any of the above headings, you should bring your claim
> to your employer. If you belong to a trade union, you should seek the advice and
> backing of the union before doing so. If you don't belong to a union, the Equal Pay
> section of the Department of Labour will advise you on how to proceed. If the boss
> disputes your claim, you should get in touch with the Equal Pay officers in the
> Department of Labour. (Two such officers have been appointed). An investigation will
> be carried out by one of these officers, who then makes a recommendation on your
> case. If you don't agree with the recommendation, or if the boss doesn't pay up, you
> can appeal firstly to the Labour Court, if necessary, to the High Court.
> (BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive)

In this section, the *Banshee* collective provides practical knowledge for its various readers in

different situations of pay discrimination. Each conditional clause "if you" is followed by a

modal verb – either "should" or "can" – indicating or advising the best thing to do in each

situation. In fact, this use of the conditional present works to spur women to action because it

declares the real pervasiveness of these situations of resistance. The anaphoric repetition of "if"

appeals to the reader's sense of emotion by emphasizing the omnipresent proximity of pay

inequality to readers' lives. The use of "you" not only appeals directly to the reader and invites

her to consider how she can "do-it-herself" and file a claim for equal pay, but also makes

assumptions about the kinds of women the *Banshee* collective imagines reading its pages:

women workers, both unionized and non-unionized. Importantly, the *Banshee* collective also

indicates that women who do file a claim for equal pay *will* experience institutional resistance

in the process. *Banshee*'s acknowledgment of resistance is significant because it begins to teach

readers to recognize the ways in which the established conventions, practices, and relations of

genres can "discourage the kind of readings and revisions that might imperil their status"

(Dryer "Taking" 521). The column bordering the left side of the "Equal Pay" analysis, entitled

"Strike for Equal Pay," reinforces the prevalence of this resistance. The news report covers the

three-and-a-half-week strike by employees at RTÉ for equal pay, equal working conditions, and

equal opportunity, which finally ended in the introduction of equal pay scales for like work

(BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). However, to the right side of "Equal Pay" sits another

column with the heading "Forthcoming legislation relating to women in employment"

(BL/F/AP/1515/3, Attic Press Archive). The news brief provides a summary of both the Anti-

Discrimination (Employment) Bill, which later becomes the Equal Employment Act (1977),

and also the Unfair Dismissals Bill. The layout of "Equal Pay" on the page suggests that the

Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act is caught between a past intent on denying women their

economic rights and a future inclined toward advancing women in employment. Together,

these three articles are a microcosmic example of the ways in which the autonomous women's

movement attempted to navigate an Ireland in transition, adapting a discourse and praxis of

feminism from an exclusionary form of contentious direct action to try and include strategic

elements of reformism. As Connolly and O'Toole argue, even though these legislative acts

exhibited "limitations in practice," they also "marked significant change in attitude to women

and work in Ireland" (*Documenting* 90). I propose that as *Banshee* and *Wicca* negotiated an

Ireland in transition, their service journalism concerning how to take up legislation

demonstrates how the autonomous women's movement both attempted to negotiate these

generic limitations in practice while also recognizing the significant changes in attitude towards

women and work in Ireland.

Wicca's Case for "How to get your work's worth"

While *Banshee* begins to scratch the surface of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act and

advise readers on the conditions and limits of uptake, *Wicca* takes its readers a step further in a

two-page step-by-step guide on "how to get your work's worth" (no. 4). The service feature is

one in an on-going series of "how to" articles published in *Wicca* before the collective

dissolved and reformed in its tenth issue. Other "how-tos" include "How to Get Supplementary

Welfare Benefits" (no. 3), "Unemployment Assistance: how to apply" (no. 5), as well as "can

ANCO help you?" (no. 7) and "women at work = low pay" (no. 9). In this feature, the

collective begins by suggesting that readers can look to the Trade Union Women's Forum for

an "inexpensive, easy to follow guide to the act;"[152] however, it also informs its readers that,

"you can also post these pages of *Wicca* in your workplace or share the magazine with other

women" (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive). Here, the *Wicca* collective instructionally

invites itself into the spaces of women's work, directing women to actively participate in the

circulation of specific information in order to create what Beins would describe as a "web of

political and social relationships" between the workplace, working women, and feminism

(*Liberation* 2). Beneath this directive is also an indication that the intervention of the

periodical, physically, into the workplace has the potential to remediate social relations and

reorganize social practices enacted in space. To circulate *Wicca* in the workplace is to "do"

feminism. In this discursive move, the collective signals to its readers that this feature article is,

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[152] The Trade Union Women's Forum published the pamphlet *Make Sure You Get Your Equal Pay* in 1977, which focused on the issue of "equal value." According to Ayres, the pamphlet addressed the notion of equal value because "many women appeared to believe that only holders of jobs identical to those of men would benefit. It also provided evidence of some of the complexities behind equal pay with the observation that 'it is not only men who undervalue women, women do too'" ("Equal" 93).

in fact, news they can and should use. Like *Banshee, Wicca* employs question subheadings to direct its readers through queries, such as "Can you claim under the act?" and "What can you claim?"; however, it is in their sections "What does work of equal value mean?" and "Watch for the employers' tricks" that the *Wicca* collective expands upon the service work of its older sisters.

"How to get your work's worth" explains that under the third definition of like work – "the 'equal value' clause" – many women will be able to claim equal pay, but "What does work of equal value mean?" (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive). Critics of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act argued that both the procedural processes and also the conditions of women's employment deterred women workers from bringing forward equal pay claims. At the time, the socialist and feminist organization Revolutionary Struggle reported in *Rebel Sister*, for example, that the supposedly "revolutionary" tenant of the Act – equal pay for like work – was problematic for the majority of women in the Republic because they tended to occupy low-paying and non-unionized positions:

> HALF of all working women are in 90% female occupations,[153] which tend to have a low level of unionisation. This makes a real farce of equal pay legislation in this country based on job evaluation. Most women work in a job where there is no male doing the same work; if a woman tries to put in a claim…she will have difficulties in getting the claim through if she sticks to 'established' rules. (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive)

Beneath Revolutionary Struggle's criticism is a larger concern with knowledge and power. One of the obstacles women encountered in the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, as mentioned earlier, was that the responsibility for filing a complaint for equal pay was allotted to women workers,

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[153] The document cites its statistics from the 1971 census report on occupations: "With a population of nearly 3 million, 51% of whom are female; there is a labour force of just over 1 million, of whom 27.3% are women. IN ALL, 287,867 WOMEN WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME. There are 39,214 married women in the workforce. This makes up under 14% of the female workforce and ONLY 3.5% OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE. There are also 25,000 widows working outside the home, and the rest about 78% are single women" (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive).

whose fate was left to employers and, later, equality officers guided by few legislative and judicial measures and methods for determining the value of "like" jobs submitted for comparison by claimants. In their review of Irish equality legislation since the 1970s, Cassidy et al. suggest that this ambiguity may have led some women to consider "the filing of an equal pay or employment claim [as] a risky proposition with a low probability of a favorable outcome" ("Differentials" S165). As non-unionized women workers and women employed in female-dominated occupations or positions often lacked the resources, information, and support to file, pursue, and endure an equal pay claim under the act, both the risk of filing a complaint and also the barrier to knowledge concerning what qualified as pay discrimination or "like work" were high. While it is exactly these potential ideological effects of the legal text that *Wicca* works to counter in its "how to" guide, the fear or reprisal of being fired would continue to impede claims even after the reduction of the knowledge gap.

While *Banshee* tends to advise its readers to resist pay discrimination and legislative loopholes by engaging in direct action, particularly the tactic of striking, *Wicca*'s advice suggests that pay equity can be acquired, more often than not, through resistant readings of the genre. In their "how to," the *Wicca* collective begins by acknowledging the criticism of those groups, like Revolutionary Struggle, who point to the "established rules" of the Act – particularly "like work" – as generic loopholes designed to deter potential claimants: "Many people think that because few women do the same or similar work to men that the new law will only affect a small proportion of the workforce" (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive). Women who lack male comparators in either their workplace or work-type will feel constrained by a genre that appears to demand proof of an explicit male/female wage differential; however, *Wicca*'s feature advises that this sole understanding of "like work" is a misconception. In fact,

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Equal pay with men is your right by law, but the wage differences between women and men are increasing every year. Only an economy that provides a basic living for all, paying workers according to the basic worth of the task, and not how little the owner can get away with paying, can provide truly equal pay for equal work. But in the meantime, there are steps we can take to force our employers to pay us equally to men. The Anti-Discrimination Pay Act has been in effect since 31st December, 1975. The Trade Union Women's Forum has published an inexpensive, easy to follow guide to the act. You can get the pamphlet by writing to The Trade Union Women's Forum, 35 Windmill Rd., Dublin 12,

You can also post these pages of WICCA in your workplace or share the magazine with other women.

CAN YOU CLAIM UNDER THE ACT

There are two things you need to know:
--Are there any male workers around to make comparisons with? (Even if there aren't, there are still things to keep in mind.)
--Are you doing 'like work' to any of these male workers? You can only claim to be compared with men working for the same employer, in the same city, town or locality, not just the same office or plant.
'Like work' is a very important phrase, and is defined in three ways.

Where both perform the same work under the same conditions, or where the work is of a 'similar nature'.

