

**Gendered Environments in Canada: An Analysis of *Women and Environments*  
Magazine, from 1976 to 1997**

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## Abstract

“Gendered Environments in Canada: An Analysis of *Women and Environments* Magazine from 1976 to 1997” explores feminist interpretations of environments in the Toronto-based periodical, *Women and Environments* (*W&E*). Founded by scholars, *W&E* began as a small newsletter. Its purpose was to keep in touch an international cohort of people interested in women and environments who attended the 1976 U.N. Habitat I Conference in Vancouver. Shortly thereafter, *W&E* matured into a magazine of professional quality, but maintained its alternative edge. Its mandate was to give equal coverage to the built, urban, rural, and natural environments, represent women from across Canada, and the United States, as well as offer international intelligence. In 1998, *W&E* announced its name change to *Women and Environments International*. Today, the magazine is one of Canada’s oldest feminist magazines still in production. This thesis examines the years of *W&E*’s publication since its inception up to and including 1997. It asks: How successful was *W&E* in offering comprehensive coverage of environmental concerns from 1976 to 1997 and how much was *W&E*’s narrative a Canadian story? Through qualitative and quantitative analysis, this project demonstrates that *W&E* was able to offer attention to several environment types for an international readership, but this distribution varied over time; while founded with the intention of being global in scope, Yet, for the first few years the magazine limited its feminist critique to urban planning, and later to psychological impacts of built social spaces in central Canada. It was only later on that it expanded its scope to rural areas, and eventually to natural environments across Canada, and around the world. Despite expanding its scope to global topics and becoming accessible to readers worldwide, I saw that for the most part, *W&E*’s writers and readers were Canadian, and specifically represented a Toronto perspective. As such, the magazine was not necessarily a *national* magazine, but was nonetheless a *Canadian* magazine. Such variations in topics and scope were related to larger societal, written submissions, reader requests, and changes to editorial management. The total of twenty-one years under review could be broken into three blocks (1976 to 1984, 1984 to 1987 and 1987 to 1997), each block was marked by particular editorial influence, and subsequently their preferences for the representation of certain environments and topics. Regardless of its fluctuation in focus, however, *Women and Environments* upheld its mandate to provide a feminist analysis of environments for English-speaking women. In the end, the purpose of the project was to showcase a collection of Canadian women who shared an ongoing concern for the variety of environments, and by doing so, took part in the zeitgeist of conversations about feminism and the environment in late twentieth century Canada.

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# Introduction: Canadian Feminist and Environmental Histories: An Examination of Scholarship and Social Activism

In 1976, three faculty members of York University's Environmental Studies department, Gerda Wekerle, Rebecca Peterson, and David Morely, created a newsletter, known simply as *Women and Environments* (*W&E*). Nearly forty years later, Wekerle recalled she never would have foreseen that small Toronto-based newsletter would “blossom into such a vehicle for supporting the efforts of women working to change environments around the globe.”<sup>1</sup> Since its inception, the magazine attempted to pay equal attention to women and environments from all over the world. However, it would not officially adopt an international focus until 1998, when it became *Women and Environments International Magazine* (WEI-Mag). Although WEI-Mag and *W&E* are effectively the same magazine, *W&E* only officially existed from 1976 to 1997. For these twenty-one years, the magazine was mainly a Canadian product for Canadian readers. The magazine's founders saw a gap in Canada's feminist periodical industry. The idea stemmed from a desire to examine environmental issues relevant to women.<sup>2</sup> In 1976, *W&E* established its mission: to address “women's multiple relations to their environments – natural, built and social – from feminist and anti-racist perspectives” and to “provide a forum for academic research and theory, professional practices and community experience.”<sup>3</sup> *W&E*'s ability to offer a balanced coverage varied over time, but it persevered. As Wekerle admitted: “The story of the struggles to keep the magazine going as other feminist publications fell by the wayside is epic.”<sup>4</sup>

My decision to research this epic story about a Canadian feminist periodical that has been publishing uninterrupted for the last forty years was prompted less by its longevity than its dedication to its mission. *W&E*'s ambitious coverage and desire to be the first English Canadian feminist periodical to treat the environment as a woman's issue led to my question: How successful was *W&E* in offering comprehensive coverage of environmental concerns from 1976 to 1997 and

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Wordsworth, “In Focus: 35 Years of Women and Environment International.” *Women & Environments International*, no.88/89, (2012): 50; Gerda Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.3 (1986):7.

<sup>2</sup> Women & Environments. “Editorial,” *Women and Environments* 2, no.2 (1978): 1.

<sup>3</sup> Women & Environments International Magazine. “Mission Statement,” *Women & Environments International*, no.94/95, (2015): 2.

<sup>4</sup> Wordsworth, “In Focus,” 5.

how much was *W&E*'s narrative a Canadian story? This thesis argues that while founded with the intention to offer an international scope, *W&E* first limited its feminist critique to urban planning and the built social space within Canadian cities, for Canadian women, until expanding its scope to rural areas, and eventually to natural environments around the world. This shift over time is measurable by the terms of specific editors over a period of a few years, first from 1976 to the early 1980s, second from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, and third from the early 1990s towards the end of the decade. Despite a fluctuation in its focus, *W&E*'s upheld its mandate: to provide a feminist perspective of environments. Alongside its exposés on gendered environments, the magazine advocated solutions to improve women's circumstances. *W&E*'s editors, writers, and readers pioneered a gendered critique of environments within the English Canadian alternative press, and, is a part of Canadian culture. By pushing the boundaries of the feminist and environmental spheres, *W&E*'s story offers a unique and valuable perspective to Canadian historical scholarship.

## Methodology

This thesis explores how from 1976 to 1997, *W&E*'s particular formulation of production, editorial content and focus – through a sometime uneasy alliance between feminism and environmentalism – contributed to Canadian periodical history, and social thought. My guiding questions were: Who created the magazine? Who were the editors, writers and readers and did their demographics change over time? Where was the magazine published and what content did it print? Did its creators' demographics affect its material and influence the shift in interests over time? How much did *W&E* reflect a Canadian story? Did the magazine operate as a collective or was it hierarchically managed? Was it a clearinghouse for feminist theory or did it publish original articles? Many of these questions were answered through a close reading of each issue from 1976 to 1997. Then, I carried out an extensive and systematic reading of a sample of issues to determine what the magazine meant first from the side of the contributors, and second, from the side of its network participants (readers). The sample for the former included all issues published in 1976, 1981, 1986, 1990 and 1996. I was limited to the years 1978, 1983, 1987, 1988, 1991, and 1997 for my second sample because these were the only years *W&E* printed network directories. Each sample is taken at regular intervals of five years to track change over time.



I further supported my research by collecting and collating data from the issues within the sample years. My methods were informed largely by Valerie Korinek's approaches to *Chatelaine* in her work, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*.<sup>5</sup> Before I began the primary research for this project, I had not fully grasped the degree of meticulousness and repetitiveness required when I read Korinek's methodology: "To best understand the history and role of any magazine, one needs to examine how the periodical is constructed – the range of articles, fiction, advice, political commentary, and advertisements."<sup>6</sup> I had no idea how to create a database, and with much difficulty, I created two, one to organize *W&E*'s contributors (editors and writers) and the other to organize its readers, whom they referred to as network participants, which chapter two discusses in further detail.

While conducting my research, I began to understand what Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman meant when they warned of the difficulty in obtaining an accurate idea of a periodical's content, and establishing how it fluctuated over time.<sup>7</sup> For my thesis, this difficulty was exacerbated by the fact that *W&E* exemplified what Scholes and Wulfman call "the hole in the archive" because it lacked digital replicas in its entirety.<sup>8</sup> To obtain a uniform data of the periodical's content, and to highlight changes of the magazine over time, I merged traditional methods with digitization. The web application, Google Forms, enabled me to efficiently and accurately collate information and metadata from the magazine into a quantifiable database.

Similar to Korinek, my research methodology involved "a systematic content analysis designed to explore and manage the material over a twenty-year case study."<sup>9</sup> Categorizing all of the content from *W&E*'s sample issues proved arduous. Content "can refer to the generic type of material published in a typical issue...topics regularly covered...or to the quality of the work."<sup>10</sup> Categories for analysis of *W&E*'s content/contributors included themes addressed and the type of item, as well as the authors' sex, occupational background, geographical location (country) and the environment type – all of which is indicated at the end of each article. Similarly, categories created

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<sup>5</sup> Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 16-23.

<sup>6</sup>Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 16.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 198.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 53.

for the network participants included sex, occupational background, geographical location (country), environment type – as indicated by their mailing addresses – and their interests listed. Out of the sample size, a total of four hundred and twenty-two articles were collected over eight issues and collated into these two databases. I weighted these article types according to their length. For example, a feature article occupied roughly two pages, where book reviews were a quarter. I was able to determine the following. First, *W&E* had a fair number of male readers and writers at a time when many feminist magazines refused to incorporate male views or cater to male readers' requests. Second, *W&E*'s level of success in merging academic, professional and community activism varied through time. Third, this periodical, which professed to be international in scope, was in fact much more regional, although these regions changed over time. Early issues offered a range of material on American topics that were written by Canadian women. The scope then shifted to cater to Canadian, particularly Toronto women, as their Canadian readership rose in number. By the 1990s, *W&E* had an increasing number of international contributors and readers.

The fourth category of analysis requires some explanation because it pertains to determining the different environment types listed in the addresses of writers and readers, in addition to the types of environments discussed in each article. When I applied the ascribed definitions of urban, suburban, and rural many addresses created confusion. I made use of Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham's book, as well as the *Canadian Social Trends* articles published by Statistics Canada.<sup>11</sup> According to Statistics Canada, no universal method of measuring environments exists. However, the definition of environment types generally falls along a continuum of population density levels. Statistics Canada has favoured measuring areas using population density as a defining indicator of an environment since 1971. Population density studies support the continuity of changing population settlements over time, known as the 'form perspective,' and it is one method for studying *W&E* content. In order to distinguish metropolitan areas from larger urban cores, Statistics Canada adopted the 'functional perspective.' It discovered that areas with larger central urban cores have stronger influence over their surrounding areas.<sup>12</sup> This study uses a combination of the form and functional perspectives to determine environment types of *W&E*'s contributors. I also consulted Statistics Canada for a definition of social environments: " Everything from the political system...to

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<sup>11</sup>Puderer, "Urban Perspectives," <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/92f0138m/92f0138m2009001-eng.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

families and social groups...are part of the social environment.”<sup>13</sup>

For works in the field of environmental psychology I relied primarily on pioneer environmental psychologist Albert Mehrabian to understand the field in its early phases, and the Canadian Psychology Association to give a brief explanation of the field today.<sup>14</sup> I also consulted a 1983 study by psychologists James V.P. Check and Neil M. Malamuth to better understand the context of rape on college campuses, and women’s perceptions of fear on college campuses, as debated within *W&E*.<sup>15</sup>

The final category I created was ‘themes,’ based on a list of themes in *W&E*’s index of interests from its 1983 network directory. I used a total of seventy-three themes to collate my data. From there, I created a simplified list, which offered meaningful data. For example, ‘Planning’ included the following topics: community planning design and development, construction and architecture, urban environment/development/design, urban planning, transportation, co-operative housing, and housing and homelessness. I also sought to understand readers – known in the *W&E* network as ‘network participants.’ I classified them according to the same categories I had used for *W&E* contributors: sex, occupations, nationalities, geographical only instead of themes I used ‘interests’ because *W&E* requested that subscribers include their interests in the magazine along with their contact information. The list of readers’ interests is identical to the one used for organizing contributors’ themes. I cross-referenced this data with *W&E*’s occasional surveys of readership, audience reception, and reader involvement with the topics, particularly indicated in the sparse selection of letters. *W&E*’s readers revealed an enthusiastic participatory nature. To get an idea of its readership and determine whether it fluctuated over the years, I investigated *W&E*’s target audience. Editors addressed their intended readers in each issue, most notably in the opening editorials entitled, “A Word from Us.”

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<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada, “Environment,” *Healthy People, Healthy Places* (2016): <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-229-x/2009001/envir/int2-eng.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> Albert Mehrabian, *Public Places and Private Spaces: The Psychology of Work, Play, and Living Environments*, (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1976); Loraine Lavalée, “What is Environmental Psychology,” *Environmental Psychology*, (2014): <http://www.cpa.ca/aboutCPA/CPAsections/environmentalpsychology>.

<sup>15</sup> James V.P. Check and Neil M. Malamuth, “Sex Role Stereotyping and Reactions to Pictures of Stranger Versus Acquaintance Rape,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, no. 2 (1983): 357.

## Historiography

This study examines a periodical whose distinctive interpretation has gone unrecognized in Canadian history. It bridges three areas of history: cultural history, history of feminism, and environmental history, and contributes to the growing scholarship of each. Foregrounding *W&E* in these histories calls for contextual information about the era in question. During its first two decades of publication, *W&E* evolved from an intellectual and professional periodical, to one that focused on community and global activism. Coinciding with this shift was *W&E*'s transition in focus from Canadian women to women around the world, namely women in the developing world. Therefore, many of the works consulted for this thesis pertain to theory and activism within social movements that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century in Canada. Those social movements are feminism, environmentalism and urban reform. This historical analysis of a cultural product enters into conversation with Canadian feminist, environmental, and cultural histories.

## Secondary Historical Literature - Feminist Histories

This thesis draws heavily on historical works of Canadian feminism. It, therefore, joins Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek in the quest to answer “some of the questions that have long interested feminist historians: “[T]he lives of individual women, women’s work experiences, women’s activism, and women’s relationship with the government.”<sup>16</sup> Cecily Devereux study of the male-dominated academic realm informed my understanding of what it would have been like for *W&E*'s founders to produce a feminist magazine at a time when Canadian universities were still oriented toward men. Feminist scholarship was still quite new in Canadian academia, and female scholars struggled to pursue their careers and gain respect as professors.<sup>17</sup> Even as the years went on, and affirmative action progress was implemented, the growth of women in academic positions was slow.<sup>18</sup> Canadian feminism’s integration into academia occurred in tandem with its American counterpart. In her co-edited collection of comparative analyses between the women’s movement in

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<sup>16</sup> Catherine Carstairs, and Nancy Janovicek. *Feminist History in Canada: New Essays on Women, Gender, Work, and Nation*. Eds. Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Ann Wilson, “Knitters and Night Cleaners: Feminist Alliances in the Academy,” *Not Drowning But Waving: Women, Feminism, and the Liberal Arts*. Eds. Susan Brown, Jeanne Perrault, Jo-Ann Wallace and Heather Zwicker, (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011): 323.

<sup>18</sup> Cecily Devereux, “What to Expect When You’re Not Expecting: or, What Having a Uterus or Even Just Looking Like You Have One Means for Women in the Academy,” *Not Drowning But Waving: Women, Feminism, and the Liberal Arts*. Eds. Susan Brown, Jeanne Perrault, Jo-Ann Wallace and Heather Zwicker, (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011): 87.

the United States and Canada, Constance Backhouse notes how both countries would “boast a burgeoning complement of women’s studies courses, instructors, and programs.”<sup>19</sup> *W&E*’s founders had actually taught a course on the interface between gender in the built environment even before founding the periodical.

The 1960s – the era that popular culture credits with advancing women’s rights – was not truly the beginning of second-wave feminism. Tarah Brookfield and Valerie Korinek offer a corrective view that feminism emerged in women’s Cold War activism in the 1950s.<sup>20</sup> Privileged middle-class, stay-at-home mothers were the prime female roles. However, as mothers, they had key functions in the nation’s future. Various publicity campaigns targeted housewives and mothers to participate in civil defence. Under Doris Anderson’s editorship, the mainstream women’s magazine *Chatelaine* was a popular avenue to motivate women’s political participation.<sup>21</sup> Women’s Cold War activism was one of preparedness for nuclear attacks during the 1950s. This decade witnessed “the greatest government investment of all time in civil defence, caused by the growing stockpile of atomic weapons and tense relations between the United States and Soviet Union.”<sup>22</sup> Women responded to the state’s maternal rhetoric in the previous world wars. This time, however, their homes were the front line. The Cold War transformed citizens into soldiers, and women’s experience as caregivers, and organizers, made them prime candidates for volunteers in emergency management organization (EMO).<sup>23</sup> Besides state-ordered publicity in the form of pamphlets, posters, and women’s sections of newspapers, Canada’s quintessential women’s life-style magazine, *Chatelaine*, was an avenue for civil defense promotion.<sup>24</sup> Some articles, propagated sexist stereotypes representative of dominant fifties’ popular culture images.<sup>25</sup> It was not long before *Chatelaine* evolved into one of Canada’s earliest venues for liberal feminism, under editor-in-chief, Doris Anderson.<sup>26</sup> *Feminist Organizing for Change*, by Nancy Adamson, et. al., specifies that feminism had three

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<sup>19</sup>Constance Backhouse and David Flaherty, *Challenging Times: The Women’s Movement in Canada and the United States* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1992), 8-9.

<sup>20</sup> Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc, 2000): 269; Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global Insecurity, 1945-1975*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 55.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Brookfield, *Cold War Comfort*, 26.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 26-53.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>25</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 268.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

distinguishable currents: liberal, socialist, and radical feminism. All had roots within feminism's first-wave during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Equality-rights feminists of the first-wave concentrated on acquiring equal voting, property, and custody laws as men, and came to form the base of equity or liberal feminism of the second-wave generation.<sup>27</sup> Liberal feminists demanded equal political opportunities and legal rights. Each person, they argued, was an equal member of society, and "should have an equal chance to compete for the resources of that society in order to rise within it as far as talents permit."<sup>28</sup> Doris Anderson tapped into equality-rights. Using her access to a wide audience, she spread liberal feminist messages throughout her years as *Chatelaine's* editor, from 1957 to 1977. In her 1959 editorial, "We Need More Women Scientists," Anderson advocated that women would be of better use fighting in the Arms Race as scientists rather than homemakers. By crafting her articles as those about the good of the nation, readers were given articles with feminist orientation.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, *Chatelaine's* participatory nature enabled readers to take part in the feminist conversation. The magazine's letters page showed that many Canadian women, albeit mostly from urban and suburban regions, echoed Anderson's feminist inclinations.<sup>30</sup> This collection of editorials, articles, and letters in a periodical supported a growing feminist community in Canada's mainstream media. A traditional women's publication inspired ideological changes in individual and collective thinking that would give birth to feminist print culture.<sup>31</sup>

By 1960, many women turned their attention away from civil defense to peace-keeping and disarmament activism.<sup>32</sup> The newly formed anti-nuclear group, Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) coordinated with Dr. Ursula Franklin in a scientific campaign. They encouraged women from all over the country to donate their children's baby teeth in order to prove that atmospheric radiation, specifically strontium-90, particularly harmed children.<sup>33</sup> VOW, claims Judy Rebick, became "the seedbed of second wave feminism."<sup>34</sup> Franklin recalled how this campaign – run by women – encouraged personal contact between women. By allowing them to move beyond the Cold War

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<sup>27</sup> Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin, Margaret McPhail. *Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988): 31.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>29</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 267.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 8, 259.

<sup>31</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 350.

<sup>32</sup> Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*, 67-68.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 71-72.

<sup>34</sup> Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution* (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2005), 3.

stereotypes of women as civil defense volunteers, the campaign “promoted into action the idea that the women’s liberation would later develop.”<sup>35</sup> *W&E* admired Franklin’s engagement with the environment, health, and a shared sense of civic duty. Her thoughts on the baby teeth campaign encapsulated a central idea of *W&E*: “[P]eace and public health are collective; they involve all of us. Whether friend or foe, we are dependent on each other. Survival is collective.”<sup>36</sup>

*W&E* touched on all areas of feminism – liberal, socialist and radical, but never subscribed to strictly one. In its 1987 editorial, the editors stated that this had always been their intention and would remain so: “*Women and Environments*’ task is to present a variety of feminist perspectives, rather than a single, unified or consistent viewpoint.”<sup>37</sup>

Appreciating *W&E*’s fluidity demands a more complete understanding of feminism’s various strains. To begin, liberal feminism emerged with VOW. For instance, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) established in 1971, set out to promote economic equality for women, access to political participation and leadership, and an end to violence against women. One of the RCSW’s recommendations resulted in the Women’s Program. This was “a grants and contributions program,” established in 1973 and managed by the former Department of the Secretary of State, until 1995.<sup>38</sup> A great deal of feminist organizations and projects, specifically periodicals, came to rely on the Secretary of State for extensive, if not full, funding.

Despite these early successes, feminism was not homogenous. Many women found liberal feminism institutionalized within a male-ordered system, and therefore untrustworthy. The Women’s Liberation Movement formed as a separate, grassroots activist movement, and was popular in the early 1970s.<sup>39</sup> WLM’s grassroots groups were dominated by beliefs that captured by the phrase, “the personal is political,” which asserted that “the overall direction of women’s lives – including their ideas, behaviours, and choices – is primarily shaped by the particular way in which society is structure.”<sup>40</sup> WLM groups took feminism in new directions, to form what Adamson saw to be the other two chief currents of feminism, socialist and radical feminism. Contrary to liberal

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<sup>35</sup> Ursula Franklin in Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Michael Valpy, “Ursula Franklin – Obituary,” *Globe and Mail*, [theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ursula-franklin-canadian](http://theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ursula-franklin-canadian).

<sup>37</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments* 9, no.2 (1987): 3.

<sup>38</sup> Status of Women Canada, *Evaluation of the Women’s Program Volume I – Final Report* (Ottawa, 2005), i. <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/trans/account-resp/pr/wpeval-evalpf/wpe-epf-eng.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> Adamson et al., *Feminist Organizing for Change*, 198.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

feminism's acceptance of the existing economic system with re-allocation of opportunities for women, socialist feminists believed equality of opportunity was impossible so long as sex, class, race, and sexual orientation determined power.<sup>41</sup> They were the primary backers of the equity clause in the 1985 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms explicitly legalizing women and men's equal protection.<sup>42</sup> By that time, women composed most of the new entrants into the labour force, rendering it crucial from an economic viewpoint "that women be "employed to the full extent of their productive potential and from a social point of view to ensure that women receive an equitable share of the benefits of productive work."<sup>43</sup> Modelled on affirmative action in the United States, Canadian employment equity designated protection for women, Aboriginals, people with disabilities, and visible minorities. Throughout the 1980s, these four groups gradually gained guaranteed federal and provincial protection from discrimination within the public and private sectors.<sup>44</sup> Employment equity, it will be shown, was a popular subject in *W&E*, particularly in the early years under Gerda Wekerle's editorship. *W&E* also endorsed the socialist feminist notion that in regards to housework, men's privileges conflicted with women's interests. Unlike steadfast socialist feminists, however, *W&E* never indicated that women and men shared similar interests in the workplace.<sup>45</sup> For *W&E*, women endured specific disadvantages, such as harassment, in work environments.

Where commonalities between men and women existed in the socialist feminist agenda, their more vocal counterparts within the WLM – radical feminists – only saw difference and conflict between the sexes. Radical feminists also disagreed with liberal feminism's rejection of biological differences between men and women as justification for inequality. Radical feminists validated biological differences. They sought to transform their political, social and emotional differences that stemmed from biology from sites of oppression to empowerment.<sup>46</sup> Radical feminists advocated for an "anti-militaristic, non-hierarchical co-operative society organized on the female values of life-giving and nurturance."<sup>47</sup> According to Nancy Adamson, it was chiefly radical feminists who developed women-centred culture (i.e. alternative business, art forms, and living accommodations).

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>42</sup> Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 143.

<sup>43</sup> Rosalie Silberman Abella, *Report on Equality in Employment*, (Ottawa: Canadian Government Publishing Centre, 1984), i. <http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-cf/abella1984-eng/abella1984-part1-eng.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*.

<sup>45</sup> Adamson, *Feminist Organizing for Change*, 11.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.



Although most feminists shared in the desire to end violence against women, radical feminists were primarily responsible for organizing shelters for battered women, rape crisis centres, Take Back the Night Marches in Canadian cities, and anti-pornography campaigns.<sup>48</sup> Constance Backhouse noted feminists' reconceptualization of sexual assault permeated society's collective thinking. In 1979, Canada published its first book on sexual harassment. By "the 1980s, the law of sexual harassment would take several new directions under revised human rights statutes."<sup>49</sup>

Demanding control over their own bodies also included legalizing birth control for women, and abortion. Frustrated with liberal feminists' timidity toward issues of sexuality, radical feminists orchestrated theatrical demonstrations, like "Free Abortion on Demand," where feminists chained themselves to the House of Commons in protest until politicians addressed abortion.<sup>50</sup> Sharon Stettner's new work offers a fresh approach to the history of abortion activism and legislation in Canada. It is told not by campaign for or against abortion, nor by those who constructed abortion laws or performed the procedure. The narrators are average women who actually *had* abortions. In one account, Bernadette Wagner recalled requiring the procedure while living in Saskatchewan during the 1980s, when Canada's strict abortion regulations made access to abortions almost impossible. Radicalist spearheaded underground networks to access abortion counseling, and those who could pay for it travelled to private American clinics or to one of Dr. Henry Morgentaler's abortion clinics in the east, but some women continued homemade remedies, such as onions, knitting needles, and coat hangers.<sup>51</sup> Due to its minimal discussion of sexual liberation, *W&E* cannot accurately be defined as radical. Between the year 1987 and 1993, this thesis proposes the magazine entertained a socialist ecofeminist mandate, but this was not sustained past 1993. The magazine fell center-left on the political spectrum.

Government financial support through agencies like the Women's Program enabled the feminist groups to grow in size and number. Alexandra Dombrowsky has noted that growth of Canada's women's organizations stimulated an expansion of feminist ideas. Feminist fundamentals

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Constance Backhouse, *Carnal Crimes: Sexual Assault Law in Canada, 1900-1975*, (Toronto: Irwin Law, 2008) 277-278.

<sup>50</sup> Bonnie Kreps, "Radical Feminism 1," *Women, Unite!: An Anthology of the Canadian Women's Movement*, ed. Canadian Women's Educational Press (Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1972), 71; Canadian Women's Educational Press, *Women, Unite!*, 11.

<sup>51</sup> Bernadette Wagner, "A Bad Law, a Bold Woman," *Without Apology: Writings on Abortion in Canada*, ed. Sharon Stettner. 2016, 114.

were unpacked and deconstructed, and “not only had to accommodate liberal, socialist, and radical feminist ideas, but anti-racist, critical disability, post-modernist, and post-structuralist feminism” as well.<sup>52</sup> As the women’s movement grew, it diversified and divisions over questions of identity required consideration. The women’s movement had never been completely cohesive, yet by late 1980s, the gravity of its divisions was unprecedented. Many women thought 1960s mainstream feminism solely represented white, educated, middle-class women.

*W&E* made an attempt in the mid-to late 1980s to incorporate multiple identities into the magazine, but reflected the biases of feminism’s second-wave in its early years. For instance, despite Canada’s large Indigenous population little representation has been given to its Aboriginal women. Statistical data presented in chapter two reveals that *W&E* failed to give adequate representation to Aboriginal writers and topics. This absence was not because Aboriginal women did not experience hardships in cities. As Nancy Janovicek noted, the late 1960s saw a major wave of migration of Aboriginal people from reserves to towns and cities. Furthermore, largely as a result of the *Indian Act* provisions, a greater number of Aboriginal women lived off reserve than their male counterparts, forming a transient group. Toronto opened its first transition home for Aboriginal women in 1968.<sup>53</sup> Although *W&E* dedicated an issue to the subject of women and shelters, it failed to adequately address problems specific to Aboriginal women living in shelters. *W&E*’s lack of self-identifying Indigenous readers and writers perhaps explains its limited engagement with Indigenous issues, but this is not confirmed in its pages.

Other minority groups, such as elderly and disabled women, and lesbians, who demanded visibility within Canadian feminism were more likely to be featured than Aboriginal women throughout the twenty-one years under review. Building on Korinek’s study of *Chatelaine*, Barbara Freeman argued that the magazine was slow to incorporate lesbian topics. This thesis includes a short discussion of lesbian feminists who carved out their own identities within the women’s movement by using alternative print media. According to Freeman, *Chatelaine* did not accurately portray lesbians’ lives and activism both within and outside the women’s movement. Over time, mainstream sources began to advocate for equal rights for lesbians, and stopped treating them as

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<sup>52</sup> Alexandra Dobrowolsky, “The Women’s Movement in Flux: Feminism and Framing, Passion and Politics,” *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada*. ed. Miriam Smith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014): 153, 159.

<sup>53</sup> Nancy Janovicek, *No Place to Go: Local Histories of the Battered Women’s Shelter Movement*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007): 21.

criminals or “medicalized misfits.”<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, the Disabled Women’s Network Canada (DAWN) was formed in 1985. Mainstream feminism in Canada ignored women with disabilities in the first instance by holding events and meetings in physically inaccessible locations. In 2005, Judy Rebick contended that “the battle for access has not yet been won.”<sup>55</sup> This thesis discusses DAWN’s participation in social and built environments, which have historically compounded the invisibility of women with disabilities. Finally, on the west coast of Canada, in Victoria, British Columbia, a collective of older women, “mainly Caucasian, middle-class, educated women, approximately 52 to 67 years old,” formed and opened feminist chapters across Canada.<sup>56</sup> They called themselves Raging Grannies, and demanded representation of older women within mainstream feminism as well as empowerment of older women via social activism.<sup>57</sup>

Like most other feminist collectives, *W&E* was vulnerable to nation-wide monetary challenges in the late 1980s. Lack of unification in strategy and identity, coupled with the new neoliberal state priorities, and opposition from anti-feminist organizations, like Realistic, Equal, Active, for Life (REAL) Women of Canada, led to cuts in funding in the Women’s Program. The women’s movement was effectively frozen.<sup>58</sup> Even though organizations like REAL Women of Canada did not singlehandedly create Canada’s feminist backlash, they were the main proponents. Gaining momentum since 1981, REAL women claimed to represent ‘real women,’ and identified as “pro-male – but only in the sense that they wanted men to take care of them.”<sup>59</sup> *Chatelaine*’s Doris Anderson recalled, “they arrived at the house of Commons with freshly baked muffins and cookies and received red-carpet treatment from many Conservative MPs in return,” as they lobbied against abortion, equality clauses in the Charter of Rights, family law reform, etc.<sup>60</sup> Consequently, feminist groups had to increase fundraising to supplement their budgets. Several were forced to adjust their objectives to qualify for competitive grants. For example, in 1987, *W&E* altered its mandate to meet

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<sup>54</sup> Barbara Freeman, “From No Go to No Logo: Lesbian Lives and Rights in *Chatelaine*,” *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 31 (2006): 821, 833.

<sup>55</sup> Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 210.

<sup>56</sup> Linda Caissie, *The Raging Grannies: Understanding the Role of Activism in the Lives of Older Women* (Waterloo: University of Waterloo, 2006): 9.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Dobrowolsky, “The Women’s Movement in Flux,” 159-160.

<sup>59</sup> Doris Anderson, *Rebel Daughter: An Autobiography*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1996), 258.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

charitable status criteria.<sup>61</sup> With limited funding, the Women's Program could not distribute funding equally to all women's collectives. As the new millennium approached, it was clear that feminism needed to revitalize, adapt to the increasingly varied younger generation and redefine its value for all Canadian women. Women of colour, new immigrants, women with disabilities, and lesbians vied for equal visibility within the movement. British Columbia's politician, Rosemary Brown, – who went on to speak at *W&E*'s 1991 conference – recalled how women of colour tirelessly worked for women's rights from the start, but had always felt the movement was dominated by white women. The Congress of Black Women, initially a national organization of Canadian-born women of African descent, revitalized in the mid- 1980s to incorporate different ethnicities.<sup>62</sup> By the late 1980s “identity politics” became a key theme in feminist discourse, and various groups of women founded new publications, “seeking legitimization within the cultural field.”<sup>63</sup>

In light of feminism's new multi-faceted character, *W&E*'s attempt to be more inclusive magazine becomes clear. It too had been guilty of over-representing hegemonic white, middle-class, educated woman's perspectives. Owing to its ability to market itself as an international magazine – as will be seen in chapter three – *W&E* was not a prime target for critique among so-called third-wave feminists. Nevertheless, the magazine recognized the need to acknowledge its lack of diversity. Identifying as a white, able-bodied, radical lesbian, Ali Grant wrote, “I am aware that I speak from a position of privilege, but I strongly believe that we need to know what safety issues mean to disabled women, to working-class women, to black women – to all those who do not feel directly addressed by or reflected in what we write here.”<sup>64</sup>

As mentioned earlier, feminism came to include a variety of new feminist criticism which constituted “the cultural turn” that is “the reification of culture as an autonomous zone of signifying practices.”<sup>65</sup> Postmodern feminism, poststructuralist feminism, and postcolonial feminism moved beyond the slightly more ‘black and white’ perspectives advocated by liberal, social and radical branches. These new, slightly greyer, strains proved influential for *W&E*, as evidenced by the

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<sup>61</sup> Macpherson, *When in Doubt, do Both*, 161.

<sup>62</sup> Rebeck, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 130; Akua Benjamin in Judy Rebeck, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution*, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2005), 136.

<sup>63</sup> Barbara Godard, “Representation and Exchange: Feminist Periodicals and the Production of Cultural Value, *Tessera*, (2002), 114.

<sup>64</sup> Ali Grant, “Taking Space – A More Personal/Political Note,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no. 1 (1989/1990): 17

<sup>65</sup> Teresa Ebert, “ReMaterializing Feminism,” *Science and Society* 69, no.1 (2005): 33.

magazine's book review, and feature articles. Thinkers like Donna Haraway, Judith Butler, and Gatyatri Spivak argued that sex and gender were ultimately cultural constructs, created by people, and reinforced through language and other aspects of various cultures. Beginning her writings in 1978, Haraway put forward some thoughts on fractured identities within feminism. She noted the difficulty of ascribing a single adjective to one's feminism: "Identities seem contradictory, partial and strategic. There is not even such a state as 'being' female, itself a highly complex category constructed in contested sexual scientific discourses and other social practices."<sup>66</sup> Haraway's concept of ecofeminism would inform the magazine period of the years under review, particularly her take on feminist cyborgs.

A year before Haraway published, Judith Butler wrote *Gender Wars* (1990) incorporated post-structural theory into her analysis of gender when she challenged the problem of a gendered language and its affects on how one sees oneself and others: "Language is not an *exterior medium or instrument* into which I pour a self."<sup>67</sup> By deconstructing the gendered language, Butler argued, one could move past an idea of oneself created by culture and form a new understanding of his or her identity. *W&E*'s engagement with identity politics echoes much of Butler's arguments. To take a step further, the way Butler decoded language to locate sexism is similar to *W&E* members, who, when they 'read' a building, subdivision, underground transit system, or a country farm, and discovered sexist foundations. Butler's theories, while compelling, posed problems, of course, because epistemological reasoning is embedded with gendered language, which is wrought with sexism. Interestingly, unlike women's studies programs in post-secondary institutions, *W&E* never changed its name from *Women and Environments* to *Gender and Environments*. For reasons unknown, it never considered this alternative.

Finally, postcolonial feminist Gatyatri Spivak critiqued the current mode of feminism as a derivative of Western European culture. It is, therefore, "coded within the legacy of imperialism...part of this heritage of European Enlightenment. *Within* the enclosure of the heritage, it is course inscribed as an 'irreducible vis-à-vis' the masculine dominant."<sup>68</sup> *W&E* grappled with postcolonial feminist concepts, but not overtly, and not until the late 1990s when it enjoyed a larger

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<sup>66</sup> Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Nature: The Reinvention of Nature*, (New York: Routledge 1996), 295.

<sup>67</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Troubles: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 183.

<sup>68</sup> Gayatri Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 48.

number of writers from the so-called ‘third-world.’ In 1988, Adamson and her colleagues noted the internationalism of feminism: “In almost every country in the world there is a women’s movement.”<sup>69</sup> A few years earlier, Robin Morgan’s *Sisterhood is Global*, offered a more focused exploration of feminism’s internationalism. She notes that the women’s movement is diverse, but ultimately united throughout the global north and south, and the developed and non-developed countries.<sup>70</sup> Aided by the many voices of women the world over, Morgan highlighted that all women share feminism not because of mystical or biological determinism but as “the result of a common condition which, despite variations in degree, is experienced by all human beings who are born female.”<sup>71</sup> *W&E* shared in this belief in global feminism from its outset, and always attempted to convey this throughout the publication with increasing effort as time went on.

At the end of 1990s, feminists organized increasingly used the internet.<sup>72</sup> Although the luxury of instantaneous connection via advanced and sophisticated technology was largely limited to those in the first world, electronic networking enabled many feminist publications, like *W&E*, to connect on the global scale and to an unprecedented degree. Websites have allowed for the birth of cyber-feminist communities and individual projects to form: “Much like the consciousness-raising groups in the 1960s and 1970s, the Internet offers spaces to share injustices with others, to voice concerns, and to devise solutions.”<sup>73</sup> Today, some Canadian feminist magazines, like *GUTS*, are entirely digital. Feminist collectives born in the 1970s must take initiative to utilize the technology that is available to them. *W&E* is currently in the process of digitizing all of their issues, but the transformation has been remarkably slow. If *W&E* could provide digitized and searchable issues free of charge, more readers could experience what the magazine has to offer. In order to survive in a digital world, the magazine must adapt to modern technological media or risk falling into obscurity.

## Secondary Historical Literature – Cultural History/Periodical Studies

Cultural historians have begun to consider periodicals worthy objects of study. According to Fraser Sutherland – the first to author a history of Canadian magazines - with their limitless

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>70</sup> Robin Morgan, *Sisterhood is Global: The International Women's Movement Anthology*, (New York: Feminist Press, 1996): 4.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Sandra Grey and Marian Sewer, *Women's Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance*, (Routledge: New York, 2008), 133.

<sup>73</sup> Grey and Sewer, *Women's Movements*, 133.

categories, regions and readers to choose from, periodicals display a variety of personalities that reflect the cultural views of their eras and their producers.<sup>74</sup> Periodical content tends to change over time as a result of editorial changes or external forces.<sup>75</sup> *W&E* shifted its orientation over time from academic to include private sector and government workers, and activists. These shifts coincided with the influence of specific managing editors.

Feminist cultural historians, who have provided tremendous insight to the field, include Tessa Jordan and Valerie Korinek. For example, Tessa Jordan's study of *Branching Out* guided my own research about a similar object of study, a periodical.<sup>76</sup> Jordan states that *Branching Out*, an Edmonton-based magazine that published from 1973 to 1980, was "the first national feminist magazine published in Canada."<sup>77</sup> Jordan's explanations for *Branching Out*'s eventual collapse inspired me to question *W&E*'s publishing success; how was *W&E* able to sustain itself for such a long time when *Branching Out* could not? Valerie Korinek's analysis of *Chatelaine*'s editorial commitment and reader commentary influenced my reading of *W&E*. Both magazines gave women a chance to become creators of a cultural product that helped stimulate feminism on a national scale.<sup>78</sup> *Chatelaine* was a mass market magazine and part of the Maclean-Hunter corporation. Thus, it was "not as explicit about this sense of 'sisterhood' as *Ms.* magazine" among its community of readers, writers, and editors.<sup>79</sup> Contrarily, the American *Ms.* – founded in 1971 – was a niche magazine with feminism at its core. Amy Farrell defines *Ms.* "as both an organization and as a discursive site...a dialogue among the editors, writers, advertisers, and readers...to whom the magazine should speak, for whom it should speak and to whom...it should belong."<sup>80</sup> *W&E*'s relationship to its readers aligned more with that of *Ms.* magazine – in its early years that is. It was a periodical, but it also represented an entire network of women using print media to stay in touch. It did not attempt to hold specific events or meetings for network members. Members met one another at conferences, campaigns, and in the work place, and organized through written correspondence or over the telephone. There was

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<sup>74</sup> Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 12-13.

<sup>75</sup> Faye Hammill and Michelle Smith, *Magazines, Travel, and Middlebrow Culture: Canadian Periodicals in English and French 1925-1960*, (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press): 9.

<sup>76</sup> Tessa, E. Jordan. "Abstract," *Branching Out, 1973-1980: Canadian Second-Wave Feminism, Periodical Publishing and Cultural Politics*. Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011.

<sup>77</sup> Tessa, E. Jordan. "Abstract," *Branching Out*, 2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>79</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 101.

<sup>80</sup> Amy Farrell, *Yours in Sisterhood: Ms. Magazine and the Promise of Popular Feminism*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998): 2.

never a general meeting space where all members could voice their opinions on network matters.

University of Pittsburg's Kathryn Flannery has also produced some excellent research on American feminist periodicals from 1968 to 1975. She defines cultural feminist productions based on their alterity, or 'otherness.' Similarly, my thesis aims to gain "some fuller understanding of the literacy practices and pedagogies of the women's movement," by "reading such fragments of movement activism in relation to a complex sociopolitical milieu."<sup>81</sup>

Within the last ten years, cultural historians have turned their attention to more alternative periodicals in the Canadian context. Dean Irvine points to the unacknowledged influence of female editors of literary, or little, magazines in the early twentieth century. Irvine counters Canadian feminist literary theorist, Barbara Godard. According to Goddard, feminist literary magazines emerged in the 1970s in isolation from earlier generations of periodicals women either founded or edited.<sup>82</sup> Due to obvious parallels between little magazines and Canada's feminist press, particularly in terms of organizational structure, content, and their oppositional nature and anti-commercial mandate, Irvine contends that little magazines were the precursors to feminist periodicals of the 1970s.<sup>83</sup> While Irvine makes a good point, Barbara Godard's claim that the 1970s was the beginning of Canadian feminist periodicals as people now understand them, is much more credible. The early 1970s was the era of feminist cultural production in Canada. Godard criticizes federal cuts to the arts, upon which many feminist periodicals depended for survival.<sup>84</sup> Godard also draws heavily on Eleanor Wachtel's 1982 assessment of feminist periodicals and their value for Canadian women's status.<sup>85</sup> Written for the Women's Program, Wachtel analyzed twenty-four Canadian feminist periodicals from seven genres to determine their social impact, financial situations, and value for Canadian women's status.<sup>86</sup> Wachtel's study includes specific details of *W&E*'s status among other feminist magazines, as of 1982. *W&E*'s circulation was among the few she outlined toward the end of the study. Wachtel's report was among the most useful accounts of feminist print media in Canada for my study.

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<sup>81</sup> Kathryn Flannery, *Feminist Literacies: 1968-75*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xx-xxi.

<sup>82</sup> Dean Irvine, *Editing Modernity: Women and Little-Magazine Cultures in Canada, 1916-1956*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007): 260.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>84</sup> Godard, "Representation and Exchange," 120.

<sup>85</sup> Eleanor Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*. Women's Programme, (Ottawa: Secretary of State, 1982), 1.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.



Secondary literature about Canadian periodicals that addressed urban environments or environmentalism was available, but very sparse. Charles Campbell and Naomi Pauls paint a clear image of Canada's underground press. The Vancouver-based newspaper, *The Georgia Straight*, had its glory days during the late 1960s and 1970s when common features included anti-state and radical environmental articles by Greenpeace founders.<sup>87</sup> Of all environment-focused alternative periodicals this study explores, *Alternative Journals* (A/J) was the only one with which *We&E* had any kind of relationship. The two frequently bartered advertisements with one another. According to a current A/J editor, the only comprehensive history of A/J appears on its own website.<sup>88</sup> This thesis relied on the environmental histories that did not have periodicals as their main focus for an understanding of urban reform and environmental publications in the alternative press. Periodicals can stand on their own as remarkable objects of study. Unfortunately, however, historians often only utilize them for scattered bits of information on other topics of interest. Countering the "fragmentary nature of magazine scholarship," my work recognizes periodicals as independent objects of inquiry with their own stories and abilities to drive history.<sup>89</sup>

## Secondary Historical Literature – Environmental History

Environmental history emerged in the 1990s, gaining prevalent recognition in 1998, when military historian, Jack Granastein, accused the field of usurping the traditional political and military approach to the field of history.<sup>90</sup> In his article, Canadian environmental historiography, Sean Kheraj evaluates the level of influence environmentalism, as a political and social movement, has had on the field. He argues that the field emerged in Canada in the 1990s in response to developments in American environmental historical scholarship – particularly the works of Donald Worster and William Cronon – "and drew connections between historical scholarship and environmental advocacy."<sup>91</sup> To a certain degree, both Worster and Cronon's works aligned with environmentalism. Each, however, developed a theory of nature that opposes the other. Worster's approach was far

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<sup>87</sup> Charles Campbell and Naomi Pauls, *The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?* Ed. Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell, (Vancouver: Douglas McIntyre Ltd., 1997).

<sup>88</sup> Alternatives Journal, "The Alternatives Story." *Alternatives Journal*, (Kitchener: Alternatives Inc., 2016): <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/about/history>.

<sup>89</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 15.

<sup>90</sup> Sean Kheraj, "Scholarship and Environmentalism: The Influence of Environmental Advocacy on Canadian Environmental History," *Acadiensis* XLIII, no.1 (2014): 197.

<sup>91</sup> Kheraj, "Scholarship and Environmentalism," 197.

more concerned with the preservation of wildlife and wilderness. Having developed his theory in the wake of the environmental movement of the late 1960s, Worster attached a moral component to his philosophy. He has promoted a romantic view of nature as the creator of man, and pitted culture as nature's antagonist. He writes: "By common understanding, we mean by "nature" the non-human world, the world we have not in any primary sense created."<sup>92</sup> Worster contends that social and built environments are "in absence of nature..." and perhaps "constitute a kind of 'second nature,'" but they are not legitimate objects of study for environmental historians.<sup>93</sup> Shortly after Worster's research earned him the name 'The Father of Environmental History,' William Cronon critiqued Worster's definition of nature, claiming the concept of 'pristine nature' narrowed the field. For Cronon, nature was a cultural construct, inseparable from the humans who perceive it: "There cannot be people outside of nature; there can only be people *thinking* they are outside of nature."<sup>94</sup> Cronon perceived the sentimental view of a wilderness untouched by man as damaging both to the field of environmental history and to contemporary environmentalism. Specializing in the history of the conservation movement, Samuel Hays was an avid environmentalist when he read Cronon's approach. Hays accused Cronon of publishing abstract ideas, unrelated to the real wilderness with which Hays himself was very familiar.<sup>95</sup> Siding with Cronon, Douglas Weiner remarked on the danger of essentializing and instantiating a universal idea of what the environment is. He advocates for an acceptance of a fluid and socially constructed nature: "[O]ur cognitive maps of the world are continually produced and revised...If we turn our backs on the notion,...we risk buying into a delusory, uncritical, received picture of the 'real world.'"<sup>96</sup> Weiner defines environmental history "as a locus for exploration and intellectual adventure rather than as a capturable, bounded entity."<sup>97</sup>

After coordinating a panel to discuss the state of the field in 2015, Lisa Brady, concluded that environmental history was inherently and necessarily diverse, messy, interdisciplinary in nature, and constantly evolving.<sup>98</sup> The following year, Brady maintained that as the field evolves in many

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<sup>92</sup> Donald Worster, "Doing Environmental History," *Canadian Environmental History*, ed. David Freeland Duke, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc., 2016): 12.

<sup>93</sup> Worster, "Doing Environmental History," 12.

<sup>94</sup> William Cronon, "The Uses of Environmental History," *Canadian Environmental History*, ed. David Freeland Duke, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc., 2016): 38.

<sup>95</sup> Kheraj "Scholarship and Environmentalism," 195.

<sup>96</sup> Douglas Weiner, "A Death-Defying Attempt to Articulate a Coherent Definition of Environmental History, *Canadian Environmental History*, ed. David Freeland Duke, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc., 2016): 72-74.

<sup>97</sup> Weiner, "A Death-Defying Attempt," 82.

<sup>98</sup> Lisa Brady, "Has Environmental History Lost Its Way?" *Process: A Blog for American History*,

different places its roots diversify: “I appreciate the way people are working on urban issues, [and] on the body, who are pushing us to think about what the environment is and means.”<sup>99</sup> The reason I am so adamantly citing these secondary sources is because the fluid definitions of ‘nature’ and ‘environment’ are integral to my thesis. At the start of this project, with little knowledge of environmental history, I feared *W&E*’s extensive attention on built environments disqualified it from the field. After familiarizing myself with the scholarship, I learned of the ongoing debates about the definitions of wilderness, nature and cities in environmental history, urban planning, or natural science. This thesis addresses the tensions between ‘built’ and ‘natural’ environment, and stresses the importance of social spaces and environmental psychology. Regardless of the environment types *W&E* examined, its story finds its place in environmental historical scholarship.