Many people think that because few women do the same or similar work to men that the new law will only affect a small proportion of the female workforce. This is not true. Many women will be able to claim under the third definition, the 'equal value' clause--where the work performed is equal in value to the demands it makes on things like..skill, physical or mental effort, responsibility or working conditions."

WHAT DOES WORK OF EQUAL VALUE MEAN ?

How do you prove that your job is 'equal in value' to a man's quite different job ? The simplest way of finding the 'value' of your job is to ask: "If a man were doing this job would the employer be able to get away with these rates?" A And if not, "Then what could a man expect to demand?" If you think a man would earn £40 for doing a job for which you are being paid £30, you should claim equal pay with any male fellow employees who are earning £40--even though they may be doing totally different jobs from you. If his job requires him to lift heavier weights perhaps this is balanced out by the greater dexterity your job needs.

Keep these points in mind when seeking equal pay:

'DON'T CALL US,
WE'LL CALL YOU'
'TOO MUCH
EXPERIENCE'
'TOO STRENUOUS
FOR YOU'
'NO EXPERIENCE'

1. DON'T TAKE ANYTHING FOR GRANTED. Why should ' 'female' jobs, which involve caring, servicing, monotonous work, etc. be valued less ? Where would we be without them. Perhaps women should have extra pay for doing dull jobs--just like skilled men expect compensation when changing technology simplifies and deskills their jobs.

2. BEWARE OF ILLOGICAL ARGUMENTS. "Women shouldn't get equal pay because they can't do heavy jobs." But the highest paid people ar are top managers--and the heaviest thing they pick up is a telephone receiver.

3. IMAGINE MEN DOING WO_ WOMEN'S JOBS AND VICE VERSA--AND SEE HOW THE VALUES CHANGE. Decide in advance which jobs you think should be compared and don't be afraid to compare unlike jobs.

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Fig. 21 The first half of "How to get your work's worth" in *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 4, 1978, p. 8; (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive).

get your worth

4. SET OUT YOUR OWN TAR-GETS IN ADVANCE AND WORK BACKWARDS FROM THERE. And the best way to set a target is to carry out this 'rule of thumb' job evaluation test--"What would be the man's rate for this job."

5. DON'T FEEL GUILTY A ABOUT PUTTING IN A CLAIM. Imagine that every time a man received his wage packet he had to dip his hand in and make a com-pulsory donation of 40% of his wages to the Em-ployers' Benevolent Fund-he wouldn't put up with it for long. Well, every time you accept unequal pay, it's as if you've made a large donation to your employers--how much longer are you prepared to go on doing so.

THINK EQUAL

If your fellow workers doubt whether they should get equal pay, ask them to stop and think CAREFULLY about the jobs they do and the jobs men do. And think about these quest-ions:

1. Are all the higher paid men doing harder jobs than you . Could you do their job--have you been given the chance.

2. What is the most de-manding job in your work-place that you feel you could do (if necessary, with extra training.)

3. Which man in your work-place would you compare yourself to. Is he gett-ing more pay than you.

4. Is your work confined to the job for which you're paid. Do you ever get asked to take on extra re-sponsibilities.

5. Do you have any skills/special training the men don't have.

6. Are you ever asked to take over a man's job. Is a man ever asked to do your work. How does his pay and your pay compare.

7. What in your job do you think you get paid for. What do you think you <u>ought</u> to get paid for.

WATCH FOR THE EMPLOYERS' TRICKS

Renaming grades can be a way of disguising unequal pay. Employers might simply replace references to sex in an agreement with ref-erences to job descriptions without any change in the sex of those doing the jobs jobs. For instance, "Male Grade" might become "Heavy Duties Grade", "Female Grade" may change to "Light Duties Grade." In fact, providing you are doing work of equal value you will <u>still</u> be entitled to equal pay, but such em-ployer tactics can mislead people. Renaming jobs, such as labeling all women "as-sistants", and then chang n changing the work content. Once women are known as "assistants" their jobs may be slightly changed and then they will find it much harder to claim. REFUSE TO ACCEPT SUCH A CHANGE--THE EMPLOYER IS NOT ENTITLED TO ALTER YOUR WITHOUT YOUR AGREEMENT. Establishing a 'Unisex' grading structure, but with all the jobs women

do at the bottom of the structure. Paying young workers or single workers less than their older or married counterparts. Since most women workers are young and single they will be at the bottom of the wage scale. Men may start at the bottom but are much more likely to rise. Keeping the basic rate low but then paying special premiums which women are less likely to receive, such as 'Heavy Work Money', 'Shift Allowances', 'Long Service Payments', and payments for willingness to work overtime (even if not actually having to work it). Employers opening new work-places will also want to start off with mens depart-ments. This will make it harder for women to put in a claim and should be firm-ly resisted--but even if men and women are doing different work it is possible to seek equal pay under the equal value clauses. Bringing in contract labour to do "women's work" like clean-ing, so that the women will be employed but a different employer from the men and hence be unable to claim, is another tactic that may be used. Contract labour should be resisted-- it undermines women's rights and it damages trade union organisation.

WHAT CAN YOU CLAIM?

You deserve an equal wage packet including overtime and shift payments, bonuses, allowances. Pensions are in included also and you are entitled to <u>up to three years</u> back pay.

WHERE TO GO TO FILE A CLAIM

If you can't get equal pay through negotiations between your union and management, you can go to one of the Equality Officers attached to the Labour Court, in the Department of Labour, Mespil Road, Dublin 4. Phone 765861.

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Fig. 22 The second half of "How to get your work's worth" in *Wicca* no. 4; (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive).

it is under the third definition of like work – the "equal value" clause –that many women *can* actually claim equal pay. Rather than focus on how women are discriminated against men, the *Wicca* collective suggests that women should focus on how women's work is undervalued, generally, to claim under the Act. The instructional guide provides women with a "series of steps" to force their employers to pay them fairly for work of equal value, equipping them with the information and knowledge to understand and recognize the "worth" of their own labour while also reshaping the kinds of readings and readers the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act makes possible.

The guide first suggests that the easiest way to find the value of your job is to use this "rule of thumb" job evaluation test: "If a man were doing this job would the employer be able to get away with these rates?" (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press Archive). One of the important elements of service journalism is easy to read, easy to follow depictions of content that make life choices simpler for readers. This rule or formula for job evaluation is repeated throughout the two-page feature, reinforcing one of the recommended solutions to the question of the meaning of equal value, but *Wicca*'s advice does not stop there. In addition to their initial job evaluation test, the collective provides a list of five points to keep in mind when seeking equal pay for work of equal value. Each of the five points is numbered and typed in all caps, visually drawing attention to the most pertinent information, and is followed by a short paragraph explaining the logic behind each guideline. Each point addresses the reader as an individual with choices, which is a key component of service journalism used to target readers (see From and Kristensen "Rethinking"), but the emphasis on choice is also important in creating genre awareness. In its first point or guideline, *Wicca* reminds readers, "DON'T TAKE ANYTHING FOR GRANTED," after which it poses the question, "Why should 'female jobs, which involve

caring, servicing, and monotonous work, etc. be valued less?" (BL/F/AP/1498/4, Attic Press

Archive). *Wicca*'s pointed question asks readers to consider *why* and *how* "female" labour is

undervalued in Irish society and *by whom*. In his work on genre systems, Dryer suggests that,

"genres (and the social relations they routinize) persist because they frame what they *permit* as

that which is *possible*" ("Taking" 506; emphasis in original). While the government presented

the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act as a possible avenue for women workers to access

employment equality, the Act also reinforced the material conditions that limited or prohibited

the participation of many women workers in equal work of equal pay in the first place. Marion

Connolly's article "Housework" in U.C.D's second issue of *Bread and Roses* (c.1974-5)

critiques this routinization of the conditions of women's low pay: "The fact is that this Bill is a

typical middle-class orientated piece-meal reform. It only benefits the women who are 'making

it' in the male world, offers no improvement in the position of working-class women (since it

states equal pay for equal work, and employers will twist this) and does nothing whatsoever to

alleviate the sordid lot of the housewife in this country" (BL/F/AP/1517/2, Attic Press

Archive). Connolly's condemnation of the legislation rests, primarily, upon her observation that

the Act does not serve the needs of the most oppressed women workers in the country,

working-class women and housewives. While Connolly's comment suggests that the Act seeks

to reaffirm a hegemonic status that only serves a narrow constituency of women thereby

compromising the value of women's labour, *Wicca*'s advocacy for women to choose to claim

under the Act attempts to counter what Reiff describes as the "exclusionary nature of genre

uptakes" that forces participants, such as Revolutionary Struggle and Connolly, to

"accommodate themselves to normalized genre expectations" ("Spatial" 211). Rather than

accommodate and accept what appears possible under the normalized expectations of the Act,

the collective offers concrete tips for its readers on how to enact alternative readings of the genre, differentiating between what *is* permissible and what *appears* possible under the conventions of the Act.