The story of *W&E*’s first twenty-one years merges urban history with environmental history, two fields whose issues overlap. Among the many stories of Canadian cities, three social movements played significant roles in shaping their development: urban renewal, urban reform and new urbanism. Understanding *W&E*’s sustained investment in women and urban planning specifically required contextualizing them in Toronto’s urban reform movement. Richard Harris noted the irony in the idea that the Canadian national identity is suffused in the imagery of untrammelled wilderness, because most Canadians have been urban dwellers since the 1920s! Urban centres increased in density and the phenomenon of urban sprawl was marked by rapid suburban development. By the early 1960s, 70 per cent of the Canadian population lived in cities.<sup>100</sup> In order for environmental history to accurately address areas where most people live, however, it must consider urban spaces. While “urban spaces may be carved out of nature, they remain part of nature.”<sup>101</sup> Christopher Klemek’s history of Toronto begins with its urban renewal phase in the 1920s. Urban renewal was a land development program that introduced functionalism into urban planning.<sup>102</sup> Functionalism decreed the four functions of modern cities to be work, residence, transportation and leisure.<sup>103</sup> These functions followed segregated land use policies, and would

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<http://www.processhistory.org/has-environmental-history-lost-its-way/>.

<sup>99</sup> Kheraj, Sean. “Episode 51: Has Environmental History Lost Its Way?” *Nature’s Past: Canadian Environmental History Podcast*. 27 January 2016.

<sup>100</sup> Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1990-1960*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 6.

<sup>101</sup> *Toronto Region*. eds L. Anders Sandberg, Stephen Bocking, Colin Coates, Ken Cruikshank, (Hamilton: Wilson Institute for Canadian History, 2013), 3.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>103</sup> Christopher Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal: Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin*. Chicago: The

become a longstanding issue covered in *W&E*. Segregated land use involved the separation of residences from inner city business districts. Cities increased in density, built high-rise buildings owned primarily by private enterprises, and really became places of work. Because functionalism was a response to, as well as a cause of, the suburban exodus, it was very relevant to the environmental – trend of the day. North Americans flocked to the fringes of the city, and set off the urban sprawl. Their migration reflected the shift in values, which, according to Samuel Hays prioritized health, recreation, and beauty.<sup>104</sup> In the interest of serving commuters, urban renewal planners constructed expressways, such as Toronto’s Gardiner Expressway.<sup>105</sup> Expressway construction required the demolition of older urban neighbourhoods.<sup>106</sup> Regent Park, Parkdale, and Cabbagetown were considered blighted slums.<sup>107</sup> Toronto’s urban renewal developers faced confrontation with the emergence of urban reformers. In his discussion of Toronto’s environmental history, Richard White described urban reformers as generally citizens from older neighbourhoods – “a mixed bag of “New Left political radicals who had it in for capitalist ‘developers’...and middle-class homeowners.”<sup>108</sup> Reformers believed that a city’s social and economic integrity relied on diverse land use, and believed cities required a mix of residents, various types of businesses, and public facilities. They “idealized small-scale capitalism at the level of neighbourhood stores and opposed the decentralization implicit in the Metro authority’s vision.”<sup>109</sup> In 1971, the Spadina Expressway, which would have cut through old neighbourhoods, like Jane Jacob’s neighbourhood, the Annex, and the University of Toronto campus, was cancelled, signaling a success for reformers. Activists argued – cities should be for people, not cars.<sup>110</sup> By 1974, urban reformers had control of City Council and implemented the construction of 4000 new public housing units, including non-profit co-operatives, units to be built over the next two years for low-income families.<sup>111</sup> Urban reformers stressed a return to inner city neighbourhoods. They rejected superblocks, which required wide roads with

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University of Chicago Press, 2011, 11.

<sup>104</sup> Samuel Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States: 1955-1985*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 22.

<sup>105</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal*, 10, 46.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 12.

<sup>107</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal*, 41, 129,

<sup>108</sup> Richard White, “St. Lawrence Neighbourhood: What it is and Why,” *Urban Explorations: Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region*. eds L. Anders Sandberg, Stephen Bocking, Colin Coates, Ken Cruikshank, (Hamilton: Wilson Institute for Canadian History, 2013), 44.

<sup>109</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal*, 200.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 141-142.

<sup>111</sup> White, “St. Lawrence Neighbourhood,” 44.

raised sidewalks to accommodate cars, and planned for narrow roads with low sidewalks. Most importantly, urban reform planners involved citizen consultation over expert planning as much as possible.<sup>112</sup> Many *W&E* editors, authors and readers practiced the urban reform building philosophy. For example, they championed the urban reform in the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, which will be discussed in chapter four.

Both White and Klemek pay tribute to Jane Jacobs, who had been at the forefront of Toronto's anti-renewal movement in the 1970s and 1980s. A former resident of Greenwich Village in New York, Jane Jacobs moved to Toronto in 1968 and became a resident of an inner suburb known as the Annex. She organized community protests against large-scale urban development, such as high-rises, and favoured traditional cityscapes.<sup>113</sup> Using Canada's national press to caution people against "getting hooked on an expensive drug" of development, Jacobs depicted American cities as doomed, having reached a point of no return in their road building: "Toronto, still had a choice."<sup>114</sup> Jane Jacobs is not featured at all *W&E* from 1976 to 1997. *W&E* did not reprint Jacobs' ideas or even allude to Jacobsean urban philosophy. Their shared interests, city, and the fact that she was a woman is too glaring a coincidence to go unaddressed in this thesis. Already a known critic and published author at the time *W&E* emerged, Jacobs was likely contacted by the burgeoning network that hoped she might offer free commentary on the – gendered built environment. It is possible, but by no means proven, that in all her fame and recognition, a small network like *W&E* was not on her radar. At bottom, no evidence within the scope of this thesis proposes the reason *W&E* failed to mention Jacobs. One source does, however, confirm that at least one long time editor of *W&E*, Regula Modlich associated Jacob's urban critiques with the magazine's mandate. In a 2008 article for *Progressive Planning Magazine*, Modlich wrote: "While neither explicitly feminist nor oriented to women, Jacobs' perspectives were rooted in the life experiences, sensitivities and issues of women. So were her solutions."<sup>115</sup> Perhaps Jacobs' detachment from *W&E* was linked to her refusal to identify as a feminist. In any case, *W&E*'s articles teamed with Jacobsean theories of citizen resistance to functionalism in urban planning (i.e. segregated land use schemes).

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>113</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse*, 133.

<sup>114</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal*, 139-140.

<sup>115</sup> Regula Modlich, Gender and Urban Planning: Time for Another Look. *Progressive Planning Magazine*, (Spring 2008): <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/2008/04/gender-and-urban-planning-time-for-another-look/>.

Throughout my research, I found that Jacobs' theory of organic development in city planning resonated with *W&E*'s urban planning philosophies. For Jacobs, all human settlements were part of a natural order. She criticized the urban renewal trend that swept across transatlantic cities, first in her native New York City and then in Toronto. Orthodox urban renewal planners feared the "chaos of cities," and this stemmed from "a long-established misconception about the relationship of cities – and indeed of man – with the rest of nature."<sup>116</sup> Human beings are no less a part of nature than flora and fauna, and the "cities of human beings are as natural, being part of one form of nature, as are the colonies of prairie dogs or the beds of oysters."<sup>117</sup> She stressed the dependency humans had on the very cities they wished to escape. Lively, chaotic diversity was precisely what made cities 'natural' in the first place. Segregated land-use policies – products of urban renewal planners catering to suburban commuters – were carving cities up with freeways and creating auto-centric urban environments. Suburbanites:

fleeing the 'unnaturalness' of the city...apparently in sheer disbelief that we and our cities...are a legitimate part of nature too, and involved with it in much deeper and more inescapable ways than grass trimming, sunbathing, and contemplative uplift.<sup>118</sup>

City and countryside, Jacobs concluded, were on equal footing, mutually dependent on each other, and should neither be revered nor condemned. The link between urban activism and the modern environmental movement was deemed obvious by *W&E*'s Regula Modlich in her 2009 article: "The diversity of towns and cities built prior to the era of land use segregation," she wrote, "still testifies to the validity of mixing urban functions. Jane Jacobs, too, demanded mixed and intensified land uses. Later, the environmental movement realized the benefits of mixed-use and intensified planning, proclaiming it 'smart growth' and better planning..."<sup>119</sup> What was less clear and indeed unacceptable, Modlich continued, was the inadequate endorsement of feminist perspectives.<sup>120</sup> The creation of *W&E* was one strategy feminist environmentalists and urban planners sought to advocate for a gendered perspective to environmental planning.

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<sup>116</sup> Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961), 444.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Jacobs, *The Death and Life*, 445.

<sup>119</sup> Regula Modlich, "Gender and Urban Planning: Time for Another Look. *Progressive Planning Magazine*, (Spring 2008): 1. <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/2008/04/gender-and-urban-planning-time-for-another-look/>.

<sup>120</sup> Modlich, "Gender and Urban Planning", 1.

Jacobs had been influenced by Edgar Anderson, an American botanist who studied the ecologies of cities in the 1950s. Anderson first published *The Considered Landscape* in 1954, wherein he depicted both man and non-human nature as integral to city living. Anderson was writing during the post-war suburban exodus, when North Americans were leaving cities in order to be closer to the tranquil and clean nature on the outskirts of the city. According to Anderson, the notion that nature could not be found within city borders was ludicrous. After all, man *was* nature. He writes: “If one accepts Man as part of Nature there is always something to be found.”<sup>121</sup> Anderson blamed naturalists for initiating the trend of studying nature outside of the city. Naturalists glorified nature outside of the city, which encouraged city dwellers – whom he referred to as “pseudo-Thoreaus” – to the countryside. This approach to so-called natural environments was unfortunately “making society sicker and sicker.”<sup>122</sup> Suburbanization was detrimental to the countryside’s integrity. The rejection of suburbanization was a critical link between urban social movements and the modern environmental movement. Both believed that “auto-centric planning destroyed urban communities and damaged the environment.”<sup>123</sup>

In the early days, the environmental movement was popularized by youth oriented groups, many of which addressed urban environmental issues. Using highly publicized campaign strategies, organizations like Pollution Probe, Greenpeace, and Montreal’s Citizens on Cycles defined environmentalism’s “first wave” in terms of innovative activism and eccentricity. These organizations succeeded in meeting their goals for two reasons: first, they appealed to a regional audience before seeking national recognition, and focused on relatable issues and second, they carried out extravagant, media savvy publicity campaigns. Ryan O’Connor’s recent work on Pollution Probe, illustrates that Canada’s first wave of modern environmentalism originated in the city of Toronto. Initiated by zoology professors and students at the University of Toronto, Pollution Probe reinforced the significance of scholarship’s relationship to activism. It tackled problems with air, water and food quality within urban and suburban borders.<sup>124</sup> From 1969 to the early 1970s it publicized Toronto Islands’ pesticide poisoned mallards, successfully battled Ontario Hydro’s use of

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<sup>121</sup> Edgar Anderson, *The Considered Landscape*, (New York: White Pine Press, 1985): 51.

<sup>122</sup> Anderson, *The Considered Landscape*, 51, 47.

<sup>123</sup> Daniel Ross, “Vive la Vélorution!": Le Monde à Bicyclette and the Origins of Cycling Advocacy in Montreal,” *Canadian Countercultures and the Environment*. ed. Colin M. Coates, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2016), 136.

<sup>124</sup> Ryan O’Connor, *The First Green Wave: Pollution Probe and the Origins of Environmental Activism in Ontario*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 3-4.

coal-burning energy, addressed highway litter and non-renewable containers, and discouraged phosphate use in laundry detergent on televised programs.<sup>125</sup> Pollution Probe increased public awareness through dramatic campaigns, such as its theatrical fake funeral for the Don River, organized to commemorate Toronto's Don River, which they argued was effectively dead from pollution. This performance earned Pollution Probe front-page coverage in national and local media, and restored concern for the Don River.<sup>126</sup> Among English speakers in Quebec, the Montreal Citizens' Movement and Citizens on Cycles – known in French as Monde à Bicyclette (MAB) – centred on a topic that concerned both urban reformers and anti-pollution advocates: the problem of cars. Historian Daniel Ross writes: "Compared to the car, the bicycle is cheap, accessible, and ecologically and socially harmonious... For that vehicle of death, we must substitute the vehicle of life: the BICYCLE."<sup>127</sup> MAB wrote the Bicyclist's Manifesto, denounced cars for poisoning the air with fumes, draining the earth's raw materials, filling scrapyards with useless metal, and creating limitless demands for fuel. A small component of MAB's anti-car stance stemmed from a feminist notion that "the car drives a wedge between the sexes, giving men control over women's mobility while the female body is used to market new killing machines."<sup>128</sup> Women and the trouble with transportation was a frequent topic covered by *W&E*'s urban planning experts.

Both O'Connor's and Ross' case studies dealt with city-based movements, that came to characterize environmentalism in central Canada. However, no discussion of the Canadian environmental movement would be complete without mention of the radical anti-nuclear West-coast group, Greenpeace. In Frank Zelko's history of the first fifteen years of this Vancouver-based group, he argues, "no single organization has done more than Greenpeace to bolster and reshape environmental protest around the world."<sup>129</sup> Composed of countercultural youth, and draft dodging pacifists, Greenpeace merged Gandhian nonviolent protest methods with civil rights activism. It also borrowed the Quaker tactic, "to bear witness," based on the belief that protesting an atrocity was best carried out through observation and reporting to the public. In 1971, the group sailed into Bering Sea to bear witness to the testing of atomic weapons. After filming the whole venture, it

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 46-48, 59-60.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>127</sup> Ross, "Vive la Vélorution," 127, 138.

<sup>128</sup> Ross, "Vive la Vélorution," 136.

<sup>129</sup> Frank Zelko, *Make it a Greenpeace: The Rise of Countercultural Environmentalism*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4.



ensured every radio and television broadcast, and print source announced its story. Using new technological media and emotion, Greenpeace persuaded audiences to become environmentally conscious.<sup>130</sup> *W&E* rarely mentioned these groups – perhaps they were wary of sexism in mixed groups. Early Greenpeace member, Rex Weyler, recalled that Greenpeace had been accused of being “too macho,” in its youth.<sup>131</sup> In any case, *W&E* wrote about far less dramatic and dangerous campaigns. Still, the magazine shared ideas and the tone of urgency espoused by these early environmental groups, and recognized the power of consistent reports on harmful and beneficial environmental developments. *W&E*’s shift toward environmental focus in the late 1980s reflected the changes of environmental interest at the macro-level. Where earlier groups concerned with localized urban issues dominated environmentalism’s first wave, its second wave gave rise to pan-Canadian environmental groups that were “particularly adept at addressing the emerging transnational environmental concerns of the era.”<sup>132</sup> By the mid-1980s, Canadian environmentalists gradually took more interest in the global discourse on acid rain and ozone depletion.<sup>133</sup> Environmental concerns over global warming and the opposing forces of economic progress and environmental protection resulted in the concept of sustainable development. Sustainability became a key feature of new urbanism, the third and final urban planning movement of the twentieth century. It arose in 1987, when the World Commission on Environmental Development popularized the idea in the Brundtland Report, which produced a negative assessment of the development of human intervention in natural, life-supporting systems.<sup>134</sup> It defined sustainable development as that which met society’s needs without compromising future generations’ ability to do the same: “At a minimum, sustainable development must not endanger the natural systems that support life on Earth: the atmosphere, the waters, the soils, and the living beings.”<sup>135</sup> The Brundtland Report was widely publicized in Canadian media. It encouraged municipal, provincial and federal governments to adopt a new urban vision, and to build communities according to

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<sup>130</sup> Zelko, *Make it a Greenpeace*, 34, 41-51.

<sup>131</sup> Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace: How a Group of Ecologists, Journalists and Visionaries Changed the World*, (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004), 395.

<sup>132</sup> O’Connor, *The First Green Wave*, 153.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>134</sup> André Sorensen, Peter J. Marcotullio, Jill Grant, “Towards Sustainable Cities,” *Towards Sustainable Cities: East Asian, North American and European Perspectives*. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004): 7.

<sup>135</sup> United Nations, “The Concept of Sustainable Development,” *Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission of Environment and Development*, 1987.

sustainable development policies. New urbanism absorbed features of its predecessor by favouring low-rise buildings in dense urban centres and mixed land uses. It stressed affordable homes, public transit service, and walkable cities.<sup>136</sup> Plans to reduce traffic and construct energy efficient buildings had either been delayed or cancelled throughout the late 1990s.<sup>137</sup> Canadians' obsession with cars, particularly fuel guzzling trucks (i.e. in the Prairies) coupled with lack of adequate public transportation systems in many urban centres, impede sustainable development. The ever expanding suburbs produce five to ten times the amount of greenhouse gases than transit-using urbanites.<sup>138</sup>

David Suzuki's autobiography paints a grim picture of environmentalism towards the end of the century. The Rio Summit of 1992 resulted in a plan for the world's top industrial countries to cut their emissions and devote 7% of their GDPs to sustainable development programs. Canada was among several of these industrial nations that found this goal unattainable.<sup>139</sup> Perhaps this skepticism about sustainable development was unsurprising, given the lack of environmental expertise in government at the time. The conservative cuts by government in the late 1980s and early 1990s reduced funding to environmental research in universities and to its environmental departments, leading to a lack of environmental experts in decision-making roles. Suzuki recalls how in the early 1990s, important environmental decisions were made by people who did not understand the science behind sustainable development. A simple test assessing their comprehension of scientific concepts revealed that members of parliament with business and law backgrounds – who made up the majority of MPs – scored the lowest, and this test was conducted in the years that correlated with decreased government funding to environmental scientific research.<sup>140</sup>

Writing a few years after Suzuki, environmental historian, Stephen Bocking, argued that environmental expertise does not only necessitate a scientific background. Bocking juxtaposed the early wave of environmentalism was led by American biologist Rachel Carson, and Pollution Probe university ecologists with research, which gradually became more and more influenced by politics into the 1990s. Ecologists cannot, he argues, lead a movement if they are guided by political

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<sup>136</sup> Jill Grant, "Canada's Experience in Planning for Sustainable Development," *Towards Sustainable Cities: East Asian, North American and European Perspectives*. eds André Sorensen, Peter J. Marcotullio, Jill Grant, (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), 147.

<sup>137</sup> John Punter, *The Vancouver Achievement: Urban Planning and Design*, (UBC Press: Vancouver, 2003), xxv.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> David Suzuki, *David Suzuki: The Autobiography*, (Toronto: Greystone Books, 2006), 286.

<sup>140</sup> Suzuki, *David Suzuki: The Autobiography*, 325, 330.

questions. Environmental problems required an interdisciplinary approach because “scientific knowledge is not the only possible description of the world.”<sup>141</sup> Experiential knowledge is necessary to achieve a practical level of sustainability. Bocking argues that science has been permitted to suppress traditional and experiential forms of knowledge by deeming them irrelevant. Often, the displacement of non-scientific forms of knowledge derives from the preference of “orthodox ecological ideas” over local practices and understanding of the land. This can lead to a misdiagnosis of problems and the suggestion of solutions that actually exacerbate degradation.<sup>142</sup>

Neil Forkey summarized environmentalism as the re-evaluation of humanity’s place in the world. The notion that each person could make daily changes for himself or herself with consideration to the holistic outcome was captured by the phrase: “Think locally, act globally.”<sup>143</sup> *W&E* endorsed this motto that incremental environmentally sound practices implied a “wholesale remedy on a global scale,” even when an “economic recession in Canada at the start of the 1990s shocked people out of this frame of mind.”<sup>144</sup> *Alternatives Journal* co-founder Robert Paehlke has frequently written about Canada’s environmental movement. Much like O’Connor, Paehlke utilizes the wave metaphor: “Social movements are amorphous and not easily fixed in time.”<sup>145</sup> He claims that environmentalism followed a kind of pattern and the late twentieth century featured two waves. The first wave took place in the late 1960s until the late 1970s, when public and government interest in the environment faded during a period of economic downturn. This interval period ended with a revitalized direction, new concerns and effectively started a second-wave of environmentalism from the mid-1980s until the mid-1990s.<sup>146</sup> Where the first wave saw environmental activist groups as protest oriented, with a regional focus and urban pollution concerns, the second wave saw increased professionalization of the movement. Its groups had national and international focus, and while urban issues were still of great concern, its advocates adopted a more global vision by focusing on ozone depletion, climate change, and the popularity of ‘green products.’ A primary factor that led to green-product manufacturing was related to health. In the early 1990s, *W&E* became a forum for

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<sup>141</sup> Stephen Bocking, “Leopold’s Challenge,” *Alternatives*, 35, no.4 (2009): <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/policy-and-politics/leopolds-challenge>.

<sup>142</sup> Stephen Bocking, “Leopold’s Challenge,” <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/policy-and-politics/leopolds-challenge>.

<sup>143</sup> Niel Forkey, *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-first Century*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 104.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Paehlke, “The Environmental Movement: Remembering Who We Are,” 285.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

women to converse about female bodies being the first site of pollution due to toxic feminine hygiene products. Similar to Joy Parr, who grappled with the idea of embodied histories, *W&E*'s story includes accounts of women who also recognized "how their bodies had been tuned to time, practice, and place," which leads "to fuller understandings of the burdens that rapid technological and environmental change place on "people in the way.""<sup>147</sup> In this particular work, wherein Parr examines the effects on the body due to rapid environmental changes via the incorporation of technology, Parr argues that "gendered relationships between doing, understanding, and being emerge in some histories of toxic technologies and the environment."<sup>148</sup> *W&E* does not go quite so far as to advocate that "bodies are places and repositories of histories of practice in place."<sup>149</sup> Nevertheless, Parr's ideas can be applied to *W&E*, particularly in 1992, when its members launched a small campaign for unbleached women's hygiene products.

### **Historical Scholarship – Merging Feminist and Environmental Histories in Canada**

Scholars who have in the past integrated a feminist lens to environmental history or vice versa, have made tremendous inroads into the discipline of history. Leading feminist environmental historian, Carolyn Merchant, agrees with Cronon's view that nature and culture are continually evolving, region-specific, social constructs. However, she adds gender to the paradigm. Culturally constructed concepts cannot be understood without first understanding the binary concepts of male and female, "and the roles that men and women act out on the stage of history."<sup>150</sup> According to Merchant, the western worldview that dominates today, emerged during the Scientific Revolution (1500-1700). Rational philosophers and scientists of the era, such as Rene Descartes, Galileo Galilei, and Frances Bacon, undermined the ancient organic cosmological worldview that placed the personified female Earth at the center of the universe. Science, argues Merchant, depicted nature as female in a derogatory light. Scientific innovation, which enabled exploration and capital growth, treated nature as inherently female and the antagonist to male-driven culture.<sup>151</sup> In her historical

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<sup>147</sup> Joy Parr, *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday, 1953-2003*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 190.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Carolyn Merchant, "Eve: Nature and Narrative," *Canadian Environmental History*, ed. David Freeland Duke, (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc., 2016): 57.

<sup>151</sup> Carolyn Merchant, "The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature," *Iris*, The History of Science Society, 9

analysis of women, science, and nature in western societies, Merchant implores women to realize that their situations are not essential; their situations were forced upon them by patriarchal thinking, and reinforced over time. Merchant expressed these highly political ideas in *The Death of Nature*, a work that sparked the beginning of an ecofeminist movement in the United States when it was published in 1980. She built on these ideas in *Radical Ecology* (1992).<sup>152</sup>

As will be seen in the final chapter, ecofeminism would introduce a set of controversial socio-political beliefs and values for *W&E*'s editorial team. Its official exploration of ecofeminism appeared short-lived, not only because of the controversy it caused for its editors, but also for the wider feminist community. In a 2006 article, Merchant recalls that ecofeminism came under harsh criticism during the 1980s and 1990s. Academics argued that ecofeminists were "actually cementing their own oppression in the very hierarchies that... identified men with culture and women with nature."<sup>153</sup> Merchant's article was in fact responding to an essay by Charis Thompson, who argued that after being marred by its own "white, middle-class ethos and uptake...from the early to mid 1990s ecofeminism, had largely been relegated to a marginal position in feminist theory in the academy."<sup>154</sup> On the contrary, Merchant noted that the 1990s and early 2000s was a period of revitalization for ecofeminists. Deeply cognizant of criticisms, they reframed their theories to acknowledge "the variable, gendered, raced subject and the social constructed character of nature...to argue for ethically responsible, situated, relational subjects engaged in political actions."<sup>155</sup> In 1992, Merchant refined her theory of ecofeminism to consider women in the developing world. She argued that because many of them still lived and worked intimately with their natural environments: "As gatherers of food, fuel, and medicinal herbs...fabricators of clothing...harvesters of horticultural crops...and bearers and caretakers of young children, women's intimate knowledge of nature has helped to sustain life in every global human habitat."<sup>156</sup> Many ecofeminist theorists looked to Southern women's grassroots activist movements, like India's Chipko women's movement, as ecofeminism's representatives. Vanda Shiva, from whom *W&E*

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<sup>152</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology, The Search for a Livable World*, (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>153</sup> Merchant, "The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature," 515.