Wicca's "how to," to paraphrase Dryer, works to articulate the conditions of the Act's possibilities for its audience. The collective reminds readers that they do, in fact, have the ability to determine what constitutes like work and define the conditions of equal value in order to advocate for themselves under the Act: "Decide in advance which jobs *you* think should be compared and don't be afraid to compare unlike jobs" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive; emphasis in original). Where the Act does not provide a clear set of criteria to qualify and judge "like work" or work of "equal value," the claimants must outline those criteria for themselves. In its following section, the collective directs women to "THINK EQUAL" and carefully consider a list of seven numbered questions, including, "Is your work confined to the job for which you're paid. Do you ever get asked to take on extra responsibilities," "Do you have any skills/special training the men don't have," and "Are all the higher paid men doing harder jobs than you. Could you do their job – have you been given the chance," among others, in order to decide whether or not they qualify for equal pay (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). These questions, while offering pragmatic information to use in the individual life-world of readers, also ask readers to reflect on the conditions of their labour within a larger system world,[154] a system world that is mediated through institutional genres. This emphasis on system and genre collusion is best represented in the penultimate section of the feature; a directive entitled "Watch for the Employers' Tricks."

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[154] Martin Eide suggests that service pages typically individualize problems and "address a *lifeworld* whose information matters to the reader," as opposed to a "system world (of economic, politics and administration) which has more restricted opportunities for action" ("Culture" 199).

Not unlike *Banshee, Wicca* draws attention to the inertia of institutional genres and the ways in which the procedural conventions of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act perpetuate the part-time, non-unionized, and over-concentrated conditions of "female" jobs, in part, through the reproduction of hegemonic sociospatial relations. The collective cautions that women workers can expect employer resistance to equal pay, but this resistance will appear to comply with generic loopholes – or, that which is permissible under the genre: "Renaming grades can be a way of disguising unequal pay…For instance, 'Male Grade' might become 'Heavy Duties Grade', 'Female Grade' may change to 'Light Duties Grade.' In fact, providing you are doing work of equal value you will *still* be entitled to equal pay, but such employer tactics can mislead people" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive; emphasis in original). What the *Wicca* collective names as an employer "trick" also is one of the many exceptions permitted under the (Pay) Act. In their evaluation of equality legislation in the Republic, Cassidy et al. explain that under section 2(3) of the Act, pay differentials could be justified if there were "legitimate non-gender reasons for the differential" ("Gender" S154). As the collective expounds, tactics like renaming grades and special premiums, such as "'Heavy Work Money,' 'Shift Allowances', [and] 'Long Service Payments,'" were used by employers as a means of adapting to the conventions of the genre (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). While these exceptions might seem "wide enough to drive a (Guinness) beer truck through," as Cassidy et al. fittingly note, they were also defensible under the Act that primarily prohibited pay differentials based on grounds of "sex" alone ("Gender" S154). In this instructional section, the collective teaches readers how to recognize the ways in which employers' needs are sanctioned and normalized by the expectations of the genre. While these expectations reinforce and are reinforced by the hegemonic social relations that produce their institutional positions and power in the first place,

Reiff, Paré, and Dryer, amongst other genre critics, propose that the "continuous work of hegemonic forces" – the constant process of policing, adapting, and evolving to changing social situations – "means they are ever vulnerable to new challenges" (Dryer "Taking" 522). Although employers' tricks and tactics may produce experiences that "comply with the larger social relations these conventions codify" (Dryer "Taking" 521), they do not necessarily foreclose the possibility of strategic resistance and revision.

Actively resisting the ideological imperative of the genre to reproduce socio-spatial relations begins, as Dryer contends, with "articulating – calling out descriptions of – the conditions that, in turn, imbue the 'knowledge' that perpetuates them" ("Taking" 524). In this "how to," *Wicca* names, defines, and explains how generic loopholes, such as renaming grades, condition potential users by constraining their access to participation and privileging employers' needs at the expense of women workers. Moreover, the collective advises readers that if they do encounter employer resistance in the form of renaming tactics, they should "refuse to accept such a change – the employer is not entitled to alter your [job] without your agreement" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). Service journalism must go beyond mere advice and also include recommendations for future action (Johnson and Prijatel *Magazine* 225). In its recommendation – stated in all-caps – the *Wicca* collective provides its readers with a specific option for how to navigate the spatial formations of discourse in situations of renaming: REFUSAL. Employers' attempts to "alter" women's job titles is proof of institutional adaptation to space/time configurations of hegemony, but these adaptations do not necessitate social compliance. While resistance is not a normalized expectation produced by the generic loopholes of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, *Wicca* reminds its readers that those loopholes are discursive sites that also offer women the possibility of counterhegemonic or

resistant interpretations to gain access to alternative sociospatial practices within the workplace. As the genre both presupposes and then resinscribes spatial separations in the workplace, ungendering the space of the workplace would work towards dismantling the gender bias inscribed in unequal pay and many other discriminatory practices in the workplace. What is important about *Wicca*'s imagining of resistance or refusal is that it be taken up or accessible through institutional routes, which becomes clearest as the feature draws to a close. In the final section of the "how to," *Wicca* directs readers "Where to Go to File a Claim": "If you can't get equal pay through negotiations between your union and management, you can go to one of the Equality Officers attached to the Labour Court, in the Department of Labour, Mespil Road, Dublin 4. Phone 765861" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). The final step in *Wicca*'s directive to resist institutional discrimination is to adopt institutionally sanctioned resources and actions to force anti-discriminatory (equal) pay. *Wicca* provides its readers with a frame for feminist action in the form of institutional participation, identifying and locating the Labour Court as a place of feminist practice. Here, *Wicca*'s advisement of feminist "occupation" of institutional space takes a more pragmatic form than *Banshee*'s radical vision of generic reconfiguration through protest; instead, suggesting that it is through the practice of taking up institutional genres that women can liberate themselves "from the practical conditioning of genres, enabling them to see alternatives and possibilities for change" (Reiff "Spatial" 218). "How to get your work's worth" is a user's guide to navigating the conventions of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, and a template for understanding, mobilizing, and attaining the value of women's labour through institutional engagement within the women's movement.

Where to Take Up Feminism: Profiling Narratives of Resistance in Everyday Life

From *Banshee* to *Wicca*, the sisters of the autonomous Irish women's movement provide their readers with patterns for feminist movement, facilitating learning through the use of instructional "how to" information. However, these are not the same "patterns" proffered in Irish women's magazines in the 1950s and 1960s, such as *Woman's Life* and *Woman's Way,* which featured advice and instructions on "knitting patterns" and other issues deemed pertinent to women's interests, such as "health, beauty, food, fashion, household work, and sometimes, political and occupational rights" (Clear *Voices* 11). The patterns found in *Banshee* and *Wicca* are structures of repetition intended to help readers spatially re-navigate their way, temporally, in the formation of new identities. If repetition is one of the "primary devices through which the term *feminism* solidified as a collective identity for women's liberation activists" (Beins *Liberation* 4-5), then *Banshee*'s emergent and *Wicca*'s continuous direction of women in regards to the workplace, the trade union, the labour court, and the dole in search of feminism through the form of how-tos becomes a mechanism for organizing the women's movement around the identity of the workingwoman, even if through slightly different modes of participation. While I have suggested that an examination of *Wicca*'s "how-to" guides – a subgenre that I will continue to consider in the remainder of this chapter – indicates a more reformist-oriented feminist praxis and ideology than its sister periodical *Banshee*, this trend also is replicated in both periodicals' use of profile pieces. Dryer argues that simply teaching users how to comprehend and reproduce generic conventions, practically, is not enough; rather users must also gain what Bourdieu distinguishes as intellectual comprehension of genres – an "intentional act of conscious decoding" (ct. in Dryer "Taking" 517). Although *Wicca* and *Banshee*'s how-tos instruct and guide readers through an awareness of generic conventions and offer practical modes of resisting the conditioning of genres – whether through protest or the

taking up of legislation – they do not necessarily produce situations to "decode" the genre

through "intellectual critique and analysis" (Reiff "Spatial" 215). I propose that one of the ways

in which *Banshee*, and more so *Wicca,* teaches readers to develop what Reiff describes as a

"critical understanding of what actions are limited by the genres and why" ("Spatial" 216) is

through the inclusion of models for imitation in their service pieces.

I draw upon Susan Miller's critical approach to rhetorical genre studies and pedagogical

methods in her discussion of how to teach practical and intellectual genre awareness as an

assembly point for thinking through the relationship between genre studies and service

journalism in the sister periodicals of *Banshee* and *Wicca*. Miller argues that rather than guide

students through hermeneutic readings of rhetorical content, students should read individual

models for imitation to better focus on "discerning, imagining, and practicing how they

themselves might write consequential texts" ("How" 483). Miller's advocacy for a

reproductive, resistant reading practice is not dissimilar to From and Kristensen's

reconsideration of service journalism as a potential source for imitation or, in Autry's

characterization, a source for "action" on the part of the reader. The show-and-tell approach of

service journalism supplies readers with solutions to everyday problems, and these solutions

can compel both individual and also collective social action in their reproduction. While the

how-to service pieces in *Banshee* and *Wicca* employ a show-and-tell approach to legitimize and

propagate expert advice, this approach is also conveyed through anecdotal reader and writer

accounts and personal profiles or narratives that act as critical models for reflection and

imitation. For example, the first issue of *Banshee* introduces a profile piece titled "Women on

the Dole" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). The single-page write-up features three

women – Margaret, Ann, and Josephine – profiled by an anonymous member of the *Banshee*

collective. Each "career" profile includes the woman's given name in bold followed by a brief narration detailing both the source of the woman's unemployment status and also her experience on the dole, punctuated by italicized quotes from the profiled subject herself. Margaret's story begins in her own voice: "When my boss found out that I was attending evening courses in drama, he asked me to leave. He said he wanted someone he could give a gold watch to after fifty years service. He said he wanted a lifetime devoted servant" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). The profile expounds that Margaret lost her secretarial job when her boss discovered she was considering the possibility of alternative employment as a drama teacher. In spite of her four years of experience as a secretary, Margaret has not been able to acquire a new job; however, she also is not receiving unemployment benefits because "of a temporary two-week job she had during the fifty-two week period when her employer didn't stamp her card;" a detail over which her former employer and the Department of Social Welfare continue to fight (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). While in a subsequent story, about Ann, Ann's story is one of self-resignation as opposed to dismissal, the article indicates that her story is no different than Margaret's, as Ann "too was *forced* out of her job for much the same reason" as her counterpart (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive; emphasis added).