<sup>154</sup> Charis Thompson, "Back to Nature: Resurrecting Ecofeminism after Poststructuralists and Third-Wave Feminisms," *Isis*, The History of Science Society, 97 no.3 (2006): 507.

<sup>155</sup> Merchant, "The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature," 515.

<sup>156</sup> Merchant, *Radical Ecology*, 197.

solicited an original article, wrote extensively on ecofeminism's impact in the developing world.<sup>157</sup>

Since it emerged in 1980, ecofeminism, Joni Seager noted, was misunderstood. Contrary to the truth, many feminists came to see it as “meaning the specific spiritually centered school of environmental thought,” and “used as a generic term for all feminist environmentalism.”<sup>158</sup> Dismissing it as regressive and essentialist, those who refused to learn more about ecofeminism's evolution have attempted to discredit ecofeminism to the point of exhaustion. For Seager, some debates “have become inward turning...and, in my view counterproductive to the larger enterprise of putting and keeping environmentalism on the feminist agenda and feminism on the environmental agenda.”<sup>159</sup> Sure enough, disagreements about ecofeminism played out in *W&E*'s pages in 1988. The magazine limited discussions of ecofeminist principles. Because the magazine was still repudiated for its urban focus, which was uncommonly associated with ecofeminism, it was easier to forget the hostile debate that ecofeminism had caused (see chapter three for details). Still, *W&E* maintained a subtle, yet positive, take on ecofeminism. It included a positive book review of the grassroots ecofeminist activism occurring in the early 1990s at Clayoquot Sound in British Columbia – a topic Maureen Reed and Niamh Moore have both explored, albeit from opposing perspectives.<sup>160</sup> My understanding of *W&E*'s position in the debate is that ecofeminist tenets continued to inform its understanding of women's relationship to nature. My argument about *W&E*'s position as ecofeminist stands in contrast to that of theology professor, Heather Eaton, erroneously argued that *W&E* was an outcome of the Women, Environment, Education, and Development (WEED) Foundation, rather than the reverse. Eaton proceeded to claim that *W&E*'s ecological horizon was narrow because “[i]ssues such as species extinction, loss of topsoil, climate change, or the politics of water rights” was not on its agenda.<sup>161</sup> Eaton never joined the *W&E* network, but she was a member of the WEED foundation in 2003.<sup>162</sup> She, therefore, would have been familiar with the magazine's extensive coverage of women and the natural environment in the

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<sup>157</sup> Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, *Ecofeminism*, (Halifax: Fernwood Publications, 1993).

<sup>158</sup> Joni Seager, “Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism,” *Signs: The Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28, no.3 (2003): 946

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 949.

<sup>160</sup> Maureen Reed, *Taking Stands: Gender and the Sustainability of Rural Communities*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005); Niamh Moore, *The Changing Nature of Eco/Feminism: Telling Stories from Clayoquot Sound*, (UBC Press, 2015).

<sup>161</sup> Heather Eaton, “A Vision of Transformation: Ecofeminist Spiritualities in Canada,” *This Elusive Land: Women and the Canadian Environment*, eds. Melody Hessing, Rebecca Raglon, and Catriona Sandilands. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 302.

<sup>162</sup> Eaton, Heather and Lois Lorentzen, *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*, ed. Heather Eaton and Lois Lorentzen, (Toronto: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 251.

early 1990s. Perhaps *W&E*'s reluctance to address spiritual ecofeminism – Eaton's preferred strain – accounts for her dismissive behaviour toward the magazine's engagement with ecofeminism.<sup>163</sup> It is equally possible that Eaton felt *W&E*'s largely North American focus rendered it insufficiently political, as one may deduce from her declaration: "If the alternative voices, such as that of ecofeminism, are to be meaningful, then they must contend with economic globalization."<sup>164</sup>

Eaton's article was adapted in the 2005 anthology, co-edited by Catriona Sandilands, and entitled, *This Elusive Land: Women and the Canadian Environment*. In this work, Sandilands and her colleagues set out to determine if "feminist perspectives enable us to better know, understand and value the Canadian environment."<sup>165</sup> This work is primarily interested in the natural world. Its goal is to "highlight previously neglected issues concerning the environment" by identifying "how gender has contributed to experiences to the land" in Canada.<sup>166</sup> Ironically, although Sandilands sat on *W&E*'s and *WEED*'s editorial boards, both go almost entirely unmentioned in her anthology. This absence is complicated when considering that *WEED* is not mentioned in Sandilands' earlier monograph, *The Good Natured Feminist*, even though she clearly identified *WEED* as a strong example of Canadian ecofeminism.<sup>167</sup>

Contrary to Eaton's and Sandilands' positions in *This Elusive Land*, ecofeminism or a feminist interpretation of the natural environment had been taken up by Canadian feminists as *W&E*. Even if the magazine editors did not openly identify as ecofeminists, and even if they were white, and middle class women, their interactions with their environments and their practices *were* ecofeminist. This claim is supported by Sherilyn MacGregor another contributor to *This Elusive Land* (and also incidentally a *W&E* member). MacGregor examined women's community-activism and 'green' housework. To do so, she interviewed thirty Toronto women in the mid-1990s. She discovered that their household labour and activism stemmed from a desire "to improve their quality of life in their neighbourhoods (and on the planet as a whole)."<sup>168</sup> The ways they sought improvement often related

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<sup>163</sup> Chapter three explores further that spiritual ecofeminism was far too contentious a topic among *W&E*'s editors. This explains the magazine's reluctance to grapple with that particular strain of ecofeminism.

<sup>164</sup> Heather Eaton, "Can Ecofeminism Withstand Corporate Globalization?" *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*, ed. Heather Eaton and Lois Lorentzen, (Toronto: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 27.

<sup>165</sup> Catriona Sandilands, et al., *This Elusive Land: Women and the Canadian Environment*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), viii.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.

<sup>167</sup> Catriona Sandilands, *The Good Natured Feminist: Ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 178; This topic will be further discussed in chapter three.

<sup>168</sup> Sherilyn MacGregor, "The Public, the Private, the Planet, and the Province," *This Elusive Land: Women and the Canadian Environment*, eds. Melody Hessing, Rebecca Raglon, and Catriona Sandilands, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 4.

to “social environments, such as immigrant settlements, ‘neighbourhoodism,’ affordable housing and homelessness, and community-policy relations,” they illustrated that “the ‘environment’ means something broader for urban women than it tends to mean to those who move and think in so-called green or ‘environmentalist’ circles.”<sup>169</sup> MacGregor explored her findings further in her book, *Beyond Mothering Earth*. She included outcomes of her study of thirty Toronto women who practiced earth care in the cities in the late 1990s, and called their activism “ecomaternalism.”<sup>170</sup> Their practices were very similar to those in *W&E*, and by telling the stories of these women, I hope that my thesis, like MacGregor’s work, broadens the scope of ecofeminism. The women of *W&E* were relevant to ecofeminist theoretical research and politics; their experiences and ideas as urban-dwellers “in the overdeveloped world are as interesting and informative to ecofeminist thought as those of “peasant” women in developing countries.”<sup>171</sup> By excluding Canadian urban women activists/authors, and their dedication to improving their environments, and their own sense of civic responsibility, environmental historians like Heather Eaton and Catriona Sandilands have limited the understanding of environmental and feminist knowledge. There is a need to include all views, and urban Canadian women were, and are, valuable representatives of ecofeminism.

## Chapter Breakdown

Chapter one provides an overview of alternative periodicals that catered to feminist or environmental topics contemporary to *W&E*, and locates *W&E* therein. The story of *W&E* in this chapter relies on the recollection of former editors first in 1986, and later in 1996, respectively. Chapter two interprets the magazine’s creators, editors, writers, and readers through quantitative analysis to track editorial trends. Graphs are provided for visual aid. The final chapter traces the evolution of *W&E*’s thematic content and its readership in relation to the transition in editorial management as well as changing national and international affairs. This chapter is organized according to theme and environment type (built, social, natural), from *W&E*’s earliest issues to its latest to deliver a gendered approach to Canadian environments in twentieth century Canada.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 170-171.

<sup>170</sup> Sherilyn MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth: Ecological Citizenship and the Politics of Care*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 4.

<sup>171</sup> MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth: Ecological Citizenship and the Politics of Care*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 128.



### Contribution to the Field of History

It would be easy to cull *W&E* for its details related to more traditional landmarks of feminist and environmental history. Yet stripping the magazine for article details from the context of where they first appeared robs *W&E* from being appreciated as an entity in its own right.<sup>172</sup> *W&E* illuminated new ways of considering larger themes in Canadian environmental and feminist history, and thereby broadened the concept of ‘environment’ by introducing different types of environments. *W&E* valued not only physical surroundings represented by natural resources, or cities, but also social interactions, feelings, behaviours and everyday life. This study not only reveals the feminist perspective of the Canadian environments in an era when the women’s movement did not typically feature environmental issues; it also stresses that all Canadian environments – the natural, urban, and everything in between should be considered.

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<sup>172</sup> Latham and Scholes, “The Changing Profession,” *Modern Language Association* (2006): 517.

# Chapter One: Histories of Alternative Feminist and Environmental Periodicals, and the Story of *W&E*

English-speaking alternative periodicals, produced by grassroots organizations, played pivotal roles in the dissemination of feminist and environmental ideas in the mid-to-late twentieth century. By the time *W&E* came to fruition, Canada had developed a lively alternative press. Alternative periodicals emerged in the 1970s, though they had much in common with little magazines of the early twentieth century. Like little magazines, alternative periodicals opposed stylistic and content rules of the mainstream presses. They targeted niche audiences, and became central forums for intellectual conversations. They “adopted diverse print formats, and published literature that was often experimental, and at times, controversial.”<sup>1</sup> Even though *W&E* was published in a traditional institutional setting, it was alternative in its creation, organization, and politics. It belonged among the group of controversial, volunteer-based, periodicals that blossomed in the 1970s to exist beyond the borders of mainstream journalism. Due to editorial burnout, lack of funds, or highly controversial content, most of Canada’s alternative periodicals had short publication runs. Many feminist periodicals at the time did not survive the rise of conservative coupled with anti-feminist rhetoric groups, in the 1980s and early 1990s. Perpetually at risk of termination (like its contemporaries), that *W&E* managed to succeed was a marvel.

*W&E*’s pages from 1976 to 1997 showed its participation in the world of Canada’s alternative press. Robert Scholes and Sean Lantham observed: “Anyone who studies periodicals soon discovers that they are frequently in dialogue with one another.”<sup>2</sup> This chapter, therefore, examines alternative periodicals with feminist, urban, or environmental focuses, with which *W&E* could have been compared or was in conversation. What follows is an explanation of the qualities that made *W&E* distinctive and more sustainable than some others. Its attributes include its affiliation to prestigious institutions (i.e. York University and the University of Toronto), its moderate treatment of radical topics, its adaptability to acquire funds, and the nature of its volunteer effort.

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<sup>1</sup> Hammill and Smith, *Magazines, Travel, and Middlebrow Culture*, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Scholes and Lantham, “The Changing Profession: The Rise of Periodical Studies,” *Modern Language Association of America* (2006), 529.

## Feminist Periodicals

*W&E* was born during the era of Canada's feminist press in the 1970s, which emerged as an alternative to the male-controlled mainstream or even male-controlled underground press. Products of the Women's Liberation Movement, feminist periodicals were typically radical in orientation. Nevertheless, they could also publish liberal, socialist, cultural or, in *W&E*'s case, ecological feminist material. They spoke to audiences who felt mainstream sources did not represent their political views and cater to their interests. Although mainstream media introduced feminist ideas on a larger scale, that was not their sole mandate. As Korinek notes about *Chatelaine*, appealing to a mass-market meant the magazine had to print on topics that were in vogue or that catered to advertisers. By the time Doris Anderson retired in 1977, Canadian women were becoming less interested in feminism. In an effort to reflect popular taste, the magazine changed its focus.<sup>3</sup> Where some mainstream media sources offered little or no coverage of feminism, others sought to undermine it by trivializing or sensationalizing the women's movement.<sup>4</sup> As a response, women like *W&E*'s founders who were "committed feminists....decided that mainstream journalism would never fairly reflect women's rights issues, and therefore started their own alternative newspapers," magazines and journals.<sup>5</sup> According to Eleanor Wachtel, mainstream media or what she dubbed 'straight' media silenced the women's movement and feminist media was the best way to "provide a visible, tangible correlate for an amorphous movement."<sup>6</sup> Feminist print collectives survived "outside the dominant mode of capitalist publishing, on the margins and in the opposition both through their borderline position with respect to the marketplace and their commitment to contestatory ideology."<sup>7</sup> This commitment to controversial topics allowed women who did not fit into the status quo to "present their definitions of reality."<sup>8</sup> Barbara Freeman referred to them as 'counter-public' publications.<sup>9</sup> Lesbian and bisexual-oriented magazines helped establish a gay community among Canadian women. For example, *Broadside* (1979-1989), *Pandora* (1985-1994), and the magazine *Kinesis* (1974-2001) drew

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<sup>3</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 371.

<sup>4</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Freeman, *Beyond Bylines*, 215.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Goddard, "Representation and Exchange," 104-121.

<sup>8</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Freeman, *Beyond Bylines*, 159, 162.

bisexuals and lesbians in to work “as editors, collective members, writers and production volunteers...because they were safe havens where they could be open and relaxed about their sexual orientation in ways they could not be elsewhere.”<sup>10</sup> While a niche group within the feminist press, lesbian periodicals also saw themselves as part of a larger feminist network, as illustrated by their redistribution of material from other genres within the feminist press. For instance, *Broadside* published a positive review of *New Space for Women*, an anthology produced by *W&E*’s founders. *Broadside* lauded the book’s depiction of female sex role stereotypes as products of traditional environmental design.<sup>11</sup>

Feminist periodicals did not, and feasibly could not, enjoy the professional presentation of commercial magazines. They were often printed on cheap newsprint with most doing their own paste-up or lay-out, “whether the copy is commercially typeset, typeset [*sic*] in-house, or banged out on an IBM.”<sup>12</sup> Their pages teemed with poetry, drawings, photographs, and personal quotes reminding the reader of the subjective sentiment attached to the finished product. Everything about them was personal, which stood in marked contrast to the established journals. Feminist periodicals were created to “push the boundaries of male categories of scholarship,” which, Wachtel reminds us, caused friction between themselves and their funders.<sup>13</sup>

By 1985, feminist periodicals had become so prolific and various, they warranted academic recognition, and they received it when the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women established the *Canadian Women’s Periodical Index*.<sup>14</sup> But this recognition did not relieve the tenuous financial situations of most feminist periodicals. Choosing alternative routes entailed the refusal of revenue from advertising companies.<sup>15</sup> Mainstream magazines, like *Chatelaine* in the late 1970s, were often forced to reposition their content to attract advertising revenue.<sup>16</sup> Financial backing for feminist periodicals had to come from somewhere else. Donations, inexpensive subscriptions, and government agencies, such as the Social Science and Humanities Research

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<sup>10</sup> Freeman, *Beyond Bylines*, 159, 162.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Chapman, “Review of *New Space for Women*,” *Women and Environments* 4, no.3 (1980-1981): 11. Reprinted from *Broadside*, 2, no. 3 (1980-1981).

<sup>12</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 48.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>14</sup> Goddard, “Representation and Exchange,” 104-121.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>16</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 371.

Council, the Canada Council, and the Women's Program, kept these periodicals afloat.<sup>17</sup> Fifteen percent of the budgets for many feminist publications came from the federal government.<sup>18</sup> So, when right-wing anti-feminist proponents portrayed the women's movement as "irksome special interests," in a time of economic downturn, feminist periodicals were especially vulnerable.<sup>19</sup> In 1990, the Women's Program suffered a two million dollar cut, resulting in lost funding for one hundred women's centres all over Canada, and three national feminist magazines.<sup>20</sup> Two periodicals with whom *W&E* bartered advertisements, *Herizons* and *Healthsharing*, ceased as a result. The Winnipeg newspaper *Herizons* ran from 1979 until 1987, when it was forced into a five-year long hiatus.<sup>21</sup> *Healthsharing* also emerged in 1979 and a lack of financial support put an end to *Healthsharing* in 1993. Throughout its publication run, *Healthsharing* reached readers living in the remotest parts of Canada seeking alternative health education. One woman "from the wilds of Alberta" thanked the magazine for sparking "a bit of conversation among the nurses here."<sup>22</sup> After 1990, *Healthsharing* published as a kind of homeless magazine for three more years – its loss in funding left it completely without infrastructural support. Editor Amy Gottlieb railed against these "Tory deficit cuts" as robbery.<sup>23</sup> *Branching Out* suffered a similar fate. Another bartering partner with *W&E*, *Branching Out* ran from 1973 to 1980. Feminist periodicals rarely offered paid positions on their editorial teams, and *Branching Out*'s volunteer staff felt "there was never enough money and never enough time" to get the job done.<sup>24</sup> During its brief period it managed to gain the reputation as the nearest to a national feminist periodical, inciting nationalistic pride among its readers: "An early survey of *Branching Out*'s readership revealed that many subscribed not simply because it was feminist, but 'Canadian feminist.'"<sup>25</sup> In her dissertation, Tessa Jordan explains that *Branching Out*, a cultural magazine, also performed a political role by "providing publishing and exhibition opportunities for Canadian women writers and visual artists at a time when few existed."<sup>26</sup> The forced termination of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>18</sup> Barbara Freeman, "Collective Visions: Lesbian Identity and Sexuality in Feminist Periodicals, 1979-1994," *Beyond Bylines: Media Workers and Women's Rights in Canada*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 160.

<sup>19</sup> Alexandra Dobrowolsky, "The Women's Movement in Flux: Feminism and Framing, Passion and Politics," *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada*, ed. Miriam Smith, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014): 159.

<sup>20</sup> Goddard, "Representation and Exchange," 117.

<sup>21</sup> *Herizons*, "About: FAQ," *Herizons*, <http://www.herizons.ca/faq>.

<sup>22</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 24.

<sup>23</sup> Goddard, "Representation and Exchange," 116-117.

<sup>24</sup> Jordan, "*Branching Out*, 1973-1980," 65.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 15-16, 25.

<sup>26</sup> Jordan, "*Branching Out*, 1973-1980," 8.

feminist periodicals not only spelled the end of a project women with shared interests did on the side. It meant the loss of exhibition space, forums of discussion, and sources of referrals; resources for women who lacked support and representation within society.<sup>27</sup> Feminist periodicals gave many physically or socially isolated women “access for validation of their perceptions or experience.”<sup>28</sup> *W&E* participated in reaching out and serving women who felt inadequately served by mainstream media in one way or another. It devised strategies to build a community feminist periodical that helped foster the Canadian women’s movement.<sup>29</sup> How *W&E* survived in an era when the majority of feminist periodicals is a central point in this study.

### Urban and Environmental Issues in Canada’s Alternative Press

Much of what has been said about feminist periodicals also applied to alternative urban and environmental periodicals in Canada. Alternative periodicals of the late 1960s, early 1970s that catered to urban and/or environmental issues existed outside the mainstream publishing world. They were typically small, produced by citizen collectives or dedicated scholars who had access to printing tools. Normally non-profit, these periodicals frequently refused to accept financial support from the very corporations whose policies they critiqued. They therefore relied on donations rather than commercial revenue in their endeavors to produce and disseminate alternative or radical ideas.

In 1969, urban reformers established a counter-public newsletter. Its purpose was to represent residents of older Toronto neighbourhoods vulnerable to ‘slum clearance,’ and to vocalize their resentment toward urban renewal in a small type, eight page-long newsletter entitled *City Hall*. This newsletter created by Alan Samuel, a University of Toronto professor and participant in the backlash against the Cabbagetown urban renewal. Its contributors included future Toronto mayors and urban reform leaders David Crombie and John Sewell. Issued monthly, *City Hall*’s goal was to report on city hall urban projects for community activists.<sup>30</sup> *City Hall* was entirely non-profit. As Sewell recalls, “we thought it could be a break-even venture...None of us were to receive any money for our efforts – we saw it as a public duty and a way of keeping our supporters informed.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Healthsharing, “Collective Notes,” *Healthsharing: A Canadian Women’s Health Quarterly* 2, no.1 (1980): 3.

<sup>28</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 24.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>30</sup> John Sewell, *How We Changed Toronto: The Inside Story of Twelve Creative, Tumultuous Years in Civic Life, 1969-1980*, (James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Toronto, 2015), 62, 187.

<sup>31</sup> Sewell, *How We Changed Toronto*, 62.

Urban reformers' belief in transparency and citizen consultation laid the foundation for *W&E* urban planners.

In 1967, *The Georgia Straight*, which considered itself an underground newspaper, emerged in Vancouver to communicate radical ideas. It earned its reputation by making public stories that that mainstream media could not or would not cover. Articles echoed urban reform rhetoric:

Rapid transit is designed to promote the concept of the city as a temple of commerce, where the main activity is the making of money and where the population consists of drones who are ferried back and forth in furtherance of this end.<sup>32</sup>

It also devoted ample space to articles about “‘environmental issues’ seriously and consistently, which the *Georgia Straight* began doing about a decade before the mainstream media”<sup>33</sup> Greenpeace founder and journalist, Bob Hunter, wrote regular articles about revolutionary environmental ethics in *The Straight*.<sup>34</sup> He praised *The Straight* for allowing him “to move in some of the directions I’m allowed to. The underground press,” he said, “forced the straight press to move and do things they wouldn’t have done otherwise...”<sup>35</sup> *The Georgia Straight* grounded itself in ecological consciousness-raising. Whilst “mainstream media would simply make fun of them,” *The Straight* became a mouthpiece for Greenpeace, publicizing the countercultural group’s revolutionary environmentalism.<sup>36</sup> Never attempting to offer a national scope, it investigated ecological damage in British Columbia.<sup>37</sup> By the time the United States withdrew from Vietnam, the *Georgia Straight* was a free newspaper, publishing weekly, and reporting regularly on British Columbia’s natural environment, such as oil spills, wildlife migration, and water pollution.<sup>38</sup> It maintained corporate independence, which made “room for writers whose work would not otherwise be acceptable to the ‘mainstream’ magazines and the daily newspapers.”<sup>39</sup> In his 1997 annotated collection of *The Georgia*

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<sup>32</sup> Estevan Pardo, “Rapid Transit System,” *The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?* eds, Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell, (Vancouver: Douglas McIntyre Ltd., 1997). 42.

<sup>33</sup> Terry Glavin, “Introduction,” *The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?* eds, Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell, (Vancouver: Douglas McIntyre Ltd., 1997). 5.

<sup>34</sup> Neil Forkey, *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-first Century*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012, 94.

<sup>35</sup> Bob Hunter in an interview with *The Georgia Straight*, “Everywhere We Went We Spread the Plague,” *Georgia Straight* (1971) in *The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?* eds, Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell, (Vancouver: Douglas McIntyre Ltd., 1997), p.

<sup>36</sup> Zelko, *Make it a Greenpeace*, 22, 44, 57.

<sup>37</sup> Forkey, *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-first Century*, 94.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Glavin, “Introduction,” 4.

*Straight*, Terry Glavin criticized mainstream media for becoming, “little more than a conduit for private media strategies that have been designed to form and shape public opinion...it’s just people who don’t know what they’re talking about, interviewing people who don’t know what they’re talking about.”<sup>40</sup> Consequently, stated Glavin, “there is this strange reality, and a widening chasm between what happens in the real world and what ends up on television or in the newspapers or on the radio.”<sup>41</sup> Editor Bob Cummings stated in 1968: “Underground newspapers are the bastard sons of a free society.”<sup>42</sup> Thirty years later, Glavin echoed this statement: “The *Georgia Straight* is still a bastard of a newspaper. Vancouver is all the better for it. So is the country.”<sup>43</sup>

Although Greenpeace members and endeavors frequently contributed and appeared in the *The Georgia Straight*, Greenpeace briefly published its own periodical. Founded in 1976, *Greenpeace Chronicles* borrowed office space from *The Georgia Straight* before moving to San Francisco two years later. At its height, the newspaper published monthly and was allegedly mailed to 50,000 North Americans.<sup>44</sup> At first only a supplement to the *Straight*, the *Chronicles*’ editor Rex Weyler envisioned it a communications network for environmental groups around the world. It publicized eco-friendly ideas and plans, and encouraged contributions about a wide range of environmental topics.<sup>45</sup> Greenpeace, in the 1970s, did not see the environment as a women’s issue. Nor did it consider the unique problems that damage to the environment created for women. In fact, an interview with the *The Georgia Straight* revealed the group’s sexist justification for preventing women from taking an offensive role in its campaign when it sailed into the nuclear testing waters:

Originally...about three women [were] supposed to be on the crew...We decided that we would get very uptight because the rest of us would be deprived...A few of us had curtains...and the skipper came down and said, “oh – jerk off curtains, eh?”

Clearly, Greenpeace members considered women, even their wives and close friends, as sex objects first, and teammates second. It is ironic that women in the environmental movement have been historically been shoved out as groups gained visibility. After all, the first person to communicate the

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>41</sup> Terry Glavin, “Introduction,” *The Georgia Straight: What the Hell Happened?* eds, Naomi Pauls and Charles Campbell, (Vancouver: Douglas McIntyre Ltd., 1997). 5.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 4, 6.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace: How a Group of Ecologists, Journalists and Visionaries Changed the World*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004, 345, 510, 548.

<sup>45</sup> Zelko, *Make it a Greenpeace*, 235.



jumble of scientific and medical information into an understandable, coherent argument about health and environment” and in so doing arguably sparked the modern environmental movement, was Rachel Carson, a woman.<sup>46</sup> According to Seager, Carson lit the “paths of inquiry for feminist environmental public health interventions,” which were issues of less priority than “wilderness, animal conservation, and wildlife protection.”<sup>47</sup> It was not until the 1980s and 1990s that feminists challenged the narrowness of “the male-led environmental movement.”<sup>48</sup>

Back east, Pollution Probe also published the modest bi-monthly magazine, *Probe Post* (1978-1991), founded by Robert Gibson.<sup>49</sup> Unlike *Greenpeace Chronicles*, *Probe Post* writers were not experienced journalists, but students and volunteers from the organization. Based in Pollution Probe’s building in downtown Toronto, the Ecology House, *Probe Post* printed newsworthy and provocative analyses of city projects.<sup>50</sup> On one occasion, *W&E* advertised *Probe Post*’s upcoming issues, for which it was likely repaid with similar advertising space in *Probe Post*.

Even though *Probe Post* was based in the same city, *W&E* had more in common with Peterborough’s *Alternatives Journal (A/J)*. For instance, both had a similar type of production location, university affiliation, and ability to channel funds. *A/J* emerged in 1971 with a mandate to “promote an understanding of 'environment' in the broadest sense of the word, including social and political dimensions.”<sup>51</sup> Founders Robert Pahelke, a Trent University professor, and Peterborough’s Pollution Probe chapter member, Jim White, sought to fuse scholarship with popular journalism. *A/J* became “a forum in which intellectuals and activists from separate fields could exchange ideas with one another, and bring their stories and research to a general audience.”<sup>52</sup> Trent provided publishing space for the journal, and covered the remaining production costs by funneling funds through a charity. *A/J* operated “on a shoestring budget by faculty and students as a volunteer, cut-and-paste operation – initially handing out freebies in obliging bookstores in the hope of generating interest.”<sup>53</sup> During its first decade, each issue sold for under a dollar. After officially becoming a

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<sup>46</sup> Joni Seager, “Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism,” *Signs: The Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28, no.3 (2003): 959.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 958-959.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 958.

<sup>49</sup> O’Connor, *The First Green Wave*, 66, 128, 143; Alternatives Journal, “The *Alternatives* Story,” <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/about/history>.

<sup>50</sup> O’Connor, *The First Green Wave*, 66, 128, 143.

<sup>51</sup> Alternatives Journal, “About *A/J*,” <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/about>.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

credible source for scholarly research in 1983, *A/J* moved to the University of Waterloo where *Probe* founder, Robert Gibson, took over editorship. It became the formal voice of the Environmental Studies Association of Canada in 1995 and continues to blend activism, scholarly research and insights from professionals today.<sup>54</sup>

### **The *W&E* Story**

The aforementioned publications highlighted the important role the alternative press played for many Canadian activists in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Tessa Jordan observed: “In the same way that a physical meeting of people for the purpose of exchanging ideas can have significant effects on a movement, periodicals act as conceptual meeting spaces.”<sup>55</sup> Alternative publications became spaces where people felt safe to express ideas that countered mainstream politics and culture. They were documentary evidence of radical groups taking control of media tools to stimulate new ways of thinking. They were also threads for physically disconnected people who felt isolated ideologically and geographically. *W&E*’s gestation occurred at a physical gathering of people with similar interests and professions, but its legacy is that of a conceptual venue, where women could meet within its pages and get to know one another through articles and images. It was no stranger to struggle, but its location in a university, its acceptance of financial aid from a variety of sponsors, its moderate radical content, its ability to transfer costs to a registered charity, and the nature of its volunteerism all contributed to its survival during the rise of conservative and anti-feminist backlashes.

### ***W&E* - Beginnings**

Several alternative publications were outgrowths of conferences, university courses, or community meetings. *W&E* “developed from the U.N. Habitat in Vancouver at the alternate forum for NGOs.”<sup>56</sup> Here, Gerda Wekerle, Rebecca Peterson and David Morely from York University’s Environmental Studies department held a workshop on women and environments, attracting over 100 people. Having taught a course and in the planning stages of the book *New Space for Women*, they

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<sup>54</sup> Alternatives Journal, “The *Alternatives* Story,” <http://www.alternativesjournal.ca/about/history>; Ryan O’Connor, *The First Green Wave: Pollution Probe and the Origins of Environmental Activism in Ontario*. Vancouver, UBC Press, 2015, 66, 128.

<sup>55</sup> Jordan, “*Branching Out*, 1973-1980,” 44.

<sup>56</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 23.

were happy to connect with people around the world who were researching the relationship between women and their environments.<sup>57</sup> Shortly after Habitat I, someone who had participated in their workshop suggested they all keep in touch. They hastily circulated a sign-up sheet, which became the initial mailing list for the *Women and Environments Newsletter*: “We felt that many who attended wanted to maintain contact with one another, and that there was sufficient vitality and interest associated with this whole area to warrant the initiation of this newsletter.”<sup>58</sup> The newsletter became the hub for an international network for women, and a few men. Its purpose was to become a vehicle for sharing information about events and research that dealt with women’s relationship to various environments. It was premised with two objectives: First it aimed to share field-related information – publications, popular events, groups, job and course opportunities, conferences and meetings. The second objective was to provide contacts for others working in the field: “We hoped this would break down some of the isolation our readers were experiencing – being the only one, for instance, in a university to teach a course on women and geography.”<sup>59</sup> *W&E* aspired to spearhead new academic and practical fields. One that merged feminism with critiques about environments. Before 1982, *W&E* was a simple newsletter with a low production value that reflected the Do-It-Yourself movement going on at the time.<sup>60</sup> *W&E* in the late 1970s was a four to five-page stapled document, with handwritten augmentations scribbled on page corners and was printed sporadically: “We had no experience in publishing a newsletter, or in graphic skills” and when Morley left the project following the second issue in 1977, *W&E* became a two-person team.<sup>61</sup>

When Kathryn Flannery studied examples of the American feminist press from the 1970s, she examined flyers, newsletters, newspapers, magazines, or paperbound journals, which were supported by volunteers who scrounged for funds and inexpensive materials. The result was free or very cheap publications. The feminist press operated as an alternative educational institution. Flannery referred to these press pieces as “women’s university-without-walls.”<sup>62</sup> The Canadian feminist press functioned similarly. Emerging in a time when journalism, much like most other areas

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<sup>57</sup> Anne Wordsworth, “In Focus: 35 Years of *Women and Environments International*,” 49.

<sup>58</sup> *W&E*, “Editorial,” *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 1, no.1, (1976): 1.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 2; Gerda Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.3 (1986): 8.

<sup>60</sup> Gaye Alexander, “Vancouver to Istanbul – Insights from Our Founders,” *Women and Environments*, no. 39/40 (1996): 5.

<sup>61</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 6; *W&E*, “Editorial,” *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 2, no.2, (1978): 1.

<sup>62</sup> Kathryn Flannery, *Feminist Literacies, 1968-1975*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 25.

of employment, was dominated by men, feminist periodicals sought to “reshape what would constitute legitimate and politically effective knowledge.”<sup>63</sup> *W&E* functioned somewhat like a women’s university-without-walls insofar that they operated out of a predominantly male workplace. However, *W&E* published at the relatively liberal York University, where its founders had already taught a course and mentored graduate students studying gendered feminist theory and the environment. With women leading enrolment growth since 1970, its editors could have imagined there was a market for their ideas.<sup>64</sup>

### Financial Struggle, Ownership and Survival

*W&E* was not immune to the financial struggles that plagued so many independent periodicals, and its perseverance was admirable. At first, the newsletter was sent freely to the 100 workshop participants who had placed their names on a mailing list. The list grew longer and Wekerle and Peterson received more contributions.<sup>65</sup> The year 1978 was the only year in the 1970s that *W&E* managed to print two issues. That year saw the beginning of its higher production value, with its clearer typeset and longer articles. Improvements, however, incurred cost. *W&E* stopped thanking readers for the occasional donation and frankly explained that without money from a private or government granting agency or a subscription fee, the newsletter could not continue.<sup>66</sup>

York University’s Faculty of Environmental Studies had been an incubator for the newsletter, but could no longer absorb the cost of what was becoming an official feminist publication with a mailing list of 600 subscribers. The cost of printing and postage led university administration to question what it saw as a “personal” project of two faculty members, a position that would have disheartened the editors who created the newsletter to specifically serve a broader community.<sup>67</sup> *W&E* editorialized again and again that the newsletter relied on its readers’ donations to survive until finally they introduced \$5 subscription fee in 1979. Immediately afterwards, 500 people took their names off the mailing list.<sup>68</sup> Such a response demonstrated, very dramatically, that

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>64</sup> Patricia Clements, “My World as in My Time: Living in the History of Equity and Backlash,” *Not Drowning But Waving: Women, Feminism, and the Liberal Arts*. Eds. Susan Brown, Jeanne Perrault, Jo-Ann Wallace and Heather Zwicker, (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011): 5.

<sup>65</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 7.

<sup>66</sup> *W&E*, “Editorial,” 1.

<sup>67</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 7

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

only the most devoted readers would pay for the publication. According to Doris Anderson, feminism was by the late 1970s and early 1980s, becoming stale and losing its appeal among the general public.<sup>69</sup> Subscription fees failed to cover the total production cost, and *W&E*'s low circulation disqualified the publications from Women's Program funding.<sup>70</sup> Without subsidies, it could not fulfil its promise to publish three times a year. Warning readers that the department planned to cut its funding, *W&E* implored readers not only to renew subscriptions, but to advertise through the grapevine: "We are still plagued by financial problems as we are not associated with any dues paying organization...tell your friends about us, and ask your library or organization to subscribe. We are interested in exchange for ads with other publication[s] and accept paid ads."<sup>71</sup> *W&E* exchanged advertisements with publications, such as *Status of Women News*, *Canadian Women's Studies*, *Resources for Feminist Research*, *Healthsharing*, the *Conserver Society Notes*, *Birch Bark Alliance*, which was "a non-profit, quarterly newspaper devoted to the coverage of nuclear concerns and energy options."<sup>72</sup> Paid advertisements came from groups or universities advertising courses. Wekerle and Peterson began to manage the newsletter by treating "it more like a small business and less like an academic enterprise. We attended workshops on magazine production and organization, we found low cost printers and typesetters: we cooperated in joint advertising campaigns and traded mailing lists."<sup>73</sup>

By the 1980s, *W&E* had garnered recognition from other funding agencies. It earned two university grants to fund an economical double issue in 1980/1981. Then, in the spring of 1981, the Women's Program provided a small subsidy, sufficient enough to help the newsletter undergo an official transformation into a mature magazine in late 1982. Other forms of government subsidies came to *W&E* through membership to the Canadian Publishers Association (CPPA). According to the CPPA, every magazine had unique value and was capable of "opening up intellectual, or social, or professional territory that otherwise would remain closed."<sup>74</sup> The CPPA guaranteed its publicity as well as financial help and security. For example, in 1983 *W&E* and ten other feminist CPPA

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<sup>69</sup> Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Inc, 2000): 371.

<sup>70</sup> Wekerle, "The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments," 7.

<sup>71</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 4, no.1&2 (1980): 2.

<sup>72</sup> Women and Environments, "A Voice of Nuclear Concern is a Voice Worth Listening to!" *Women and Environments*, 4, no.3 (1980/1981): 5.

<sup>73</sup> Wekerle, "The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments," 7.

<sup>74</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 20-21.

members in similar financial straits organized a joint direct mail campaign to obtain lower mailing list costs.

At the time, *W&E*, like other feminist publications, did not own a computer or word-processor. The editors organized their mailing list with portable and user-friendly handwritten index cards. Part of the rationale was that *W&E* took issue with “male-controlled technology,” which even if made affordable, required computer literacy and could not “provide the personalized service that is part of the running of many feminist publications...some of our letters to you,” writes *W&E*, “are even hand-written.”<sup>75</sup> In these early days, *W&E* reflected the women’s movements skepticism toward advanced technology. *W&E* also followed the typical organizational structure, which was common among older feminist collectives. In her memoir, Kay MacPherson recalled that recruitment methods for VOW were simple: “If one woman knew another woman who could keep books, organize a sale, speak in public...then she was persuaded to come and help and usually stayed in.”<sup>76</sup> *W&E*’s subscription lists testify that readers often became writers and even editors. Spreading news about feminist activity through word of mouth and using any available resources was a prime *W&E* tactic throughout the decades. “Most of you pass us on to an average of three others,” the editors reformed their readers in their response to a reader survey.<sup>77</sup>

From 1985 to 1988, *W&E* published regularly. It was produced quarterly, and published two network directory issues in 1987 and 1988. What’s more, each issue came out on schedule – Winter, Spring and Fall. By 1989, release dates dropped to one to two times a year, with most editions being double issues. Using funds cobbled together from various places– including the editors’ own pockets – and gradually increasing subscription fees, *W&E* was able to keep printing. The subscription fees and donations by no means fully supported *W&E*. Its survival, therefore, depended considerably on funding agencies, free services and resources, such as secretarial and design assistance, and production space, from York University and later the University of Toronto’s Centre for Urban and Community Studies.<sup>78</sup> The Women’s Program and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) offered regular funding – although conservative politics in the mid-1980s rendered grants from the former somewhat unreliable. Other

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<sup>75</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 6, no.1 (1983): 2.

<sup>76</sup> Kay Macpherson. *When in Doubt do Both: The Times of My Life*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 89.

<sup>77</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us: Survey Results,” *Women and Environments* 10 no.3, (1988): 4.

<sup>78</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 5, no.3 (1982): 4.

sponsors gave money only when *W&E* printed special issues pertaining to them. For example, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Ontario Ministry of Housing sponsored *W&E*'s Fall 1987 issue. Its editors thanked CMHC for "having thus declared [its] interest in women's shelter, the Corporation will reach a deepened understanding and commitment to addressing the conditions which are so clearly exposed in these pages."<sup>79</sup>

Following the 1989 Polytechnique Massacre in Montreal, *W&E* teamed up with Metro Action Committee on Public Violence against Women and Children (METRAC) for its 1989/1990 Winter issue on women and urban safety. Since METRAC supported the entire issue, most of the issue's feature-length articles were reprints from METRAC publications. Business W.I.S.E., Ontario Farm Women's Network, and Women for Survival of Agriculture all funded the Spring 1996 special issue on Canadian farm women, and Health and Welfare Canada funded issues dealing with women living in co-operative housing. The Spring/Summer 1989 issue was financed by two unlikely corporations – The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company Ltd. and once by Petro-Canada Inc.<sup>80</sup> *W&E* never explained why it accepted Petro-Canada's donations, and it would have been a conflict of interest for the magazine because its new owner, WEED, was dedicated to healthy natural environments. Still, times were desperate in those conservative years, and rather than go the fate of so many other feminist periodicals, *W&E* perhaps compromised its values in order to stay in print. It can be concluded that its sponsors had a significant impact on what *W&E* printed, and in return, its depictions of these organizations and corporations as generous. It is important to remember that except for UNESCO, all of *W&E*'s sponsors were Canadian organizations, institutions, or corporations. *W&E*'s survival would have been impossible had not been for Canadian funding agencies' recognition of *W&E*'s value for Canadian women.

In 1987 the WEED Foundation, co-founded by *W&E* editor Miriam Wyman, took over ownership of the magazine. Publication of the magazine was WEED's sole project. Editors disclosed to their readers that it chose to become a charitable foundation chiefly "to help us raise money."<sup>81</sup> Under the cooperative model, the editors invited readers to become part of the WEED Foundation much the same as they had joined the *W&E* network. To incentivize people, WEED

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<sup>79</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 10, no.1 (1987): 3.

<sup>80</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 11, no.3/4 (1989): 3.

<sup>81</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 110 no.3 (1988): 3.

introduced the special title “A Pillar of Environment,” to anyone who made tax-deductible donations to the charity. The title operated on a tier. For example, a donation over \$500.00 granted someone the title, “Lifetime Pillar;” a donation between \$100.00 and \$499.00 earned the title “Sustaining Pillar;” and for \$25.00 to \$99.00 one could be called “Well-Intentioned Pillar.”<sup>82</sup>

Financial consistencies included *W&E*’s reliance on university support, subscriptions, and private donations under WEED. Albeit, for a few years, WEED produced the magazine in a low-cost office space provided by Bathurst Street United Church Centre for Peace and Justice in downtown Toronto.

*W&E*’s money troubles worsened when, caught up in the midst of anti-feminist attacks, the Mulroney government froze the Secretary of State Women’s Program. Subscription sales paid for 60% of income costs. Meanwhile, conservative women’s groups wanted to reduce or augment criteria for Women’s Program grants.<sup>83</sup> Anti-feminist groups like REAL Women of Canada, some churches, and politicians lobbied to cease government funding for all feminist print and services advocating women’s sexual freedom. By 1990, large cuts to the Women’s Program led to the collapse of much active research and publishing programs.<sup>84</sup> According to Barbara Goddard: “Statistics on the number of feminist periodicals published in Canada in 1997 are hard to come by with the collapse of the periodicals index.”<sup>85</sup> To combat these struggles in 1997, *W&E* announced it would start including advertisements and joined another charity, Earth Appeal, “an umbrella group of eighteen members founded to facilitate the flow of core funding to environmental groups, all struggling against the financial realities of operating for cause in a profit-driven society.”<sup>86</sup> Joining Earth Appeal allowed for its eligibility to access corporate employee deductions and targeted donations.<sup>87</sup>

### **The Periodical is ‘The Child’: Editors’ Efforts and a Transformation of Presentation**

Like many alternative periodicals, *W&E* depended on the tireless efforts of primarily

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.2 (1982): 3.

<sup>84</sup> Barbara Goddard, “Representation and Exchange: Feminist Periodicals and the Production of Cultural Value,” *Tessera* (2002): 105.

<sup>85</sup> Goddard, “Representation and Exchange,” 117, 115.

<sup>86</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, no.41 (1997): 3, 2.

<sup>87</sup> Goddard, “Representation and Exchange,” 118.



volunteer labour, but its higher turnover of editors compared to its contemporaries prevented burn out. It was ironic that despite feminism's belief in economic equality for women, "women as free labour are the most essential ingredient of the feminist publishing industry's survival."<sup>88</sup> Sending *W&E* issues to press on time meant sacrificing a lot of time and energy. Beginning with Wekerle, *W&E* managing editors referred to the magazine as "the child," equating their production time of the magazine to unpaid parental labour. In her 1984 farewell editorial, Wekerle surmised, "it's a hint of what it feels like to let a child that's grownup go off on its own. It has a life of its own and is not as dependent on me."<sup>89</sup> Such emotional attachment, not only to forgo income but to put personal money into a project, was – and remains today – the case for the majority of feminist projects. Throughout most provinces, parents do not get paid to have children, they pay to have them.

In the early 1980s, Wekerle and Peterson were still doing most of the legwork, all the while teaching full-time at the university level, and raising young families. Wekerle described the day of her first child's birth as the lowest point in her time with *W&E*: "[H]ours after the birth, the typesetter showed up at the doorstep of my home with 24 pages of type. Trying to proofread, organize layout, negotiate with a printer and mail out the magazine seemed as impossible as scaling Mount Everest..."<sup>90</sup> In 1982, help came in the form of three paid graduate student positions to be filled annually for *W&E*'s editorial team. The positions were filled chiefly, but not exclusively, by female students from York's Environmental Studies, Communications, and Fine Arts departments. With increased assistance, presentation and content evolved and *W&E* settled into its new identity as a magazine. Graphically, it had a more formal look. It was bound, with feature article titles listed on the glossy coloured cover that displayed either original artwork or a photograph depicting a particular theme.<sup>91</sup> Its typesetting was professional and there were fewer editing errors to apologize for from one issue to the next. Higher circulation numbers resulted, accompanied by more accountability to present a better and timely product. In terms of content, the editions steadily became longer, from six pages in 1976, to more than double the following year and twenty-five in the early-1980s. Page number leveled out in the mid to late 1980s, with double issues averaging

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<sup>88</sup> Sharon Batt, "Feminist Publishing: Where Small is Not so Beautiful." *Status of Women News/ Statut de la femme* 6.2 (1980): 12-13, quoted in Tessa E. Jordan, "Branching Out, 1973-1980: Canadian Second-Wave Feminism, Periodical Publishing and Cultural Politics" (PhD diss., University of Alberta, 2012), 83.

<sup>89</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 6, no.2 (1984): 1.

<sup>90</sup> Wekerle, "The Birth & Growth of Women & Environments," 8.

<sup>91</sup> Wekerle, "The Birth & Growth of Women & Environments," 8.

thirty-eight pages. Item count averaged at 38.5 per issue, with feature articles averaging two pages over the course of the years. As time progressed, its presentation changed in favour of more professional material, such as original black and white photos rather than amateur drawings to illustrate stories. Reports on people, organizations and events reduced in number or were condensed.<sup>92</sup> During the years 1983, 1987, 1988, 1991 and 1997, *W&E* devoted whole issues to network directories.

Newcomers to the editorial board in 1982 had more experience with journalism, and were not necessarily academics, but “persons active in the feminist community and in the environmental and planning professions.”<sup>93</sup> This change signaled a shift in the magazine’s scholarly content in favour of articles about urban and community planning. The shift also gave *W&E* better access to more practical circles (i.e. private consultancy firms), and delegated management responsibilities to people with different skills. Regula Modlich, a Toronto planning consultant and Miriam Wyman, an Urban Planning doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto, were also active in the prolific organization, Women Plan Toronto (WPT).<sup>94</sup> Other additions included Gay Alexander, a housing consultant for the Lantana Housing Cooperative Resource Group and in 1984, planning consultant Barbara Sanford (now Rahder), and Judith Kjellberg. With years of publishing experience, Kjellberg took editorship from 1984 until 1987. The editorial switch was not only to relieve a burnt-out Wekerle, but to shift the financial weight from York University to the University of Toronto, where Kjellberg worked as Program Officer in the Urban and Community Studies department’s Research Center – “a clearing-house for information on urban studies in the Toronto area.”<sup>95</sup> Her access to material on urban planning, it will be shown, influenced *W&E*’s content. Like Wekerle, Kjellberg had a maternal approach to her role as editorial manager. In 1990, the editors thanked her for her relentless help:

Judith has nurtured [the magazine] as only a talented and dedicated journalistic mother can...The “child” has continued to flourish under her guidance, and we are very proud and grateful. But a new nest and a new mother must be found...none of us is prepared to let this

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 5, no.3 (1982): 4.