According to *Banshee,* Ann joined an insurance company to train as an underwriter, but was required to begin her work there as a filing clerk in order to work her way up (or so she was told); however, after fourteen months Ann decided to leave because, as she explains, "By that time I was an excellent filing clerk of course, and I got the impression that they wanted to keep me that way" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). After eleven months of unemployment benefit waged between £9.50 and £8.10 per week, Ann "desperately" applied

WOMEN ON THE DOLE

Margaret

"When my boss found out that I was attending evening courses in drama, he asked me to leave. He said he wanted someone he could give a gold watch to after fifty years service. He said he wanted a lifetime devoted servant"

This is how Margaret began to tell me the story of how she lost her secretarial job and came to join the Friday dole queue at Victoria Street.

Margaret has been a secretary for four years and was feeling very dissatisfied at the prospect of spending her life as a "scivvy" to some male boss. She started going to evening classes in drama. She wants to be a drama teacher. Her boss found out that she was entertaining the thought of leaving his service at some future date and decided that the unemployment situation being what it is — he could easily fill the post with somebody without such aspirations.

This happened last November and Margaret didn't think of applying for unemployment benefit because she was a good secretary with four years experience and would have no problem getting another job. In January, the job situation began to look desperate so she decided to apply for the dole. Now six weeks later her case for unemployment benefit is still being considered because of a temporary two-week job she had during the fifty-two week period when her employer didn't stamp her card. While the Dept. of Social Welfare and the employer fight over the two missing stamps, Margaret receives absolutely no income.

After about 30 interviews she is losing hope of getting any employment. She says: *"It's absolutely degrading being interviewed by some man who thinks he is doing*

you a favour giving you a job" *"They ask you questions like: "What does your father do? What do your brothers and sisters do? Do you intend to get married? — And you feel obliged to answer these ridiculous questions because at this stage I really need a job".*

Margaret feels that 'good' looks is very often the factor in deciding who gets the job.

So what's in store for Margaret? She can see no prospect of getting a job. As the days go by she feels she has less energy to apply herself to another interview with the possibility of another rejection.

She would go to England where the situation is not much better but she wants to stay here to finish her drama course. All she can do is battle with the Dept. of Social Welfare to grant her enough money to feed herself.

Ann

Ann too was forced out of her job for much the same reason. She left university after two years to join an insurance company to train as an underwriter. She would have to start at the bottom they told her and so she began work as a filing clerk. Fourteen months later she was still a filing clerk – still at the bottom. *"By that time I was an excellent filing clerk of course, and I got the impression that they wanted to keep me that way".*

She left in April 1975, drew weekly dole benefit of £9.50 and began looking for better prospects. Six months and many interviews later, she was put on assistance of £8.10 per week. By February eleven months after she left the insurance company, and paying a weekly rent of £7, Ann was desperately applying for jobs as a waitress.

"I couldn't believe it. When I went along for interview the employment agency told me they would let me know if I was on the short list".

Short-listing and second interviews for a job as a waitress!!

Career profiles like the above, permanent secretary – permanent filing clerk, struggling to become just a waitress, have led many women on the dole queues to make the economically rational decision – choosing marriage as a career. That job at least brings the prospect of a house, a partner with higher-earning potential and tax relief and the alledged social status of wife and mother.

Josephine

Josephine, a married woman, put it quite bluntly *"I was earning £35 per week and bringing home £23 after taxes. Out of that I had to pay someone to look after my child and I was doing housework at night when I came home. So I left the job and get the dole now. It works out that I get almost the same amount of money because my husband gets the tax relief."*

SAME WORK
SAME BOSSES
SAME MACHINES
SAME HOURS
SAME SWEAT
DIFFERENT PAY
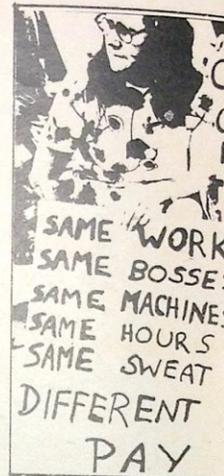
DIARY OF A WOMENS' STRIKE–THOMS DIRECTORY

The six women employees who last year fought for and won the right to join a trade union after 5 months on the picket line are now jobless. All six have been looking for jobs since the beginning of December. Employment agenices refuse to handle them and interviews resulting from job advertisements in the newspapers have ended abruptly at the very mention of their previous employer. Having won the right to join a trade union, they lost the right to work. The women claim that they have been blacklisted by the F.U.E. and that their names have been circulated to all members of that organisation.

The strike began in mid-July, when one of the women was dismissed by her employer, Mr. J. L. Wootton and replaced by another worker being paid £4 per week less. Feeling threatened by similar dismissals, eight of the other women workers joined The Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

When Mr. Wootton found out that his workers had become unionised, he informed them that he was about to go into liquidation. Nor was he willing to deal with a trade union. He gave the eight union members notice of their immediate dismissal. The ITGWU served strike notice

and a five month picket followed. Mr. Wootton did not go into liquidation. He carried on business with newly-hired non-unionised workers. The unions virtually powerless, could only ensure that the directory could not be printed in Ireland or England.

Following a march of trade unionists and womens groups the dispute went to the Labour Court for a full hearing – almost eighteen weeks after the strike began. The outcome of the hearing was that the women were reinstated. Mr. Wootton pleaded yet again that he was about to plunge into liquidation, this time giving himself three weeks notice. The women went back to work for the last two weeks before the closure of the firm, during which time they were to work out redundancy payments. They received only ½ of their wages backdated to the start of the strike.

Mr. Wootton closed his firm but re-opened three weeks later, employing non-unionised workers. The union is claiming victory and the women are claiming the dole.

If six women can strike fear into the hearts of employers and employment agencies imagine what could be achieved if all women workers were organised. Until and unless we are all organised, the isolated few will continue to be victimised.

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Fig. 23 "Women on the Dole" in *Banshee* no. 1 (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive).

for jobs as a waitress. What the article begins to make clear to readers is the conditions of women's labour in the Republic, specifically permissible discriminatory employment practices, that "force" or habituate women to occupy certain spaces and relations of employment, even in women's attempts to revise their prescriptive, gendered socio-economic function by pursuing alternative forms of employment. As the collective rationalizes towards the end of Ann's profile, "Career profiles like the above, permanent secretary, permanent filing clerk, struggling to become just a waitress,[155] have led many women on the dole queues to make the economically rational decision – choosing marriage as a career" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). In spite of their motivations to acquire stable, higher paying occupations of employment – drama teacher and underwriter, respectively – Margaret and Ann are forced to adjust and accommodate their actions to meet the conventions of the workplace. Similarly, the characterization of secretarial and clerical work – positions of employment typically non-unionized, low-waged, and overcrowded by women – as "permanent" intimates that these are sanctioned and regulated ways of discriminating against working women as a means of maintaining inequality. The profile illuminates the constraints of employer hiring practices in Ireland that structure situations in which women like Margaret and Ann take to the dole as a means of circumventing normative integration into the labour economy; however, this position of reliance on the economic provision of the state only serves to further entrench both women within a gendered system of precarity. As the choice for women was often one between what Ursula Barry and Pauline Conroy characterize as "a patriarchal employment market…and the patriarchal welfare system" ("Ireland" 4), many women "chose" (read "were forced to accept")

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[155] I want to draw attention to the use of the adverb "just" in this phrase. While *Banshee*'s use of the phrase "just a waitress" may speak to its aspirations for women's work beyond lower paying, often part-time, service positions, its presence may also reflect an underlying bourgeois feminist politics that IWU was so often criticized of harbouring within its ranks.

marriage as a career.[156] This compulsory adaptation of many women to the conditions of

employment in Ireland is best represented by the third profile in "Women on the Dole":

Josephine.

Josephine is simply introduced as a "married woman." Her profile is shorter than the

other women's accounts and includes no analysis or interpretation; rather, her profile is purely

a self-representation – a direct quote from Josephine herself – suggesting that the quotation is

more important than the narrative:

> I was earning £35 per week and bringing home £23 after taxes. Out of that I had to pay
> someone to look after my child and I was doing housework at night when I came
> home. So I left the job and get the dole now. It works out that I get almost the same
> amount of money because my husband gets the tax relief.[157] (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic
> Press Archive)

"Women on the Dole" individualizes the systemic processes by which women are put in their

socially sanctioned place: the home. From Margaret to Josephine, the profile piece maps the

trajectory of women who work outside the home as they attempt to navigate the symbolic and

material spaces and structures of a genre system that ultimately leads them back into the home.