<sup>94</sup> Gerda Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 8; Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 5, no.3 (1982): 4.

<sup>95</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 5, no.3 (1982): 4; Gerda Wekerle, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 6, no.2 (1984): 1.

rambunctious and successful child go completely unmothered!<sup>96</sup>

At this point, the magazine was still “a child,” but one gradually entering maturity. Kjellberg formally retired in 1987, but remained on the editorial team for years afterward. Alexander, Modlich, and Wyman also remained until well into the 1990s. Wyman’s influence increasingly became evident in 1987, when WEED took over the magazine. Two additional editorial members who incorporated governmental perspectives in the 1990s were Gloria De Santis, Research Director at the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District, and Rosemary Foulds from the Department of Social Services, Regional Municipality of Hamilton and Wentworth, Ontario, in the Social Planning Division.<sup>97</sup> The issues under their management included feature articles about public programs, government policy and research on social services, particularly public housing.

Four factors contributed to *W&E*’s survival during the era of government cuts and feminist backlash. First, despite its explicit stance against sexual violence towards women, *W&E* tempered its treatment of radical feminist topics. It did not address women’s rights to explore their sexual freedoms, sexual orientation, pornography, birth control, and abortion. It was far less radical than some of its contemporaries, such as *Broadside*, *Healthsharing* and *Herizons*. After “right-wing politicians, churches and civic groups such as REAL Women that wanted an end to government funding for any feminist service or publication that advocated abortion or lesbianism” made it so, “feminist groups applying for funds had to get around the policy or die.” *Herizons* perished.<sup>98</sup> Periodicals devoted to lesbian topics also existed in precarious financial straits. Systemic discrimination made it difficult for them to secure public funding and advertising.<sup>99</sup> Second, *W&E* was able to do what many feminist groups could not or would not do when funding was cut; the magazine made bureaucratic changes. In 1987, it was incorporated into the WEED Foundation, and the result was a shift in attention to natural environments, as will be discussed in chapter three. Because WEED was an umbrella group for other very small groups working with women’s health in the environment, it qualified for certain funding that *W&E* as a single publication did not. Similar to

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<sup>96</sup> Women and Environments, “Thank you Judith!” *Women and Environments*, 12 no.2 (1990): 2.

<sup>97</sup> Profiles of Gloria DeSantis and Rosemary Foulds in *Women and Environments*, 14, no.1 (1994): 7, 15.

<sup>98</sup> Barbara Freeman, “Collective Visions: Lesbian Identity and Sexuality in Feminist Periodicals, 1979-1994,” *Beyond Bylines: Media Workers and Women’s Rights in Canada*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 160.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

A/J, which created the charity Alternatives Inc. solely for the purpose of publishing the journal, WEED was created chiefly to publish *W&E* magazine.<sup>100</sup> Ten years later, in 1997, *W&E* registered under the charity Earth Appeal. Third, *W&E* had long since been associated with two of Toronto's prestigious academic institutions, which gave it credibility and access to resources. The last major factor that accounts for *W&E*'s perseverance was the nature of its volunteers. Many alternative magazines, especially feminist "periodicals depended extensively or exclusively on volunteers."<sup>101</sup> One of the benefits of *W&E*'s location in universities was the opportunity to hand over responsibility to other people, at times even paid graduate students. Like many alternative magazines, *W&E* had core people assuming primary responsibility for organizing and putting out issues, but they were able to rotate tasks and share skills more easily than others.<sup>102</sup>

## Conclusion

At the start of the 1970s, the Canadian Publishers Association, of which *W&E* and so many alternative magazines were a part, submitted a report to the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, stating: "Whatever its origins or its means of delivery, a magazine offers itself first of all as a way of opening up intellectual or social or professional territory that otherwise would remain closed to the reader."<sup>103</sup> To date, there no single study reveals the longevity of Canada's feminist and radical environmental alternative periodicals. Yet, research indicates that most of the periodicals with which *W&E* would have been compared did not publish past the 1980s, which speaks to *W&E*'s sustainability, a rare characteristic within the alternative press. That decade marked the emergence of a lively feminist press that aimed to serve Canadian women in ways the mainstream media failed to do. With their existence outside the mainstream publishing world, feminist periodicals had to rely on public funding, university and government grants, charities, donations, fundraising, and of course, hours of volunteer labour. Feminist periodicals often exchanged advertising space with one another, as well as other feminist cohorts, and allied with other organizations to qualify for financial aid. The experimental and oppositional natures of feminist periodicals created challenges for their unpaid, overworked editorial staffs during the rise of right-wing government and counter-feminist pressure

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<sup>100</sup> Barbara Freeman, "Collective Visions," 160.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>103</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 2.

coalitions. Wachtel described the end of feminist periodicals as severed lifelines, “especially women living in far-flung, rural areas of the country. Here women feel doubly isolated; often the only feminists in their communities, they have no access to validation of their perceptions or experience, and no arena for action.”<sup>104</sup> Despite its shaky beginnings, *W&E* managed to sustain itself whilst its contemporary feminist publications could not. Its relationship with powerful universities played a major role in its survival. Its endurance was due to the regular turn over on the editorial team, which relieved burn out. Additionally, *W&E* offered paid positions for graduate students from York’s Environmental Studies Department, a blessing many other feminist periodicals could not afford. It also published less radical content than its contemporaries, so it was less of a target for counter-feminist pressure groups. When push came to shove, *W&E* took the opportunity to explore alternative funding routes by changing owners, and by registering under charities. Its endurance was also made possible because its editors accepted funds from a wide variety of sponsors, even unlikely ones like Petro-Canada that may have appeared to have conflicting interests. These strategies allowed *W&E* to continue publishing in an era that saw the end to so many feminist periodicals. The loss of feminist publications meant the loss of exhibition space, forums of discussion, sources of referrals and resources for women who lacked representation and support from wider society. Feminist periodicals gave many physically or socially isolated women “access for validation of their perceptions or experience.”<sup>105</sup> *W&E* participated in reaching out and serving women who felt inadequately served by society. It devised strategies to build a community of feminists in Canada interested in environmental issues.

To a lesser extent, *W&E*’s story was akin to environment-focused alternative periodicals. Much like the feminist press emerged from within the women’s movement, Canadian periodicals with environmental focuses surfaced from the political and social movements, urban reform and environmentalism. They covered news and stories on citizen-based city-planning, air and water pollution, oil spills in the natural environment, and nuclear testing. Their politics and organization varied, ranging from radical underground newspapers for a regional audience to esteemed scholarly publications with a national scope. Some offered free distributions; others charged nominal fees. None was profit-oriented. Most broke even whereas others acquired deficits. Some were citizen-

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>105</sup> Wachtel, *Feminist Print Media*, 24.

based, and all of them attempted to engage with average informed citizen. By doing so, these periodicals situated themselves at the frontlines of political and social movements. None, however, dealt specifically or depth with women's issues, even though women took part in these environmental groups. Women helped found Pollution Probe, and Greenpeace. Women sat on *A/J*'s editorial board. Nevertheless, women's issues and feminist perspectives were by and large left out of their publications. Is if this were not bad enough, evidence indicates that female Greenpeace members still dealt with being treated as sex objects by their male counterparts. *W&E*'s mission to deliver women's message within urban-planning and environmental campaigns and its unique definitions of an environment are perhaps what makes it most distinctive from other periodicals focused on physical environments. As with any magazine, *W&E*'s editors were key factors for the direction of the publication. Not a single editor wavered in her dedication to *W&E*'s mission. In much the same way, its writers and readers faithfully followed the theme: "We try to represent our individual as well as collective interests, trusting that you will share those interests, if not in a given issue, then across a number of issues."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us: Who Reads *Women and Environments*: Our Readers Respond," *Women and Environments*, 7, no.2 (1985): 2.

## Chapter Two: *W&E* Up Close: Quantitative Analysis of Content, Contributors, and Network Participants

*W&E* prided itself on functioning as a clearinghouse for information, a site for original articles, and a networking tool, working to sustain a dialogue among members. This chapter uses quantitative analysis of *W&E*'s contributors/content, and its readership to illustrate that although *W&E* set out to be international in scope and offer equal coverage on all environment types, much of its make-up was ultimately influenced by its Canadian editorship and location at Canada's urban universities in central Canada. This chapter is divided into two parts. Part one discusses *W&E*'s content and contributors. The nature of its content very much depended on the contributors' – especially editors' – demographics. The categories of analysis include sex, occupational background, geographical location, and environment type and were based on a sample of issues from the years 1976, 1980, 1986, 1990, and 1996.

Part two of this chapter deals with the magazine's readership. *W&E* constantly worked to expand its readership, and maintain loyal subscribers. One of the ways it built a unified readership was by referring to readers as 'network participants.' Since most writers also subscribed to the magazine, they too were considered network participants. As a result, all members were considered equal; editors encouraged them to send in written contributions, and all were required to pay the subscription fee. To drive home its identification with equality, *W&E* decorated its cover and pages with images representing egalitarianism (i.e. webs, wheels, mandalas, and the woman's symbol). The magazine also devoted whole issues to network directories, and stressed the importance for all members to be reachable. Directories featured two alphabetized lists about the participants: an index of interests, and contact information organized by country. Editors also honoured readers by conducting reader surveys and writing in-depth reader profiles. Assessing *W&E*'s readership involved tracking its changes over time, which proved difficult due to the directories' irregular releases. Ultimately, an exploration of *W&E*'s readership relied on evidence specific to readership, *W&E*'s "Report of the 'Women and Environment' session at Habitat I published in the first issue, reader surveys, reader profiles, and data generated from the network directories published in 1978, 1983, 1987, 1988, 1991 and 1997. The categories used to analyze *W&E*'s readers are identical to those used to investigate *W&E*'s contributors.

## Content and Contributors

The decision to print certain material in *W&E* was based on submissions and an agreement among the editorial collective. A typical *W&E* issue consisted of a variety of article types. In general, long feature articles had their titles printed on the cover. They also directed the theme of a particular issue. When weighted, feature articles made up 66% of magazine content. Guidelines stipulated an average of 2,500 words per feature article. The “notes” section was wide-ranging and fluid. It included research in-progress, unpublished papers, lectures, bibliographies, job openings, classes, upcoming conferences and workshops and an occasional call for papers. The “Events” section included short blurbs about symposiums, lectures, and campaigns. ‘Correspondents’ and the short-lived section, “In the Field,” covered feminist activism on the ground.

While most *W&E* contributors were women, the magazine welcomed contributions from men as well, after all one third of its founders – David Morely – was male. Having male editors and contributors was uncommon for feminist periodicals at the time. For example, *Branching Out*, enforced a “women writers only” policy, “because we feel there is a female point of view towards society that has not been sufficiently explored by either male-run interest magazines, or traditional women’s magazines.”<sup>1</sup> Throughout *W&E*’s first two decades, about 5% of its authors were men. This number may seem low given the number of men in academia— *W&E* founders were just beginning their careers in 1961 when men accounted for almost 90% of Canada’s university professors.<sup>2</sup> Obviously very few men were interested. Men interested in the magazine were likely those in the same circles as the editors. Most male contributors ascribed to liberal feminism. A few challenged ecofeminist arguments. For example, then graduate student, Niel Evernden, reviewed a book written with an ecofeminist perspective whose author was also a woman: “[o]ne can’t help but wonder whether the natural tendency to want to associate desirable traits with whatever group one is part of...hasn’t led her to choose for women an extravagant share of humanity’s better traits.”<sup>3</sup> With caution, Evernden followed up with an assurance: “But, having only a male experience to bring to

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<sup>1</sup> Susan McMaster. “Branching to?” *Branching Out*. Edmonton: New Women’s Magazine Society, v.1, n. 1, 1973, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cecily Devereux, “What to Expect When You’re Not Expecting: or, What Having a Uterus or Even Just Looking Like You Have One Means for Women in the Academy,” *Not Drowning But Waving: Women, Feminism, and the Liberal Arts*. Eds. Susan Brown, Jeanne Perrault, Jo-Ann Wallace and Heather Zwicker, (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 2011): 87.

<sup>3</sup> Niel Evernden, “Review of *Why the Green Nigger?: Re-Mything Genesis*,” *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 4, no.1&2, (1980): 12.



bear, I may be quite wrong about that.”<sup>4</sup> Evernden’s critique was published in 1980. That year, men composed a quarter of *W&E*’s editorial team. The year 1980 also featured a higher number of submissions from men, a phenomenon that sparked a readers’ queries about the magazine’s open-door policy, as will be discussed in the readership analysis.

The contributors’ occupational backgrounds generally depended on the editorial management and production location at a given time. In *W&E*’s early years, most contributors were academics, like Wekerle and Peterson. A large portion of the magazine comprised of scholarly material or advertisements on upcoming conferences or university courses, which reflected its founders’ areas of expertise. Furthermore, since *W&E* depended on advertising through word of mouth, it published topics written by people who crossed paths with the editors. The magazine’s focus shifted to topics relevant to urban and community planning professions and urban activism when Alexander, Modlich, and Wyman joined the editorial board in 1982. It shifted further in this direction in 1984, when *W&E* was transferred to the University of Toronto, with Kjellberg assuming the managing editor role. All four of these women were members of Women Plan Toronto (WPT), a grassroots organization of planners, architects, and scholars other professionals working to shape Toronto’s environments.<sup>5</sup> In 1987, long time editor, Miriam Wyman, left academia without finishing her doctoral degree. She put her energy toward environmental activism and represented *W&E* at international environmental summits.<sup>6</sup> Wyman co-founded the Women, Environments, Education, and Development (WEED) Foundation in 1987, which was instrumental in the magazine’s coverage of topics about natural environments written by women belonging to NGOs. These topics appeared primarily in years outside of the sample issues chosen for this study, specifically in two issues from 1987 and 1988, as well as three double issues printed between 1991 and 1993.

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<sup>4</sup> Evernden, “Review of *Why the Green Nigger?*” 12.

<sup>5</sup> Regula Modloch, “Women Plan Toronto,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.1 (1986): 20; Regula Modlich, “Women Plan Toronto (-2000) and Toronto Women’s City Alliance (2004-and struggling on): Experiences and Lessons,” *Universitas Forum*, 3, no.1 (2012), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Miriam Wyman, “About the Editor,” *Sweeping the Earth: Women Taking Action for a Healthy Planet*, Charlottetown: Gynergy Books (1999): 356.

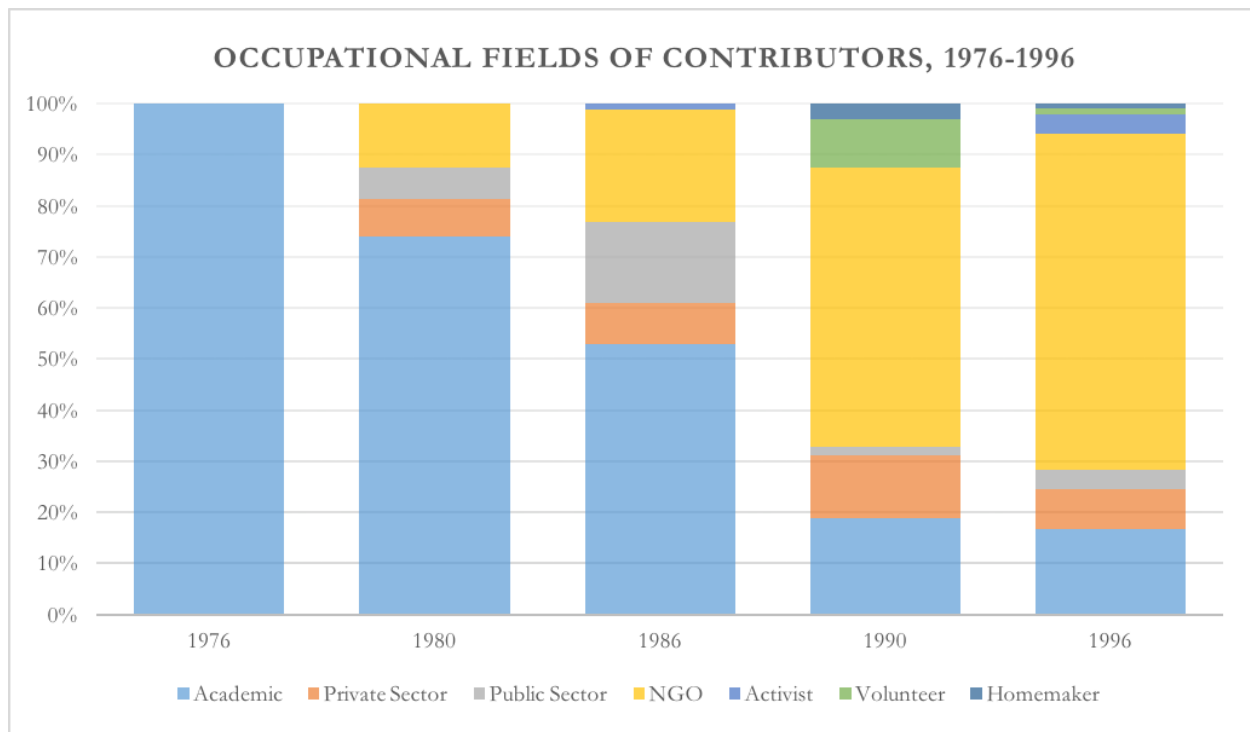


Figure 1 – Break down of occupational fields of the contributors of *W&E* from the year 1976 to 1996.

As shown in Figure 1, the number of *W&E* contributors was overwhelmingly academic in the early years. More specifically, the number of articles written by academics was above other categories in the years 1976, 1980, and 1986. Of course, there was only one issue printed that year by the founders who were all scholars. Over the next few years, more contributions from NGO workers, such as members from WPT. That does not mean these women were uneducated, in fact, most of them had at least one university degree. They simply were not scholars. The percentage of NGO representatives consistently increased throughout the years. In other words, the articles written by people who identified as members of NGOs made up 22%, 55%, and 65% in the years 1986, 1990, and 1996, respectively. The years following WEED's take over of the magazine illustrate contributors were joined by volunteers and independent activists came on board. NGO workers may very well have had other employment, but listed NGO as their identifier following their articles to showcase their group. *W&E* may very well have been the only free advertising space for some of these groups. It is important to remember that the contributors' occupational backgrounds overlapped. Contributors could very well belong to more than one category, but did not always identify with each of their categories. A contributor writing as a representative of an NGO, for

instance, also employed in the public or private sectors, but did not necessarily identify with both. If they did, they were counted as both.

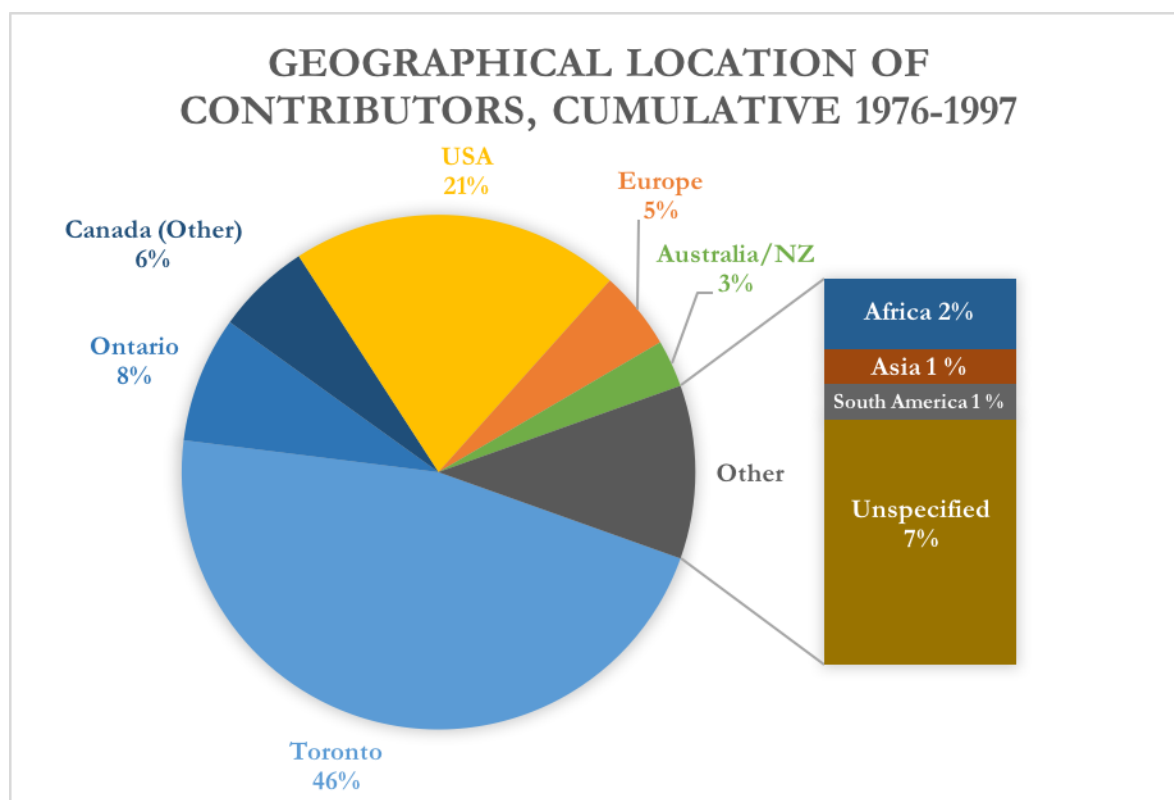


Figure 2- Breakdown of Geographical backgrounds of contributors from the all years, 1976 to 1997

No matter the occupation, most of *W&E*'s contributors lived in Canada, as evidenced in the information blurbs included at the end or incorporated into the article. Figure 2 illustrates that most women who sent in written submissions to the magazine were Canadian, and made up 60% of the total number of contributors during the twenty-one years under review. The 6% defined as 'Other' represents women in various parts of Canada, most of whom were from cities, namely Halifax, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. The overwhelming number of articles offering a Toronto perspective is explicable by the majority of *W&E*'s writers living and working in Toronto. As Eleanor Watchel observed, despite their best efforts to provide national coverage, feminist periodicals were constrained by a lack of resources and time.<sup>7</sup> While international contributors made up 33% of this

<sup>7</sup> Watchel, *Feminist Print Media*, 15.

magazine, 21% of these contributors were Canada's American cousins. International postage was expensive, and even mailing articles within Canada was costly and at times unreliable. The Canada Post strike in 1981 delayed *W&E*'s publication that year, albeit since the demand for paid maternity leave was a central issue to the strike, *W&E* forgave the inconvenience.<sup>8</sup> The magazine's regional focus was likely one reason behind its reluctance to incorporate "international" into its name until 1998, when it had a more substantial pool of international writers. It covered stories on Copenhagen and London, but few topics addressed women in the developing world until the late 1990s. *W&E* had neither writers nor readers from developing countries in the 1970s. In 1985, it printed three entries about women in Africa in response to readers' request for "more information about women in the Third World."<sup>9</sup>

Yet, these articles were likely written by women originally from developed countries, an assumption based on the authors' names: Diana Baxter, Diana Lee Smith, Fran Hosken, which appear to be Anglo-American and European names. It is presumptuous to judge a person's heritage purely by her surname, but these names stand in marked contrast to the contributors in the Spring 1996 issue where Rhoda Kahatano wrote about women and housing in Tanzania, Günseli Tamkoç discussed women's traditional labour in rural Turkey, and Dr. Rashmi Shrivastava looked at women's activism to block the construction of a dam in India. It was by no coincidence that *W&E* dedicated its Spring 1996 issue to reports on the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul, where it made more global connections.

Until *W&E*'s contributors list became culturally diverse, *W&E* approached topics on race and multiculturalism with caution. Toronto feminist circles experienced some racial tensions. During the planning of Toronto's International Women's Day, African-Canadian women suggested "making 1986 a year about anti-racism," and the meeting became very charged: "[W]e said that racism is not like an issue that you can do and then go away. Some white women threw their hands up in the air because they lost control and so felt they couldn't do anything."<sup>10</sup> In a broader context, cross-racial tension also surfaced with Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum's *Into the Heart of Africa*, a 1989 exhibit. The exhibit displayed cultural artifacts collected by Canada's military and missionary groups in

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<sup>8</sup> Women and Environments. "Editorial," *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 5, no.1, (1981): 2.