As readers move from Margaret's story to Ann's, concluding with Josephine's, they bear

witness to the transformation of personal, potential motives into institutionally permissible

intentions. On the one hand, Margaret continues to "battle with the Dept. of Social Welfare"

and its techniques of inscription – the two missing stamps – while applying for jobs and

pursuing her drama course in an attempt to challenge the conventions of workplace genres

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[156] It is interesting to note that, "marriage in Ireland reached a high point of popularity in the early 1970s" (*Emerging* 110). Prior to the 1970s, O'Connor explains that resistance to marriage "has been attributed to the economic climate, where marriage was not necessary for economic security and may even have been a threat to the living standards of individuals" (*Emerging* 110).

[157] According to Yvonne Scannell, married women who worked outside the home were punitively taxed under the Income Tax Act of 1967, "which effectively deemed a married woman's income to be her husband's with the result that her income was taxed at his highest marginal rate" ("Taxation" 327).

(BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). On the other hand, Ann's motives have been rerouted towards a more traditional "female" occupation – waitressing – as a result of her continuous subjugation under the governing mechanisms of unemployment assistance. While neither woman appears to have entirely given up the potential means to realize her choices, both women's simultaneous reliance on unemployment assistance seems to indicate that they will inevitably end up in a position where they are forced to make Josephine's career "decision": marriage. "Women on the Dole" poses an opportunity for readers to consider, recognize, and identify patterns in women's subjugation under the conventions of employment. It also serves as a warning to women what they should try to conceal from their employers if they have career aspirations in other fields. In spite of their varying employment goals, Margaret, Ann, and Josephine's actions are limited by systemic practices, such as hiring methods and unemployment assistance, which reshape and realign ideological potentials for action with socially sanctioned motives. As Dryer asks of institutional discourses and zoning codes, "How many citizens abandon how many plans when confronted with the difficulty and expense of entering this system?" ("Taking" 520), so to does "Women on the Dole" ask readers to reflect upon the number of women whose career motives are mediated by the discourse of employment when confronted with the "cost" of entering this system.

"Women on the Dole" offers a space for genre consciousness-raising, a place in which women can gain an intellectual comprehension of the workings of genres and reflect on their own experiences, and throughout both *Banshee* and *Wicca* readers can find other profile pieces detailing women's individual experiences with institutional genres and hegemonic social arrangements. In *Banshee* profiles on "Maria Montessori: a pioneer in children's liberation" (no. 4) and "Interview: Kate & Anna McGarrigle" (no. 5) highlight past and contemporaneous

women who successfully pursued alternative careers, while "Did Somebody Mention Discrimination? One Woman's Experience" (no. 5) and "Women at Work" (no. 7) provide counterpoints, individualizing women's experiences with the limitations of workplace genres.[158] In *Wicca,* readers can find a more diverse range of profiles on famous, or rather mainstream newsworthy women and women's supporters, such as prisoner Noreen Winchester, film theorist Laura Mulvey, and current female politicians,[159] alongside profiles of female sex workers, working women in factories, prisons, homes, and women's groups as well as the entertainment business. These service profiles invite the participation of all types of women into the fields and actions of journalism, expanding the terrain of feminist activism by delivering women's experiences as content and information for reflection and analysis. While these profiles offer bottom-up information on how the conventions of genres of work affect women in their everyday lives, they also become important critical tools in further developing a connection between the theory and praxis of tactics of generic revision.

In spite of both the *Banshee* and *Wicca* collectives' advocacy of alternative modes of genre revision through their service journalism – direct action and legislative uptake, generally – both also rendered visible the challenges to those who chose to engage in these acts of resistant production. If we return to *Banshee*'s "Women on the Dole," on the same page lays another service profile entitled "Diary of a Womens' [sic] Strike – Thoms Directory." The term "diary" intimates a personal recording or recollection, here a recollection of an event that

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[158] Other profile pieces in *Banshee* deal with women's experiences with other institutional genres, such as health and medical institutions, the law and access to contraception, and body image and the media, including "I've Started Another Pregnancy" (no. 2), "Pain – 'just our imagination'" (no. 4), "One Woman's Experience [with contraception]" (no. 6), "Body Image: "I Was a Teenage Elephant" (no. 7), "Feminism (A Personal View)" (no. 8).

[159] See profiles, interviews, and biographies on "Noreen Winchester Free" (no. 1); "filming feminism" (no. 2) an interview with Laura Mulvey; "Women in Europe" (no. 7) on the women candidates standing for Europe; and "Herstory" (no. 9) on William Thompson and Anna Wheeler, the authors of "Appeal of One-half of the Human Race, Woman, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men, to Retain Them in Political, and Thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery."

gained publicity in the commercial press,[160] thereby situating the feminist press as a kind of safe haven or confessional for private accounts of women's lives. The diary recounts the details of the five-month strike – a form of contentious direct action – undertaken by six women employees of Thom's Directory who were dismissed by the employer, Mr. Wootton, and replaced by non-unionized workers after they joined the Irish Transport and General Workers Union. Upon learning of the women's dismissal, the ITGWU served a strike notice and began the picket; however, it was only "following a march of trade unionists and womens [sic] groups [that] the dispute went to the Labour Court for a full hearing" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). Even though the hearing decided that the women be reinstated in their former positions of employment, Mr. Wootton closed his firm after two weeks, only to re-open it three weeks later with non-unionized workers. Wootton's actions left the women workers unemployed with only half of their wages backdated to the start of the strike. The profile concludes that "the union is claiming victory and the women are claiming the dole," for after "having won the right to join a trade union, they lost the right to work" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). What the "Diary of the Womens' Strike-Thoms Directory" reveals is the adaptive capacity of institutional genres in the struggle for ideological hegemony. Even though the six women employees of Thom's Directory challenged the hiring practices of their employer by engaging in both institutional politics (the trade union) and contentious politics (the picket line), they were left in no better position than Margaret, Ann, and Josephine of "Women on the Dole." While the outcome of the events is important to the feminist act of consciousness-raising regarding the conditions of women's employment and pay inequality, what is more important here are the detailed descriptions of the different actions and outcomes

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[160] See Christina Murphy's report, "This time it's Thom's Directories" in *The Irish Times,* 14 Aug. 1975, p.10.

of the actions of protest, which ultimately help readers to understand and clarify whether or not the mobilizing information in *Banshee* is, in fact, news they can or cannot use, pragmatically.

Banshee's comprehensive chronology of the tactics and strategies employed by the women employees of Thom's Directory – unionization, picket, march, and court – draws attention to the functions and problems of different types of feminist activities, connecting actions to outcomes. Atton maintains that when it comes to protest narratives, "activists' accounts might best be thought of as critical narratives of resistance since they not only recount the experiences of protesting but critically engage in its successes, failures, and contradictions" (*Media* 125). In spite of female employees' application of pressure on the genre system of women's labour, the presence of loopholes sublimates ideological resistance into institutionally permitted patterns that ultimately complicates or impedes sustainable change. The outcome of the Thom's employees' strike is not necessarily successful as the women still cannot find fairly compensated work, for "employment agencies refuse to handle them and interviews resulting from job advertisements in the newspapers have ended abruptly at the very mention of their previous employer" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). This outcome reveals the potential contradictions of direct action tactics, which propose solutions through obstructive actions; however, this detailed account does provide a learning moment regarding the adaptive capacity of institutional genres and presents an opportunity to reflect upon ways of improving future action. At the end of their profile, the *Banshee* collective recognizes that "until and unless we are all organised, the isolated few will continue to be victimized" (BL/F/AP/1515/1, Attic Press Archive). This is *Banshee*'s information for mobilization: that women must recognize how socio-spatial conditions propagate institutional genres and locate the "Women on the Dole" in the same subject positions as the women of "Diary of a Womens' Strike – Thoms Directory."

Until this collective resistant form of reading occurs, the movement of the "few" will continue to be delimited by what Dryer calls the "process of hegemonic additions and modifications to genre systems" ("Taking" 528). The side-by-side comparison of non-organized, everyday workingwomen like Margaret, Ann, and Josephine with the publicly contentious and commercially newsworthy women strikers of Thoms Directory attempts to build a situation of intellectual mobilization in which women workers understand their personal experiences with employment conditions – like Margaret, Ann, and Josephine – as permutations of larger patterns of institutional genres. And, like the women strikers of Thom's Directory, their experiences of discrimination are actionable. Similarly, the profile of the actions of the women's strike provides information for readers to learn from – the "successes, failures, and contradictions" of protest – as they consider how to use these models for imitation in the future.