<sup>9</sup> Wyman, "A Word from Us: Who Reads *Women and Environments*? Our Readers Respond," (1985): 2.

<sup>10</sup> Dionne Brand, "Taking it to the Streets: International Women's Day," *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution*, ed. Judy Rebick (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2005), 122-123.

Africa. Toronto's Black community criticized the exhibition for glorifying Canada's colonialism by using images and phrases that possessed negative meanings, according to Africans and African-Canadians, such as "Darkest Africa." People stood outside the ROM's doors, protesting angrily, and accusing the exhibit's use of the dominant discourse that devalued and disempowered "the Other." They demanded, unsuccessfully, that the exhibit be taken down.<sup>11</sup> During this time, all *W&E*'s editorial team was of white, European heritage, and conceivably felt ill equipped to comment on the ROM controversy. More likely, *W&E* did not see the controversy as part of its mandate.

*W&E* printed one feature-length article about cross-racial and cross-culture tension when it published a story about an American photojournalist in pre-revolutionary Nicaragua in the late 1970s. Montreal author, Shloime Perel, submitted the article, "Insider/Outsider: Susan Meiselas and her Radical Photojournalism," to *W&E* after attending a guest lecture by Meiselas at Concordia University. Meiselas admired journalism that depicted cultures at the grassroots level, and criticized western correspondents whose general approach was "to enter a country and exploit its people for photos...she stressed the need for sensitivity when living in and documenting another people's culture."<sup>12</sup> Meiselas clarified that the photos she had taken belonged to the Nicaraguan people, not herself, but after *TIME* Magazine published her photos, Meiselas found that mainstream media had distorted her intent. Unfortunately, the contract gave publishers "complete control over design, layout, text and selection of photos."<sup>13</sup> *W&E* recognized the need for people to be sensitive about cultural differences,, but it rarely acknowledged its lack of diverse cultural representation, at least until the early 1990s. Its omission of cultural differences is noteworthy considering Toronto accounted for most of its articles' settings— a city that by itself account for 42% of Canada's visible minority populace. Furthermore, between 1981 and 1996, Toronto's 'visible minority' population rose from 13.6% to 30.1% of its total population, respectively.<sup>14</sup>

Given the relative hegemony of Toronto voices *W&E* represented, most contributors were urban-dwellers. Many of *W&E* contributors lived and/or worked in cities and wrote about shared

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<sup>11</sup> Tator, Carol Tator, Winston Mattis and Frances Henry, "Into the Heart of Africa," *Challenging Racism in the Arts: Case Study of Controversy and Conflict* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 37-48.

<sup>12</sup> Shloime Perel, "Insider/Outsider: Susan Meiselas and her Radical Photojournalism," *Women and Environments* 8, no.3 (1986): 14.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Feng Hou and Garnett Picot. Visible Minority Neighbourhood Enclaves and Labour Market Outcomes of Immigrants. (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2003), 1.

experiences of raising families in urban neighbourhoods, focusing particularly on finding “workable, affordable living spaces for themselves and their children.”<sup>15</sup> Data revealed that the number of articles written by rural women peaked in the mid 1990s, but this resulted from the Spring 1996 double issue being entirely devoted to farm women in Canada. In previous years, a lack of proximity to rural areas limited the magazine’s ability to access and perhaps general interest in rural women. As for country-dwelling women, many simply had not heard of the magazine. Most feature articles about rural life were written by urbanites conducting studies on women in resource-based towns or remote areas, such as Sioux Lookout in Northwestern Ontario.

Although most of *W&E*’s contributors were urbanites, distinguishing urban, suburban, and rural settlements was not an easy task.<sup>16</sup> Caught up in the trend of urbanization, the vast majority of *W&E* homes and workplaces fell under Statistics Canada’s definition of urban areas. Where differentiating between urban and rural may seem more or less intuitive, discerning suburban from urban areas causes confusion. It was easier to tell where contributors were from if they lived outside North America. Most European *W&E* contributors came from capital cities and spoke English. Contributors from other Commonwealth countries adhered to different classifications of urban and suburban areas. For example, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand classify any population outside a city core to be suburban and anything beyond that rural.<sup>17</sup>

According to Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham, compared to Oceania and European countries, Canada and the U.S. have ambiguous definitions of cities and suburban areas.<sup>18</sup> My thesis categorizes commuter cities and towns as suburbs. Toronto, with its larger population and wider reach of services, encompassed commuter settlements, like Markham, which this study refers to as one of Toronto’s suburbs. Shortly after *W&E* surfaced, Highway 404 was built, facilitating an easier commute to Toronto for the residents of Markham. Although most *W&E* contributors were from Toronto’s inner city neighbourhoods, enough were from Toronto’s suburbs to warrant their own category in this study. Suburbs are generally low density, largely residential communities on the

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<sup>15</sup> Gay Alexander, “Vancouver to Istanbul – Insights from Our Founders,” *Women and Environments Magazine*, no. 39/40 (1996): 5.

<sup>16</sup> According to Statistics Canada, an urban environment must have a minimum of 1000 people with at least 400 people per square kilometer, and any other human settlement can be defined as rural. As censuses update and smaller towns are incorporated, the definitions of these areas change. The general shift has been toward increased urbanization. (Henry A. Puderer, “Urban Perspectives and Measurement,” 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Puderer, “Urban Perspectives,” <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/92f0138m/92f0138m2009001-eng.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

fringes of dominant urban centres and may or may not embody local governments and distinctive ways of life.<sup>19</sup> Canada followed America's suburban trend, such as single owner occupation, but Canadian suburbanites tend to place less importance on community identity.<sup>20</sup> Statistics Canada encourages scholars to use a combination of measurements when defining urban environments that best serve their analytical needs.

When people consider the definition for "environment," they typically think of physical environments. What makes *W&E* quite distinctive from environmentally focused alternative periodicals is not simply its inclusion of women's perspectives, but *W&E*'s consideration of 'social' environments or 'environment psychology.' Statistics Canada defines a social environment as that which "encompasses the social, cultural and economic aspects of our lives. It includes institutions and organizations and the ways they interact with individuals and the community."<sup>21</sup> Hadley Dyer and Marc Ngui argue that a social environment is "any space that brings people together," whether that be rural or urban.<sup>22</sup> All human settlements can be defined as social environments. This study examines social spaces and the psychological effects environments have on people within built environments. It classifies *W&E*'s articles as pertaining to social spaces if they examine women's relationships with other people. This study also classifies any article dealing with the human psyche, such as power dynamics in the work place or mental health in rural resource towns as related to environmental psychology. Most of the articles about these more conceptual environments types were written in the mid-1980s. Although *W&E* especially sought to relate nature to women's social empowerment and health – a point explored in chapter three. In total, nearly a quarter of the magazine's content dealt with social environments and environmental psychology. Following this, *W&E* became preoccupied with natural environments, a shift signaled by transitions at the executive level in 1987 and the surge in public interest in natural environment, referred by Robert Paehlke as environmentalism's 'second-wave.'<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham, "Suburban Foundation, Form and Function," *Changing Suburbs: Foundation, Form and Function*, Ed, Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham, (London: E& FN Spon, 1999), 8.

<sup>20</sup> Harris and Larkham, "Suburban Foundation," 9-10.

<sup>21</sup> Hather Gilmour and Pamela L. Ramage-Morin, Cathy Cotton, Sylvie Moreau, John Grabetz, Kirstin Haley, and Magda Ferguson Health, "Healthy People, Healthy Places: Environment," Analysis and Health Statistics Divisions, *Statistics Canada* (Ottawa: Minister of Industry, 2016): <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-229-x/2009001/envir/int2-eng.htm>.

<sup>22</sup> Hadley Dyer and Marc Ngui, *Watch This Space: Designing, Defending and Sharing Public Spaces*, Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2010, 12.

<sup>23</sup> Paehlke, "The Canadian Environmental Movement: Remembering Who We Are," 283-303.

Throughout its first twenty-one years, *W&E*, systematically focused on a select number of topics, and during this time, it consistently featured urban oriented topics. Still, discernable fluctuation of distribution of its topics – explicable largely by Canada’s socio-political trends – are apparent. For example, the magazine echoed the rise in attention to postmodern feminist concepts, like identity politics, evidenced by the increased number of *W&E* articles written about working-class women, immigrants, women of colour, and lesbians increased in the early 1990s. Changes also depended on various factors, notably editors’ choices and submissions per issues. For example, a substantial number of *W&E*’s editorial team consisted of women working or researching the urban planning field. They solicited contributions by women and students involved in similar lines of work. Topics that fell within the planning theme included construction and architecture, development and design, transportation, co-operative housing, and homelessness. Consistency and fluctuation in thematic content will be made clearer following the analysis of readers’ interests.

### Network Participants

Feminist periodicals “regularly emphasized the need for participation” of their audience by placing “high importance on feedback and commitment...to engage in a productive dialogue with their readers” and *W&E* was no exception.<sup>24</sup> It enthusiastically reinforced the value of readership throughout the years, stressing the periodical’s collective ownership. This analysis will be organized according to the same categories of inquiry used for examining *W&E*’s contributors— sex, occupational background, geographical location, and environment type of their home or workplace. Discussions of the categories will include details on *W&E*’s intended network participants at Habitat I, examples of reader profiles, survey responses and results from the tabulated data.

Establishing the sex of original participants was difficult. *W&E* was originally intended for the attendees at the Habitat I workshop, “Women and Environments,” included in the “Women and Human Settlements” sessions, where Margaret Mead, and British Columbia’s MLA, Rosemary Brown were both keynote speakers. *W&E* never specified the number of female or male attendees for its own or any other conference workshop. It did, however, mention that it was shocked to discover that of the 500 U.N. delegates, only 30 were women. The majority of *W&E*’s network

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<sup>24</sup> Jordan, “*Branching Out*, 1973-1980,” n.160-161.



participants were female. Some subscribers were organizations, and therefore were categorized, as “both.” The number of male participants peaked in 1978 and the following year saw a sharp decline, coinciding with editor David Morely’s departure. While the magazine never boasted about having male readers, *W&E* was candid about their existence: “*The Women and Environments’* network is growing – including women (and some men).”<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that all profiles were female may indicate the editors’ reluctance to showcase male readers. Only one reader criticized the magazine for publishing articles written by men, and the number of male readers actually rose steadily throughout the twenty-one years. *W&E* gave equal treatment to the interests of its male readers, so long as their interests applied to women. For instance, Jerome Tognoli’s interest in the “relationship between sex roles and domestic space, with an emphasis on men and boys,” went unacknowledged.<sup>26</sup> Like the majority of its readers, most of *W&E*’s male network participants worked in academia.

In fact, the vast majority of *W&E*’s contributors were well educated. While its intention was not to exclude anyone, *W&E* spoke primarily to professionals involved in academic research, civil service and social work, volunteerism and activism, or some combination. Original participants were Habitat I attendees who took part in the “Women and Environments” workshop. Participants included members of UNICEF and from the American NGO Human and Urban Development (H.U.D).<sup>27</sup> Another conference attendee, Wendy Sarkissian from Sydney, Australia, worked in public housing as a liaison between the women residents and the architects in the head office. Sarkissian recalled feeling virtually alone in her concerns until she joined the network in 1976.<sup>28</sup> Wekerle recalled participants were “either doing research on the interrelationships between environments and women’s lives or working in the community to create environments more responsive to women’s needs...others were thinking, writing, and teaching about issues we felt required attention.”<sup>29</sup> In its first two years of publication, *W&E* attracted “architects and city planners, community leaders, academics and civil servants” and became “a clearinghouse for information about on-going research and action projects, courses and bibliographies – materials which were hard to find, often

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<sup>25</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 6, no.1 (1983): 2.

<sup>26</sup> Women and Environments, “New Network Participants,” *Women and Environments*, 2, no.2 (1978): 12.

<sup>27</sup> Women and Environments. “Editorial,” *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 1, no.1, (1976): 8.

<sup>28</sup> *W&E*, “A Word from Us,” 9, no. 3 (1987): 6.

<sup>29</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 6.

unpublished and not yet abstracted in the conventional sources.”<sup>30</sup> The late 1980s saw a spike in NGO affiliated readers, which can be attributed to the switch in *W&E*’s ownership to the WEED Foundation. Still, even by 1997, “the majority of our subscribers are professors, university students and planners.”<sup>31</sup> Readers were more likely to be part of the academic scene because *W&E* was rarely accessible outside academic spaces. If readers did not hear about the magazine through friends, they named professors, references in journals or library catalogues as the most common paths taken to discovering *W&E*.<sup>32</sup> Some bookstores carried copies, but it was not available for purchase on newsstands.

Despite the overwhelming number of academics revealed in a reader survey, *W&E* admitted:

We don’t know whether this sample is an accurate reflection of all our readers or whether it tells us that university people are more likely to leap for their pens; maybe other working women are just too busy. But based on the sample you are formidably well educated.<sup>33</sup>

Network participants were less homogenous in their comments on *W&E*’s reading style. They complained it was “too dry,” “very slick but readable,” and asked for “more punch.” Its editors claimed they were making “continuing efforts to serve our substantial academic readership while at the same time making the magazine more accessible to many other women.”<sup>34</sup> This comment about being accessible to the vague group of “other women” is slightly indicative of the magazine’s preference for an academic writing. It is important to remember that not all readers identified as academics, even though most held at least one degree.<sup>35</sup> Similar to *W&E*’s contributors, *W&E*’s readers rejected ascribing to one occupation, stating that they played multiple roles simultaneously, such as “an assistant professor/university administrator/mother/partner/daughter...”<sup>36</sup> Regardless of their occupation, *W&E*’s scholarly writing style of the articles implied the magazine knowingly did not write for a popular audience.

Besides giving editors an idea of the readers’ demographics, reader surveys allowed editors to

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 41 (1997):3.

<sup>32</sup> *W&E*, “A Word from Us,” 10, no. 4 (1988): 4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,3

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>35</sup> Wyman, “A Word from Us: Who Reads *Women and Environments*,” 2.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

reply directly to their readers' concerns. They did so, quite candidly. To one reader who said, "wish you had the money to make it slicker," the editors replied, "we just wish we had money – period."<sup>37</sup> Another reader said, "not impressive, but recognize limited funds," and another said she appreciated the magazine's "homemade look."<sup>38</sup> To this comment the editors responded drily: "With friends like these..." When asked to list their other common reading material, readers named *Chatelaine*, *Harrowsmith*, *Mother Jones*, *Macleans*, *Ms.*, the *APA Journal*, *Atlantic*, and a variety of academic journals. The editors replied, "We noticed that alternative press readers are more appreciative of our looks than those accustomed to the polish of *Ms.*, *The New Yorker*, or *Atlantic*?" and bluntly added, "Sorry, can't compete."<sup>39</sup> The editors disclosed that although "we winced at some negative comments," reader surveys had given them the opportunity to learn about their readers, acknowledge their tastes, and give them recognition.<sup>40</sup>

*W&E* featured 500 word-long reader-profiles to showcase their network participants, most of whom had multiple achievements. For example, Martha Bell from New Zealand introduced herself as "an outdoor instructor in an isolated Outward Bound school who teaches 'hard' skills like whitewater kayaking and coastal cutter sailing..."<sup>41</sup> Ireland's Rosalyn Moran worked for EKOS, an architectural psychology and environmental consulting agency. Mary Chakasim was "the official Canadian delegation as the Aboriginal youth representative at the United Nations conference on sustainable development in Istanbul."<sup>42</sup> No longer a staple in today's *W&E* issues, reader profiles once served to showcase its multi-skilled and motivated women.

Reader profiles also underscored *W&E*'s attempt to showcase national diversity among readers. It is obvious its editors selected readers from around the world. Introduced in the late 1980s, reader profiles gave the magazine a new opportunity to market itself as an international periodical. Before *W&E* introduced reader profiles, its international readership growth was slow. In 1978, it published just two letters, both from North America. By 1980, four of the six letters it received made the journey from Australia and New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. By that point in time, *W&E* was unique in that although "separate organizations of women in architecture,

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<sup>37</sup> *W&E*, "A Word from Us," 10, no. 4 (1988): 4.

<sup>38</sup> *W&E*, "A Word from Us," 10, no. 4 (1988): 4.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> *W&E*, "A Word from Us," 10, no. 4 (1988): 4.

<sup>41</sup> Martha Bell, "Reader Profile," *Women and Environments*, 10, no.3 (1988): 7.

<sup>42</sup> Mary Chakasim, "Reader Profile," *Women and Environments*, 41 (1997): 11.

planning and geography were being established in the United States, Canada, the UK, Australia, and various European countries, there was no organization or publication which crossed disciplinary boundaries or national borders.”<sup>43</sup> At Habitat II in Istanbul in 1996, *W&E* managed to obtain forty new subscribers. “For most conference participants,” unfortunately, “the \$20.00 subscription for *Women & Environments* was a great sacrifice.”<sup>44</sup> Even though most network participants were Canadians writing on Canadian topics, its first few years of publishing saw more American and Canadian subscribers. This means Canadians wrote for American readers, rather than the other way around. According to Constance Backhouse, an “obvious locus for cross-fertilization between the women’s movements in Canada and the United States was the academic field...Certainly Canadians are well versed in the texts and periodical literature coming from the American movement...”<sup>45</sup> While not on the same scale or to the same degree, American feminists were also readily consuming Canadian material. It would be easy to say that *W&E* had a larger market in the U.S. because of its larger and more vocal women’s movement. It is much more likely that *W&E* editors thought its feminist criticisms of specific environments, such as of suburban life, resonated more with American women. In the rare times *W&E* wrote about suburbia its commentary was negative, and when readers requested more articles about life in the suburbs, its editors did not comply. One may surmise that since none of the editors resided in suburbia, they were reluctant to print articles about suburbia. More than once, Wekerle openly criticized suburbs for their lack of services, namely transit and childcare. Comparing North American suburbs to those in Sweden, she writes: “North American women suffer isolation, boredom associated with the “trapped housewife”, loneliness and dependent on others with transportation North American planners have a stereotypical and narrow image of women, limited to the traditional housebound wife and mother.”<sup>46</sup> In any case, a search on Google Earth demonstrates that most of the long-term editors lived in central districts and more affluent neighbourhoods. Wekerle’s and Peterson’s neighbourhoods both bordered the affluent Forest Hill.

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<sup>43</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 6-7.

<sup>44</sup> Joyce Brown, Regular Modlich and Pamela Sayne, “Habitat II – From a Gendered Perspective,” *Women and Environments*, no.41 (1997): 6.

<sup>45</sup> Constance Backhouse, “The Contemporary Women’s Movements in Canada and the United States: An Introduction,” *Challenging Times: The Women’s Movement in Canada and the United States* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1992), 8.

<sup>9.5</sup> Gerda Wekerle and Novia Carter, “Urban Sprawl: The Price Women Pay,” *Women and Environments*, A Word from Us,” 2 no. 2 (1978): 8-9.

They lived in Deer Park and St. Clair West Village, respectively. Modlich and Alexander lived in The Beaches.<sup>47</sup> By including suburban topics, the magazine could have attracted more *W&E* subscribers both living in and beyond urban boundaries. To state the obvious, the majority of *W&E* readers were urbanites.

Of its small pool of suburban readers, most were American. Apparently, Americans more readily listed suburbs in their addresses and their interests, where Canadians were less inclined or simply did not live there. According to Harris and Larkham, Canadian suburbanites did not place as much importance in terms of community identity, having fewer block parties, local papers and small-town heritage sites. Unlike American suburbs, Canadian suburbs were not politically distinct, and they were fragmented fiscally and socially. Their governments did not have constitutional power. Canadian suburbs can be made, and unmade according to provincial powers. In 1954, Toronto, Ontario centralized some of the suburban governments' powers and functions when it created a metropolitan tier of government. In 1998, the suburbs in Toronto's metropolitan area merged with the city to form a single local government.<sup>48</sup> Even before then, editors Wyman and Sanford, who lived in Glen Park and Wilson Heights, respectively, both listed Toronto, rather than North York, as their addresses. Given their lack of constitutional independence, Canadian suburbs had more at stake when city municipal officials made decisions. In return, their inhabitants had input in city's municipal decisions – or according to *W&E* the male inhabitants did. Canadian public transportation systems were better equipped – although by no means perfect – to serve married suburban women who did not work regular 9 to 5 work hours both to and from city center workplaces.<sup>49</sup> For this study one tenth of the network participants who were classified as living in Toronto actually lived in the outer suburbs.

Of all the countries wherein *W&E* had subscribers, Australia and New Zealand were the only two to have a majority of suburban dwellers. With different definitions of suburbs, these island states considered 'urban' areas to be quite small, encompassing the central business, retail and cultural districts. What Canadians would call an older city district, Australians and New Zealanders referred to as an "inner suburb," and neighbourhoods along the fringes of cities as "outer suburbs."

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<sup>47</sup> *W&E*, "A Word from Us," 10, no. 4 (1988): 7-14.

<sup>48</sup> Harris and Larkham, "Suburban Foundation, Form and Function," 12-13.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

Therefore, nearly all Oceanic residents who North Americans would label urbanites, identified as suburban dwellers.<sup>50</sup> Contrarily, all of *W&E*'s European network participants resided in urban centres. As Harris and Larkham state, English-speaking intellectuals were more likely to be found living in larger European cities, like Stockholm, Antwerp, and Amsterdam, than surrounding areas. *W&E* was an English language magazine geared to an academic audience, which explains its urban readership from the European continent. In the case of its British readership, most lived in suburbs. However, similar to Australia and New Zealand, suburbs in the U.K. seem more like older and densely populated urban areas by North American standards.<sup>51</sup>

Similar to its European constituencies, the overwhelming majority of network participants from Asia, Central and South America, and Africa came from urban centres. Those from Asia came from the densely populated countries of India, Indonesia, and China, and of these, most were from cosmopolitan areas, which had a higher percentage of English-speaking intellectual populations. A quarter of participants from Central and South America and Africa lived in rural areas due to *W&E*'s connections with women working in rural development made at the NGO Forum in Nairobi in 1985, and the Habitat II held in Istanbul in 1996. Readers from developing countries began appearing on the network participant list toward the end of the 1980s. Overall, less than 1% of *W&E* readers came from Asia, Africa, and Central/South America combined, which accounted for a total of seventeen subscribers from these areas. Of these seventeen, fourteen were urban dwellers. This small number renders it difficult to determine definitive conclusions about this group.

This following table illustrates the geographical distribution of *W&E*'s readership over the years under review:

### Readers' Geographical Location

Region	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1983	1987	1988	1991	1997	Overall
USA	68%	66%	72%	57%	56%	52%	38%	33%	32%	16%	42%
Canada - Toronto	11%	16%	14%	14%	20%	20%	19%	23%	25%	39%	22%
Canada - Ontario	14%	13%	10%	4%	9%	8%	15%	16%	13%	20%	13%
Canada - Other	0%	1%	0%	19%	12%	16%	21%	19%	21%	16%	17%

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>51</sup> Harris and Larkham, "Suburban Foundation, Form and Function," 10, 12.

Europe	7%	5%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	5%	3%
Asia	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Central/South America	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Africa	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Australia/New Zealand	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	3%	4%	3%	1%	2%

Table 1 - Table of readers' geographical location, selected years, 1977 to 1997

The occupations, countries, and the types of environments network participants lived in and/or worked partially explains why people were interested in belonging to *W&E*'s network. For example, network participants interested in housing and homelessness generally worked as architects, urban planners or designers of women's shelters, co-operatives, or housing departments. Others were researching women's experiences in houses, safe homes, or being homeless. For example, Renée Steinhagen worked for the National Coalition for the Homeless in New York City. Avoca Foundation was an interval home for battered women in Eganville, Ontario. Azra Churchman was a part of the Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning in Haifa, Israel.<sup>52</sup> Through the sharing of various feminist perspectives and borrowing different strategies on women in planning professions, research and activism, readers could learn, and connect with one another, even while worlds apart.

Readers also used the periodical to confide in one another or to request help. For instance, Madge Dresser's letter, published in *W&E*'s 1983 directory, claimed that housing policy under Thatcherism had led to the downgrade of the British welfare state.<sup>53</sup> Dresser claimed that soaring numbers of unemployed women unable to afford adequate housing were becoming homeless. Many were victims of an increased rate of domestic abuse from unemployed partners. Newly formed groups at the grassroots level, national councils, and universities were all working together to understand and combat these hardships.<sup>54</sup> Ultimately, Dresser's letter was a request for advice or resources from fellow *W&E* network participants who may have had similar experiences.