While *Banshee*'s critique of social movement tactics emerges[161] through the juxtaposition of profile pieces with other articles on the same or adjacent pages, *Wicca's* use of service profiles to revise social movement tactics is more explicit. For example, *Wicca*'s third guide on how to get "supplementary welfare benefit" (no. 3) is amended in the fifth issue of the periodical by personal reports submitted by two women, which are profiled under the title "try and try again" – a title indicative of the content to follow. Importantly, this profile piece also is highlighted in the second page of the how-to feature of no. 5, "Unemployment Assistance: how to apply." "Try and try again" opens with the following:

> You may remember in *Wicca* No. 3 we had an article on how to go about getting
> Supplementary Welfare Benefit. Well we have had reports from two young women
> who applied for this benefit and did not succeed in getting a penny. Their stories are

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[161] Here, I situate my use of the term "emergence" within periodical scholars' work on systems theory. According to Hammill and Smith in their research on Canadian periodicals, the continuities within a periodical are often the result of a "serendipitous generation of meaning," which are "often deliberately reinforced through adjacent positioning, yet seemingly accidental juxtapositions, or discontinuities, [that] can produce fresh meanings" (*Magazines* 67).

almost identical. Both were broke and applied in the way outlined in the article we ran. Both were refused. (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive)

The collective acknowledges that this profile details the experience of two women who took

Wicca's advice on how to apply for supplementary welfare benefit and did not succeed in

accomplishing the end-goal detailed by the how-to: supplementary welfare benefit. Such a

profile is important for two reasons: first, the evidence of reader contributions points to the

interactive and lateral nature of the periodical. While the collective works to supply its readers

with expert and practical advice of its own making, it also uses reader contributions as

informational or advisory tools, thereby incorporating readers into the process of knowledge

production. Second, reader responses to *Wicca*'s how-tos that detail their experiences

reproducing the genre also provide tools to further consider the challenges posed by genres

pertaining to discrimination, like welfare benefits, and transform theories of feminist practice.

At the end of "try and try again," *Wicca* poses to its readership, "Has anything like this

happened to you? If so let us know about it" (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive). The

invitation suggests or implies these two women's experiences may be a symptom of a larger

pattern of a generic discursive function that has adapted to the changing terrain of women's

rights. As the profile draws to a close, the collective advises its readers regarding their next

steps should they encounter similar difficulties as the two young women: "neither of the

women mentioned above appealed the committee decision. So appeal if you are having

problems. If you still don't get any money let us know as there seems to be something fishing

happening with supplementary welfare" (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive). This direct

address to readers reminds *Wicca*'s audience that the collective is, in fact, at the service of its

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE;
how to apply.

From the first of October this year (1978) single women are entitled to unemployment assistance on the same basis as men have been. This means that if you have never worked before you are entitled to claim for assistance and hopefully get it. Before this you needed at least one dependent or twenty six stamps to qualify. Now you can get it.

To qualify:

1. Be between the ages of 18 and 66.

2. Have lived continuously in the State for at least six months.

3. Be capable of and available for work and looking for it also.

4. Satisfy the means test.

If you are a married woman your husband must be dependent on you OR if neither of you is dependent on the other then you must have at least one dependent. So sort that one out if you can.

If you live in the West or the poorer farming areas in the country and own a farm below a certain valuation you now qualify for a small holders benefit, the 'farmers dole' Before October women were not eligible for this.

Now how do you go about applying for assistance? Presuming you qualify under all the conditions mentioned above, you apply for a Qualification Certificate. To do this you go to your local Employment Exchange or Office. The addresses in Dublin are:

1. 23-28 North Cumberland St., Dublin I.
2. Victoria St. off South Circular Rd., Dublin 8.
3. 157-164 Townsend St., Dublin 2.

If you live 6 miles away you can apply by post. In one of these venues you fill in an application for a qualification cert, and a few other forms, but don't be optimistic, you won't get any money just yet. Next a note will arrive by post from

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a social welfare officer telling you to be in on a certain day when he will call around to assess your means. She will ask you of your present income (if any) and other questions relating to your financial position. If you admit to be getting any money at all for example from your parents this will be noted and will probably result in you not getting full assistance.

The Officer will then make a report to the Department of Social Welfare and they will decide your fate. If you qualify you will be paid the amount you deserve according to their enquiries. If you have been waiting for her report to come through and signing on every week you will be back paid. You

will also receive two butter vouchers per month worth 17p each. Beware of being late to sign on as you may be deducted a day and since the new measures to stop dole fiddlers the staff in the employment exchange seem to delight in reproaching one for being late. Now how much exactly are you entitled to receive? No its not enough to live on but sure beggars can't be choosers is the favourite slogan in the Dept. of Social Welfare.

1. If you are without a dependent ie. a single girl you get a maximum of £11.75 if you live in an urban area. In all other areas you get £11.35.
2. If you have an adult dependent you get £20.30 in an urban area and £19.70 in all other areas.

Fig. 24 *Wicca*'s service piece in its fifth issue on how to apply for unemployment assistance (BL/F/AP/1498/3, Attic Press Archive).

readers and can only further contribute to solving problems and providing actions regarding economic discrimination if readers themselves contribute to expanding upon the pragmatic limitations of supplementary welfare benefit.

As *Wicca* continues to publish how-to guides, it also continues to supplement those guides with user profiles. In its seventh publication in 1979, the collective provides a comprehensive and informative manual on how to use An Chomhairle Oiliúna, otherwise known as A.N.C.O, a branch of the National Manpower and Youth Employment Agency. Briefly, A.N.C.O was established in 1967 by the Minister for Labour as an industrial training authority. The agency was male-dominated until a review in 1975, the outcome of which recommended that the body target female apprenticeships in its public materials. After a detailed listing of A.N.C.O's services, an interview with Lucy McCaffrey – A.N.C.O's women trainee advisor – regarding training women, finding employment, and illuminating the attitudes of women, the how-to ends with a three-point guide on "How Can We, As Women, Use AnCO Better?" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). Succeeding the feature, two pages later, is another service piece entitled "Only a Muck Bird." The profile details the career path of Luarena Murphy, a woman in her mid-twenties, who attempted to pursue her childhood dream of carpentry before she became aware that "there were and still are plenty of 'man made' reasons to prevent and hinder women from working outside low paid, unskilled jobs" (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive). After three months in a joinery shop doing "the work the men did not want to do," having her hours restricted with no chance for overtime, and being offered no opportunity to learn through apprenticeship, she left and applied for the A.N.C.O carpentry and joinery course. The profile goes on to describe her experience in the program and the discrimination she faced in A.N.C.O, in spite of the program's "theoretical recognition of

the Employment Equality Act." Despite Murphy's critique of the culture of the program, she

also admits that it is here she learned that "it is only a myth that women are incapable of

learning skills and trades," and concludes with the following recommendation:

> I would advise any woman interested in learning a building skill or trade to apply to A.N.C.O. (in the case of a trade you must also register with National Manpower)…You will be challenged with less sexism in A.N.C.O. that in a job, you will also learn more in a year (in the case of a trade) spent with A.N.C.O. than in a job where you would probably be abused and used to do work that men don't want to do. (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive)

Murphy's profile traces a woman taking up the social and material conditions of an institutional

body, A.N.C.O, and reflecting on her experience within the space of supposed transformation.

As a supplement to the issue's how-to guide, Murphy's piece serves as an explicit model for

imitation, endorsing, delivering, and verifying information and advice dispensed in *Wicca*'s

former how-to feature.[162] Murphy's narrative also demonstrates one of the characteristics of

service journalism, which From and Kristensen suggest is "often associated with a journalists'

personal style or storytelling, blurring the boundaries of news and views" ("Rethinking" 722).

In this instance, Murphy forges a personal and intimate connection with potential readers

through her participatory actions, providing "news" about A.N.C.O through her own

experiences or "views." Like Margaret, Ann, and Josephine of *Banshee*'s "Women on the

Dole," Murphy's profile in *Wicca* works to familiarize readers with the systemic workings of

genre systems, while also offering pragmatic information regarding how they can successfully

take up alternative ones. *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s service profiles enable readers to gain first-hand

insight into the lives of those who choose to practice resistant readings of institutional genres

through both contentious and non-confrontational methods. Throughout the issues of both

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[162] This pattern of how-to complemented by user profile is similarly repeated in the eighth issue of *Wicca* in the articles "Women in Action" (profile) and "Women at work = low pay" (how-to). See (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive).

periodicals, the how-to guides respond to the changing problems and conditions of employment equality in the Republic – from pay equality to unemployment assistance to employment equality – while the user profiles assist in the reflection, critique, and transformation of theories of "autonomous" feminist praxis. As both *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s service pieces continue to come up against the challenges of circumventing legislative generic loopholes, another strand of advice emerges, simultaneously, in response to the concerns of women's labour in both periodicals' service journalism that foreshadows the disintegration of the autonomous branch of the women's movement: how to become involved in trade union organization.

As I began to demonstrate earlier in this chapter, the service articles within the pages of *Banshee* and *Wicca* on how to take up institutional genres both indicate shifts towards a reconsideration of the spaces and places from which feminists mediate and write the conditions of women's labour in the Republic; however, as *Wicca*'s periodical run continues, it explicitly moves to advocate for trade union participation as one of those means "necessary to achieve the maximum implementation of the legislation" on equal pay, particularly after its first dissolution circa 1979. As *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s readers reported that their advice on how to resist employment discrimination legislation brought them up against new sociospatial obstacles, *Wicca* responded by expanding its search for sites and actions of feminism and revising the modes and means through which it mediated this generic knowledge in order to better navigate and overcome these obstacles for its readers.

Conclusion

The legislation and legal channels have acted as a delaying mechanism in achieving equal pay…In the final analysis, whether the woman workers achieved equal pay or not, has always depended on how well organized they are and how persistent they are in pushing their claims. –

"Women at work = low pay." *Wicca,* vol. 1, no. 8, 1979, pp. 10-12; (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive)

Through their service or action journalism, the women activists of *Banshee* and *Wicca* taught other women how to navigate and revise the everyday life patterns of institutions, educating them in both an intellectual and practical way about the genres and texts of institutional powers. As legislative and other institutional and non-institutional resources concerning employment equality evolved and expanded throughout the 1970s, *Banshee*'s initial advice on tactics and methods of contentious direct action gave way to more practical instructions on legislative uptake. This trend was taken up further by *Wicca,* serially, in its service features, particularly its "how tos," which advised women to participate in the reformist structures of the government. On the one hand, this continuing shift in *Banshee* and *Wicca*'s advice and guidance over time illustrates the ways in which the "benevolence" of the state brought new (or at least modified) obstructive discursive and sociospatial formations for women to chart and circumvent on their paths to attain equal – or at least enhanced – rights for women. On the other hand, these institutional shifts in generic practices indicated that feminism had, in some way, re*root*ed the relations, actions, and identities of women within patriarchal institutional spaces, specifically the spaces and places of labour, even if it had not systemically up*root*ed those sedimented systemic formations. As *Banshee* and *Wicca* assembled new sociospatial relations for women within specific locations, those women also sought a discourse that recognized, reflected, and reproduced those altered relations; a discourse that mobilized feminism beyond its delineated boundaries. This demand was no more apparent than in *Wicca*'s increasing interest in feminism's relationship to state and formal institutions. Although *Wicca*'s discursive shift brought attention to the need for women's representation and participation in these institutions, it also brought women in the autonomous movement back to the tension that

had plagued its sisters in IWU: reform or revolution? While Irish feminism sought to integrate itself across a broader range of social practices and institutions in order to develop resistant generic knowledge, this latter thread of instructional advice indicated that it would have to sacrifice, or at least de-emphasize the specific critical engagement with genre that had come to characterize the movement, at least in its most resolute, or autonomous phase. The cost of integrating feminist politics across a greater spatiosocial horizon was that it would lose its long-formed recognisability to ensure the movement of women into the future, even if that "movement" did not take the form of a national autonomous women's movement.

Conclusion

The autonomous women's movement began as a means to create feminist mobilities outside the established sociospatial boundaries of the state. While the periodical offered both a place to connect women to the ideologies, movements, and practices of feminism and a means of organizational structure outside the limitations of state formations, the mounting issues of equal pay, women's labour, and nationalist politics during a time of increasing state conflict brought many feminists back to thinking through strategic ways in which women might advantageously align their own political platforms with those recognizable forms of state integration that fractured its movement organizations in the earliest stages of their formations. The rising prominence of a reformist discourse of feminism in both *Banshee* and *Wicca* throughout the seventies indicates that there were feminists in the autonomous sector who believed it was no longer enough to simply map ways for women to navigate the spaces and places of legislative discourses from the outside; rather, they needed to take up the organizational movements of institutional politics, practices, and bodies to uproot the internally sedimented structures of women's economic, political, and social inequality and rewrite and rebuild the conditions of possibility for women's practices, relations, and identities from the inside. What I offer in this conclusion is a brief overview of the final issues of *Banshee* and *Wicca* as a means of elucidating the ways in which sociohistorical conditions, sociospatial formations, and Irish feminism converge in the material form of the periodical before glancing toward the future of feminism in Ireland.

"Roots of Male Chauvinism" in *Banshee*

As I illustrated in Chapters Two and Three, the issue of equal pay for women forced

feminists to revisit the question: where are the places of and for feminism in a changing Ireland? Part of what emerges in periodicals such as *Banshee* and *Wicca* as a problem with the movement to radicalize and autonomize women on the issue of equal pay is the way in which Ireland's entrance into the EEC resulted in a culture led by economic changes. In an article in the last issue of *Banshee* titled "Roots of Male Chauvinism," a self-proclaimed "socialist feminist who is active in left wing politics as well as the autonomous movement" states that, "there has been a continual failure within the revolutionary left to analyse the position of women within the world imperialist system and a weakness within the women's movement itself to understand and come to grips with how pro-imperialist economic and political systems determine our lives" (BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive). "Roots of Male Chauvinism is important for two reasons, the first of which is its identification of an ideological weakness in the autonomous movement; the second is the writer's explicit identification of herself as a "socialist feminist."

In the words of *Banshee*'s anonymous socialist feminist contributor, while the autonomous women's movement did not structurally uproot the "pro-imperialist economic and political systems" that determined women's (and men's) lives in the Republic, it did sow the seeds of feminist resistance; however, because labour value and social value are always indexed to one another, pay discrimination is not only a cultural issue but also a materialist one in which culture is tasked with assuaging anxieties about shifting relations of capital; a consequence best clarified by the revelation of generic loopholes. In spite of the implementation of equal pay legislation, the institutionalization of political and economic inequality for women persisted both socially and spatially. One of the most visible signs of the continuation of sociospatial inequality in the 1970s was that working women remained "segregated in the lowest-paid

industries and employment sectors" of the country (Connolly and O'Toole *Documenting* 90), a

material condition frequently noted in *Wicca'*s features and news reports, such as "women at

work = low pay" (no. 8) – even years after the implementation of the Anti-Discrimination (Pay)

Act. In his 1983 review of equal pay regulations, Richard Townshed-Smith concluded that in

spite of Ireland's amendments to equal pay legislation, those revisions were, in fact, largely

irrelevant to the root causes of women's lower earnings and discriminatory working conditions

in the Republic:

> Explanations for the differential include discrimination, women's lack of human
> capital…their commitment to household duties, breaks in length of service, limits
> placed on geographical mobility, monopsony in the labour market, the overcrowding
> of women into certain occupations and their concentration into lower paying
> organisations, exclusion from higher paying jobs in internal labour markets, the use of
> incremental pay systems, entrapment in the secondary sector of the dual labour market
> and lower levels of productivity and commitment to work. ("Legislation" 213)

Townshed-Smith's choices of terms to evaluate the origins of women's pay inequality have a

common sociospatial theme: "limits placed on geographic mobility," "monopsony,"

"overcrowding of women into certain occupations," "concentration into lower paying

organisations," "exclusion," and "entrapment." All of these causes point to the ways in which

women continued to be physically and socially organized, located, and confined within spaces

beyond or outside the normative systems of labour value; marginalized by a gendered

socioeconomic order that privileged men's claim to national space. And this spatial divide

between men and women in the labour market continued to influence divides within spaces of

worker solidarity, which returns us to the second important point of "Roots of Male

Chauvinism" and the writer's explicit positioning of herself as a "socialist feminist."

The framing tactic of authorship in "Roots" is not common in *Banshee,* neither is the

article's stated intention "to stimulate some discussion in the pages of *Banshee*"

(BL/F/AP/1515/8, Attic Press Archive); however, the disclaimer disrupts the normative

sociospatial relations and ideologies of the periodical and organization and attempts to interject different voices and relations into the folds of its pages. And, in a way, this article does anticipate a rupture, as this was the final issue of *Banshee* published before IWU disbanded. What the article's author, and IWU's subsequent dissolution, demonstrate are the perceived threats of "outsiders" to the established or normative sociospatial hegemony of autonomous feminism. *Rebel Sister* best represents the effects of these divisions in its critique of the autonomous women's movement in the conclusion of its special issue on Irishwomen's struggles. Revolutionary Struggle chastises IWU for its narrow iteration of feminism, particularly with regard to socialism and republicanism: "When socialist women can be treated inside IWU as 'outsiders' – is it little wonder that the Rita O'Hares and Marion Coyles of our times can be hunted down as rats by this State and not a woman's voice or whisper raised up in their defence" (BL/F/AP/1492/4, Attic Press Archive). Revolutionary Struggle's characterization of socialist women as "outsiders" by IWU is particularly illustrative, as it spatializes the autonomous women's movement as a place organized, bounded, and delineated by exclusions, particularly exclusions from institutionalized spaces, relations, and political identities of the Irish state. In fact, what the state and autonomous feminist organizations have in common, in this example, is that both serve to reinscribe the most vulnerable Irish women as outsiders, those women who approximate or live within the borders of discourse communities. These alternative women's periodicals illustrate the ways in which the institutionalized sociospatial policy of divide and rule has been ideologically and practically internalized within the autonomous women's movement and has acted as a material barrier to the revaluation of women's position in Irish society.

Fig. 25 *Wicca*'s photo essay "The Movement in Action" highlights the range of intersectional interests that define the periodical (BL/F/AP/1498/5, Attic Press Archive).

Wicca: "Reform or Revolution?"

While the *Banshee* collective dissolved before it could repair these internalized divisions, *Wicca* picked up where its older sister left: with the intention to end both "sexism *and* capitalism" (BL/F/AP/1498/1, Attic Press Archive; emphasis added), and it began by looking for opportunities to interact across these diverse discourse communities in the activity system of the labour economy, both in the form of trade union participation and anti-imperialist struggle. In its eighth issue, the *Wicca* collective states the following:

> [T]he fight of women workers for equal pay also has a particular characteristic in that it is against the policy of divide and rule of capitalism to use women as cheap labour and conditions male workers to see women workers as competitors for jobs...To-day the workers in general, in their struggles for their rights are coming up against the opposition of the employers and state through court injunctions on pickets, police harassment and arrests (e.g. Post Office workers, McDonalds etc). The struggle of women workers for equal pay must clearly be prepared to face and overthrow the main obstacles by strengthening their organisation, winning support from their male colleagues and developing whatever means are necessary to achieve the maximum implementation of the legislation and tackling the whole issue of the generally extremely low wages of women throughout industry as a whole. (BL/F/AP/1498/7, Attic Press Archive)

The *Wicca* collective recognizes, just as the author of "Roots of Male Chauvinism," that the women's movement has, historically, missed an opportunity to revalue women's labour by neglecting to take up issues pertinent to leftist politics and defining itself against other discursive communities within the genre system of women's labour. Here, *Wicca* argues that the women's movement needs to create new opportunities for organizational structures *within* "traditional" or institutional formations of the state – or, within "male" designated spaces – in order to write into those spaces new sites of stability for women to combat the sociospatial quality of divide and rule. In other words, women must organize with men to contest, disrupt, and adapt the routines of inequality enacted by the state. It appears that this strand of advocacy for feminist alliance with "traditional" male forms of participation as one of those opportunities

"necessary to achieve the maximum implementation of the legislation," similarly, precipitated *Wicca*'s first dissolution circa 1979, just as it had its older sister.

After its ninth issue, the original *Wicca* collective dissolved and took a six-month hiatus before returning with the stated intention to "discuss issues that arise in the women's movement and provide a forum for women (not necessarily active in the movement)" (BL/F/AP/1498/11, Attic Press Archive). *Wicca*'s motive to engage women beyond the former borders of autonomous feminist knowledge and praxis and to locate its periodical as what Dryer might identify as a "physical and discursive [space] where people can work together to develop resistant knowledge of generic knowledge" ("Taking" 527), becomes clearest in its shift in genres. Gone are the instructional how-to guides, and in their place are opinion-editorials, news updates, and reports on seminars and conferences on women and trade union activity – "Trade Unions: Galway Seminar" (no. 10), "Trade Unions: Make Policy Not Tea" (no. 11), "Woman's Work: Jacob's Awards?" (no. 13), "Conferences: Action - Positive or Otherwise?" (no. 13), and "Reform or Revolution?" (no. 13) – and editorials on the Northern conflict, such as "Belfast: Why a Womens [sic] Centre?" (no. 11), "Women in Armagh Prison" (no. 11), and "Armagh Women Prisoners: Three views" (no. 12). *Wicca*'s generic shift away from instructional advice and information, more generally, is a prime example of the ways in which, as Dryer argues, genres are responsive to changes in their situations and conditions of creation ("Taking 528). As *Wicca*'s readers reported that their advice on how to resist discrimination legislation brought them up against new sociospatial obstacles, *Wicca* responded by expanding its search for sites and actions of feminism and revising the modes and means through which it mediated this generic knowledge in order to better navigate and overcome these obstacles for

its readers; however, this generic expansion of feminism grew fractious, as revealed in *Wicca*'s final report.

In the final issue of *Wicca* – the magazine only withstood four more publications before its second and final dissolution – Róisín Conroy reports on the Status Conference[163] held in Liberty Hall, Dublin on February 21, 1981 in her article "Reform or Revolution?" (BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). An activist involved in both the Irish women's movement and the trade union movement, Conroy was an information officer for ITGWU, co-founder of Irish Feminist Information, and co-founder and publisher of Attic Press, as well as the generator of the archival materials used in this dissertation. According to Conroy, the conference was organized "to stimulate discussion on possible strategies for action which could contribute towards bringing about change in Irish society" (BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). How should women move forward at a time when "the women's movement is gradually broadening its base?" (BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). As Conroy reports, the conference was attended by "over a thousand women" who wanted more information on the conference Charter of Demands, which included demands for changes in education, health, rural women, women in the home, family law employment, and social welfare (BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). While Conroy notes that these demands "were selected on the basis that they are attainable and have the potential of appealing to a broad spectrum of women," the conference was criticized by women from "the left," such as the Socialist Workers' Movement (SWM) and the Peoples' Democracy (PD). In their publication

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[163] The Status Conference was organized by *Status* magazine, a sister publication to *Magill.* The first of ten issues was launched on February 19, 1981 before the publication was suspended twelve months later. The opening editorial states the following: "Status is a word that has cropped up in women's affairs all over the world as well as here in Ireland…The word was chosen as the name for this magazine as an indication of what we are about, and the kind of editorial policy we will adopt. News coverage and investigative journalism from a woman's perspective is what we're aiming for, taking into account the kind of status that a woman has, has not, wants, does not wan, whether she be in the home or outside, married or single, widowed, separated, deserted and/or blissfully happy" (BL/F/AP/1507/1, Attic Press Archive).

Red Women, SWM states that "the assumption underlying the Status conference was that

gradual reformist policies will usher in a new liberated age for women" and while "it (reform)

all sounds very plausible and much more attractive than violence and revolution, it (reform)

doesn't work" (BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). In contrast, PD supports the "need for

the women's movement to maintain its autonomy from political parties"; however, it also

maintains that "the real oppression of women must be analysed in terms of the partition," for

"'only a new united and socialist Ireland can guarantee real freedom for Irish women"

(BL/F/AP/1498/16, Attic Press Archive). Whether or not these practices worked, it is clear that

the politics of reformism, socialism, and "Irishness" repeatedly proved disruptive to the

organizations and ideologies of the autonomous women's movement. While *Wicca*'s devotion

to ideological openness in its discursive practices could not withstand the realities of political

and economic divisions within the autonomous women's movement, its generic coding of new

forms of spatial knowledge for women precipitated a series of intense struggles in the 1980s;

on the one hand, a struggle between "the traditional male-dominated forces of the trade union

movement and the newly arrived women activists" (Cunningham ct. in O'Connor *Emerging*

40-1), and on the other, a reinvigorated struggle between feminism and its position in relation

to the North and South. As the women's movement mainstreamed in public discourse, it sought

new tactics and strategies in the continued battle for women's rights.

The Future of Irish Feminism

On June 23, 2016, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. The Brexit

referendum has underlined the material and symbolic Irish border and its discursive formations.

Questions about what a hard border would mean for Irish citizenship has reinvigorated debates

on Irish identity and sociospatial mobility, questions that are not dissimilar to the moment when

Ireland first entered the EEC in 1973, drawing the sociospatial location of the island to the

forefront of political discourse. For Irish women, both North and South, concerns such as the

impact of austerity and the state of abortion rights has bolstered the call for discussions of

Brexit as a feminist issue. I do not intend to offer a path forward for Irish women today as they

encounter reiterations of the past, but rather offer a space for reflection on what we can learn

when we read the relationship between discourse, sociospatial practices and relations, and

emergent media forms in the past. What is interesting about the mid-century ideology and

praxis of the women's movement in the Republic is the way in which the periodical form was

intrinsic to its evolution and devolution, a phenomenon that raises important questions about

historiography, feminism, and periodical culture. In Ireland, the periodical enabled the

formation of feminist identities, imaginatively, discursively, and physically, at a time when

institutional and cultural discourses of modernization were resistant to the advancement of

women's rights in social spaces. By navigating the demands of periodical print production,

circulation, and reception women were able to occupy, assemble, and create distinct, if not

altered, spaces for feminists – however momentary they may have been. As they learned how

to take up the material and symbolic actions and relations of hegemonic spaces, or their genres,

feminists not only learned how to resist their discursive inscription as singular subjects of the

Irish state, but also learned how to attempt to adapt and revise those genres to suit feminist

motives. Of course, this process was resisted from both state and feminist actors alike. As an

ideology, autonomous feminism was short-lived in Ireland because the frame of gender was

never shifted in the way that it needed to be to garner national mobilization like it had in other

countries, such as the United States; there were other cultural narratives in place to navigate. As

Galligan suggests, "the hegemony of conservative cultural, social, political and religious values" in Ireland left "limited cultural space available for the expression of feminist politics" (*Politics* 64). In order for feminism to persist, it had to adapt. While the multifarious and dynamic periodical form had enabled the localization of autonomous feminism in the form of groups and organizations, it was this very format that also enabled its rapid ideological proliferation, and eventual dissolution, or devolution.

The second phase of the Irish women's movement intersected with the last edge of print as the dominant mode of circulation in Irish culture. As I demonstrated throughout this dissertation, building collective feminist action was fundamentally intertwined with the material processes of print. As our current mediasphere is impacted by altering and emerging media technologies, it is important to recognize and identify the evolving sociospatial and discursive genres of institutional activity and how those genres position individuals with unequal power in relation to one another. One of the initial goals of this project was to address the gap surrounding female writing during an era characterized by historiographies as culturally and politically inert. My hope is that my study has demonstrated the ways in which Irish women's cultural engagement is a complex, dynamic process characterized by both conformity and dissent during a time when feminists both created new and adapted old spaces for their writing. More importantly, I hope this dissertation intervenes in conversations about feminist historiography, feminist media history, and feminist acts of uncovering and recovering, and highlights the need for further theoretical models that consider how and when women create sites of feminist resistance and how and when we read those historical and contemporaneous sites in light of the dominant discourses and practices of our respective fields.

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