Comparing network participants' interests with the magazine's thematic content enabled *W&E* to address its readers' concerns. After cross-referencing the two, *W&E* addressed what its

<sup>52</sup> *W&E*, "Network Participants," 10, no. 4 (1988): 10, 15, 20.

<sup>53</sup> Madge Dresser, "A Letter from Britain," *Women and Environments*, 6, no.1 (1983): 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

readers wanted: planning. Considering the number of women planners who belonged to *W&E*, the magazine was certifiably writing for a niche group of Canadians, which was enumerated in a reprint of urban and social policy analyst Fran Klodawsky's report to Labour Canada in *W&E*'s 1985 Winter issue. Klodawsky – a member and frequent contributor of *W&E* – found that women made up 9% of architects and 19% of planners in Canada.<sup>55</sup>

In spite of its success in meeting the high demand for topics about planning, this quantitative analysis indicates that topics on the “natural environment,” were underrepresented in the magazine. Over two-hundred network participants listed “natural environment” as their interests from the sample years, a rate double to that of *W&E*'s output. In addition, it appears *W&E* underrepresented topics relevant to the developing world, cultural issues, and minority women, even when some readers expressed their dislike for the idea that a “universal female perspective,” exists.<sup>56</sup> The discrepancies in topics represented stems from the shortcoming of sampling a magazine organized according to thematic issues: *W&E* dedicated long, dense thematic double issues of women with natural environments, and made efforts to include Third World topics and Third World women's perspectives in the early 1990s, but these issues did not fall within the sample years.

## Conclusion

In total, *W&E*'s contributors came from a variety of backgrounds and wrote about a variety of topics. Data show that its initial contributors identified as academics researching feminist approaches to urban and community planning, like *W&E*'s founders. Following its maturation, the private urban planners and activists joined *W&E*'s editorial board, and diversification of contributors' occupations followed. Like many western feminist collectives in the mid-1980s, *W&E* neglected to include contributions by and topics about visible minorities and cultural disaffections. It also overrepresented people from and topics about urban regions, namely Toronto, irrespective of its claims for an international readership.

Furthermore, *W&E*'s editorials suggested the magazine was applicable to women across Canada, did not attract a wide readership from Western Canada, nor the Maritimes. One might have

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<sup>55</sup> Fran Klodawsky, “Employment Opportunities for Women in Architecture and Planning: Problems and Prospects,” *Women's Bureau, Labour Canada*, (Ottawa: Publications Distribution Centre, 1985), quoted in *Women and Environments*, 7, no.2 (1985): 20.

<sup>56</sup> Wyman, “A Word from Us: Who Reads *Women and Environments*?” 2.



surmised that women outside central English-speaking Canada did not see themselves represented in the magazine, and therefore, did not subscribe. Data also showed that most themes pertained to women and planning in Toronto, as seen in some reader profiles, and surveys. Since subscribers were Toronto residents, it is unsurprising that they often requested topics about environments they could identify with. The magazine carefully evaluated its readers' concerns and worked to address them appropriately to assure a fair and inspiring dialogue.<sup>57</sup> Reader profiles and surveys gave the readers recognition, and received reader feedback, but also gave *W&E* the opportunity to market itself as a global magazine. In this way, *W&E* could both elicit a conversation about cultural differences among its small international readership as well as market itself as a global periodical – embellishing its international reach. *W&E*'s desire to be international in 1976 was somewhat ahead of its time among feminist circles because, as mentioned at the start of the thesis, a wider interest in international feminism was expressed only by the late 1980s, marking the arrival of the so-called third feminist wave. By adopting creative strategies to appear international, *W&E* was less of a target to critics of second-wave feminism's overrepresentation of white, middle-class, educated women. Interestingly, while *W&E* sought to attract readers from abroad, within non-western countries, the magazine did not address race relations or cultural differences at home. *W&E* could have stressed cultural differences of women within its own city, but chose to stay out of the Toronto race debate of the late 1980s.

Needless to say, it is impossible to attain an understanding of *W&E*'s readership that is 100% accurate. Readers only shared personal information at their own volition. Replying to reader surveys or submitting a reader profile was voluntary. Moreover, not everyone who read *W&E* answered its surveys or even paid for a subscription. A magazine – and the messages it contains – is light, portable and easy to transfer. According to *Branching Out* founder, Sharon Batt: “Once something is in print, it can be handed around, copied, reprinted, put in libraries and schools, talked about and used by lobbying groups and teachers.”<sup>58</sup> A periodical's portability is perhaps its greatest strength. *W&E* hoped to share its ideas, even if this meant forgoing completely accurate knowledge of its readership. The magazine established a stable relationship with a group of well-educated women, all seeking to learn and implement feminist changes in their environments.

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<sup>57</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 6-7.

<sup>58</sup> Jordan, “*Branching Out*, 1973-1980,” 46.

## Chapter Three: An Environment is a Feminist Issue

*W&E* grew out of a desire to fill a gap in Canada's women's movement: "There are now many journals and magazines which cover feminist issues, but none which focuses exclusively on women's environmental needs."<sup>1</sup> Its editors purposely accepted a broad definition of environments so they could offer a wide scope and gain exposure among a growing readership with eclectic tastes. They reminded readers that environments were not simply physical surroundings, like "geography and urban landscape, housing, industry, and transport, which represent our relationship to the earth and its resources. Environments are also our interactions and behaviours towards each other, the structures of how we live together, work, and play."<sup>2</sup> For *W&E*, there was not *one* environment.

Regardless of the types of women and environments discussed in its pages, *W&E* intended to fulfill four objectives: First, it sought to raise awareness about women as separate users of any given environment. Second, it drove home the idea that women, as different users, had specific needs for whom their contemporary environments often did not account. Third, *W&E* aimed to encourage women's intervention directly in environmental planning, design, and management. Last, *W&E* advocated for women's access to environments conventionally unavailable to them.<sup>3</sup> Throughout its publication run, *W&E* incorporated various spaces occupied and shaped by women from different perspectives. This chapter explores the main kinds of environments *W&E* wrote about. First, *W&E* featured articles about built spaces. Second, the magazine examined less tangible environment types, namely social spaces or psychological aspects of an environment. These spaces typically pertained to built spaces because urban environmental history involves "the complex interactions between people, technologies, ideas, and the urban environment."<sup>4</sup> Last, *W&E* became progressively preoccupied with natural spaces from approximately 1987 until 1993. As the previous chapter emphasized, a myriad of factors determined *W&E*'s content. Its contributors, and readers' interests influenced the magazine's direction. Yet, as with any periodical, much of what was published depended on the editors and the context of the time. Following a close reading of all

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<sup>1</sup> Women and Environments. "Editorial," *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 2, no.2, (1978): 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Women and Environments. "Editorial," *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 1, no.1, (1976): 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> L. Anders Sandberg, Stephen Bocking, Colin Coates, Ken Cruikshank, "Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region," *Urban Explorations: Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region*, (Hamilton: Wilson Institute for Canadian History, 2013), 3.

issues over the years, this chapter argues that social and political context, as well as editors, contributors, and network participants played out in *W&E*'s treatment of sexism in Canadian environments. This chapter presents representative material of the themes and environment types from 1976 to 1997.

## **Urban and Built Environments**

*W&E*'s articles about built spaces generally pertained to urban environments, and were written with Canada's urban social movements in the backdrop. As discussed in chapter one, Toronto was among the many transatlantic cities to experience urban renewal and its challenger, urban reform.<sup>5</sup> Even though urban reformers were more sensitive to women's needs than the preceding urban renewal schemes, Women Plan Toronto (WPT) played a role in maintaining a feminist perspective in urban planning. *W&E* proposed the idea that a city's physical determinism – architectural design and building arrangements – negatively impacted women as distinct users.<sup>6</sup> Early years of the publication showed substantial coverage of research on women planners, correlating to Wekerle's editorship. These years also included some perspectives of private sector planners and activists from the groups Women In/And Planning and Women Plan Toronto, which found inspiration in the urban reform and new urbanism movements.

## **Academic Research on Gendered Built Environment: Gerda Wekerle (1976-1984)**

When Gerda Wekerle founded the magazine, she was engaged in full time empirical research on "women's relationships with the home, neighbourhood, and city."<sup>7</sup> At the time, organized communities had "yet to define urban planning as a women's issue."<sup>8</sup> Interested primarily in women as professional planners, how they fared in male dominant professions, and how their positions as women affected their design choices, Wekerle attended several American conferences on architecture, and research in urban and community planning and design. Prior to Habitat I, Wekerle had been inspired by meetings and symposiums about women and spatial design, which were

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<sup>5</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> White, "St. Lawrence Neighbourhood," 52.

<sup>7</sup> Women and Environments, "Review of *New Space for Women*, 4 no. 1&2, (1980): 19.

<sup>8</sup> Gerda Wekerle, "Women in the Urban Environment," *Signs*, 5 no. 3, (1980): 212.

themselves a product of affirmative action debates in the United States around 1972.<sup>9</sup> News on the Women's School of Planning and Architecture (WSPA), an alternative "school" held in various American cities, frequently made its way into *W&E* from 1978 to 1982. WSPA offered alternative learning. It met for two weeks annually, and offered workshops, conferences, tours, and activities "for women in all environmental fields – architecture, construction, environmental psychology, housing, interior design, landscape, neighbourhood development, planning," and was "the only school of planning and architecture to be entirely conceived, founded, financed and run by and for women."<sup>10</sup> WSPA sponsored a group of tenants, which was composed of all women working in St. Louis, Missouri for an inner city public housing project where they lived.<sup>11</sup> Wekerle covered the story in 1982, emphasizing the multiple levels of difficulty an entirely women-operated construction team faced: acquiring credentials to become construction workers, gaining respect of male contractors, and getting the necessary materials. In the community, "99% of the heads of households are females," and in order for them to get the houses *they* wanted, they had to build them.<sup>12</sup>

Wekerle's American connections explain why, in its early years, *W&E* published material about events that occurred south of the Canadian border. Statistics showed that until about 1983, Americans wrote over one quarter of *W&E*'s articles, and over 50% of its readers were American. Bringing American inspirations home to Canada, Wekerle helped form a group called Women In/And Planning (WIAP) in 1982. Made up of planning consultants, architects and social science academics, all WIAP members either lived in the city or within a 200-mile radius of Toronto.<sup>13</sup> It met once a month to discuss women's place in Toronto's recent demographic changes, and action plans that could help women working on planning projects.<sup>14</sup> WIAP's founders included *W&E* editors Miriam Wyman, Regula Modlich, and frequent contributor, Anella Parker-Martin.<sup>15</sup> WIAP initially received mixed responses from both male and female urban planners outside of the group.

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<sup>9</sup> Wekerle, "The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments," 6; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Affirmative Action," 2013. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/affirmative-action/>.

<sup>10</sup> Women and Environments, "Events: The Women's School of Planning and Architecture," 2, no. 2 *Women and Environments*, (1978): 3.

<sup>11</sup> Wekerle, "Women as Urban Developers," 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>13</sup> Kathleen Bee, "Women in/and Planning – Toronto," *Women and Environments*, 5 no.3, (1982): 6.

<sup>14</sup> Women and Environments, "Women in A Man-Made World: Women in/and Planning," *Women and Environments*, 5 no.2 (1982): 6.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 4.

At conferences, men in the audience appeared threatened.<sup>16</sup> Women typically felt empowered to hear someone articulate for the first time the “realization that work and living environments, planned for men and automobiles, are even less suited to their needs today.”<sup>17</sup> WIAP suggested a feminist design was imperative to confront these challenges. WIAP’s first victory occurred in Hull, Quebec, at a Canadian Institute of Planners Convention: “For the first time, men were well represented in the audience as women presented their concerns about the shape of our cities and our lifestyles.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Expanding Editorial Expertise at University of Toronto: Judith Kjellberg (1984-1995)**

At the end of an article published in *W&E* in 1982, WIAP listed Judith Kjellberg as its contact person. Kjellberg likely heard about the magazine through fellow WIAP members. Wekerle and Peterson began having children in 1984, and found balancing executive duties, family, and academia too overwhelming. Looking back at this period of time, Wekerle recalled it was a critical moment in *W&E*’s history: “The point at which the founders burn out is critical for a feminist publication – either it folds or someone else takes it over. In 1984, we were fortunate to find Judith Kjellberg.”<sup>19</sup> Because Kjellberg oversaw the Resource Centre for the department working as Program Officer at the Center for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto, she had access to material about Toronto’s urban projects.<sup>20</sup> Kjellberg had ample “experience in putting people and information together,” and furthermore was “really interested in all the aspects of publishing – from the nitty gritty of proof reading, to layout and design, to corresponding with authors. She is very organized and gets things done – on time.”<sup>21</sup> Kjellberg’s editorship allowed *W&E* to “formalize our links with the wider community both through a Toronto-based editorial board and a more widespread editorial board.”<sup>22</sup> She undoubtedly helped facilitate the University of Toronto’s agreement to jointly publish and help finance the magazine. Kjellberg also had experience working as Special Assistant to an alderman at Toronto City Hall.<sup>23</sup> Her connections to municipal government were no doubt an asset to the magazine. Whereas Kjellberg’s expertise and connections

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<sup>16</sup> Kathleen Bee, “Women in/and Planning – Toronto,” *Women and Environments*, 5 no.3, (1982): 6.

<sup>17</sup> Bee, “Women in/and Planning – Toronto,” 6.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Wekerle, “The Birth and Growth of Women & Environments,” 6.

<sup>20</sup> Gerda Wekerle, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 6 no.2, (1984): 1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

were of critical value to the magazine, she rarely wrote articles. Much of the content during her editorship came under the influence of fellow WIAP member and Wekerle's Master's student and mentee, Regula Modlich.

### **Women Plan Toronto (WPT) as Urban Reform: Regula Modlich (1982-2000)**

Shortly after joining the editorial board in 1982, Regula Modlich co-founded WPT. Her experience in WPT significantly impacted the periodical's direction for years to come, and explains its ample coverage of WPT in the early 1980s. Inspired by "an article about [the British group] Women Plan London (WPL) in *Women & Environment*," Modlich thought WPT was a good idea.<sup>24</sup> WPL was an outgrowth of the Greater London Council, a government administration that implemented urban renewal policies until 1973. When the Labour Party won government, the Council joined anti-renewal forces.<sup>25</sup> By 1982, Labour feminists had persuaded the Party to establish WPL as a women's committee within the council. WPL included women from various planning professions and district governments in London and feminist community action leaders. "For the first time in this country," wrote WPL's Beverley Taylor, "women's issues have been explicitly recognized in a land use plan."<sup>26</sup> The revised London Development Plan stated: "Women in London live in a city designed by men and for men and have had little opportunity to influence or shape the urban environment."<sup>27</sup>

*W&E* under the editorship of Kjellberg frequently featured WPT. Articles varied from short blurbs about projects to a handful of 1-2 page features. WPT was archetypical of the kinds of groups to whom *W&E* wished to give exposure. It was grass-roots, volunteer-based, and participant-orientated that affected feminist change at the local level, in hopes of inspiring women elsewhere to do the same: "Just as Women Plan London inspired WPT, WPT in turn inspired women in other cities in Canada and abroad to organize and raise women's issues; these included Montreal, Hamilton, and Vancouver."<sup>28</sup> More centrally focused and smaller in number, WPT expanded WIAP's scope by adding insights from non-professional planners focused on inner city projects. In 1985, WPT coordinated the workshop, *Shared Experiences and Dreams*. Held in Toronto's City Hall,

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<sup>24</sup> Modlich, "Women Plan Toronto (1985-2000)," 1.

<sup>25</sup> Klemek, *The Transatlantic Collapse*, 133.

<sup>26</sup> Beverley Taylor, "Women Plan London: The Women's Committee of the Greater London Council," 7 no.2, (1985): 4.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 7.

Modlich and WPT co-founder, Birgit Sterner, invited a diverse group of women to participate in a hands-on project wherein they illustrated shared urban experiences and hopes for change in city zoning, design, and service patterns.<sup>29</sup> The workshop's findings contributed a feminist critique of Ontario's urban planning in the Canadian professional planning journal, *Plan Canada*.<sup>30</sup>

WPT was largely inspired by Toronto's urban reform movement. Its respect for "unique ecologies of persons of different sexual orientations, abilities, ages, and gender" rendered it open to feminist urban planning approaches.<sup>31</sup> The St. Lawrence neighbourhood, located one kilometer east of Union Station in downtown Toronto, exemplified how urban reform designs could accommodate women. The St. Lawrence neighbourhood was a low or mid-rise, high-density project built from scratch around 1975. There was limited green space around the buildings. Many residents lived in townhouses or apartments, all with street-facing windows.<sup>32</sup> This facilitated a shared sense of responsibility for supervision, an idea informed by Jane Jacobs, who observed that most so-called street gangs did their terrorizing in playgrounds and parks.<sup>33</sup> WPT named secluded and dark public spaces prime locations for crimes against women: "Personal safety in public areas has been raised as an issue...especially by young women who have not yet submitted to the implicit social discouragement to women going out alone and/or in certain areas and/or at certain times."<sup>34</sup> Before WPT emerged, little had been written about women and safety in Canada's urban centres.

Another belief WPT shared in common with St. Lawrence regeneration schemes was the goal of mixed land-uses. St. Lawrence designers adhered to mixed land uses, which was defined as a mix of residential commercial and industrial, and mixed tenure levels and incomes – "some rentals, some co-operatives, and even some private ownership."<sup>35</sup> The St. Lawrence neighbourhood would eventually have a performance facility, residential apartments, shops, restaurants, and public services – sometimes sharing buildings – a school and a park.<sup>36</sup> WPT eventually had direct involvement with St. Lawrence's construction of a women-only, 80-100 unite housing co-operative.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Regula Modlich, "Women Plan Toronto," *Women and Environments*, 8 no.1, (1986): 20.

<sup>30</sup> Modlich, "Women Plan Toronto (1985-2000)," 4.

<sup>31</sup> Sandberg, et Al., "Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region," 6.

<sup>32</sup> White, "St. Lawrence Neighbourhood," 41.

<sup>33</sup> Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 76.

<sup>34</sup> Modlich, "Women Plan Toronto," 20.

<sup>35</sup> Richard, "St. Lawrence Neighbourhood," 41, 46, 47.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Sarah Singh, "Women Plan Toronto: Making Toronto Work for Women," *Women and Environments*, 14 no.2, (1995): 27.

WPT pointed out the value of mixed land use for women living in the 1980s. Advocating for the accommodation of women's multiple roles throughout Toronto, WPT represented women who were mothers, caregivers, and members of the labour force. In one *W&E* editorial a WPT member rhetorically posed: "Wouldn't it be nice if...I could live and work and shop in the same community."<sup>38</sup> Their point was that women lost valuable time and energy in the transition between home, daycare, school, places of worship, work, shopping, and recreation districts. Fulfilling multiple roles was a reality shared among women from all walks of life. WPT's concerns were articulated in an American study of women in Baltimore, conducted in 1985 by Susan Hanson and Ibipo Johnston, who introduced the spatial entrapment thesis. According to this thesis, "working women are more sensitive to distance than men are for reasons related more to their mobility than to their 'dual roles' of wage earner/homemaker," and consequently a greater proportion of women lived in central neighbourhoods.<sup>39</sup> There was one interesting discrepancy between the American study and WPT's anecdote. The former only sampled white, middle-class women. WPT found the same concerns expressed among groups of diverse demographics: "First, we met with 25 women's groups: young, old, native, immigrant, business, home-making, employed, disabled, middle class, transient, single women and sole support mothers."<sup>40</sup> Despite their differences, there were collective feelings of frustration due to women's unmet needs within their communities. Reform neighbourhoods, with their mixed social and economic occupants, were more suited to WPT's demand for a diverse set of women's services.

*W&E*'s overwhelming coverage on built, urban spaces in these early years was not due merely to an executive decision, but reflected reader interest. This study's data illustrated that most readers' interests lay in urban and/or community planning and development or construction and architecture: "Several readers suggest a greater emphasis on women in professions such as architecture and landscape architecture," *W&E* stated in its 1982 survey.<sup>41</sup> These interests mirrored their occupations as professionals or student planners, who were "hungry for material relating

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<sup>38</sup> Birgit Sterner, "Women Plan Toronto," *Women and Environments*, 9, no.1, (1987): 9.

<sup>39</sup> S. Hanson and I. Johnston, "Gender Differences in Work-trip Length: Explanation and Implications. *Urban Geography* 6 (1985): 193.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Women and Environments, "Response to Reader Survey," *Women and Environments? Our Readers Respond*, *Women and Environments* 5, no.3 (1982): 4.



planning and environments to women's concerns."<sup>42</sup> Most readers led urban lives: "More than half of you live in big cities; most of the rest in small cities," revealed the 1985 survey.<sup>43</sup> As a resource magazine, *W&E* made sure enough of its material would be of interest to its readers.

Even though planning was the most popular topic sought after and ultimately covered by *W&E*, data also showed the number of articles devoted to planning decreased in the early 1980s. The editors warned that even though planning would "continue to have high priority," the magazine would be making room for the new topics suggested by the readers, such as "women's work environments, the hazards of women's environments in the home, workplace...crime and the perception of fearful environments," etc.<sup>44</sup> While these topics pertained to built spaces, they focused on their psychological effects on women as well as the social relationships occurring within them. Besides seeking to meet readers' requests, events in the 1980s inspired *W&E* writers to submit material on women's thoughts and feelings produced by those built environments. So, the mid-1980s saw *W&E* introduce environmental psychology and social environmental discussions.

## **Environmental Psychology**

Environmental psychologists examine how spatial-physical environments affect human behaviour, and vice versa. Topics in environmental psychology are wide ranging, from the relationship between human behaviour and natural resources and sustainability, to the psychological effects of noise, light, and extreme environments.<sup>45</sup> Environmental psychologists may also treat human behaviour as a cause and consequence of the state of built physical environments, a theory *W&E* frequently reflected. For example, *W&E* printed articles about personal space, mental health, and the evaluation of buildings.<sup>46</sup> When *W&E* began to explore environmental psychology, it was still relatively young, having emerged just a few years before the magazine. Environmental psychology distinguished itself from the broader field of psychology by focusing on the mind's view of the outside world. A pioneer of the field, Albert Mehrabian distinguished environmental psychology from conversations about what was by then the conventional definition of environment.

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<sup>42</sup> Wyman, "A Word from Us: Who Reads," 3.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>44</sup> Women and Environments, "Response to Reader Survey," 4.

<sup>45</sup> Lorraine Lavalée, "What is Environmental Psychology," *Environmental Psychology*, (2014): <http://www.cpa.ca/aboutCPA/CPAsections/environmentalpsychology>.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

At the time of writing, he remarked, on the “enormous flood of writing on The Environment,” that had been done.<sup>47</sup> By capitalizing the term “environment,” Mehrabian was criticizing the omission of other environment types. He continued, somewhat derisively:

Sometimes the ‘environmentalists’ are talking about the web of natural systems which sustains all life on our planet. All too often, however, they are [talking about] green trees, a hatred of the automobile, or an antiquarian interest in animals they’ve never had to share territory with. When environmental psychologists talk of environments, they can mean a cocktail party, your apartment building, a park, the clothes on your back, a retirement community, or a kitchen.<sup>48</sup>

The types of spaces of interest to environmental psychologists were those the majority of people spent nearly 100% of their lives. The field of knowledge articulated how “space” related to the human psyche. Mehrabian theorized: “Anywhere you are...anything within you sensory range constitutes an environment which can be describe accurately and succinctly” and would “enable people to relate the nature of particular environments to their own feelings and behavior.”<sup>49</sup> With the intention of helping people understand and manipulate the persistent and often non-verbalized problems affecting them, environmental psychologists assured human beings that their findings would potentially leave them happier, more comfortable, liberated, and productive in their day-to-day lives.<sup>50</sup>

## Women and Safety

Mehrabian promoted ideas about the differences in male and female perceptions of the same environments.<sup>51</sup> Although never featured in the magazine, some *W&E* articles echoed his perspectives. He argued that women found it more difficult than men to screen out negative stimuli in any given environment. Because non-screener experienced higher degrees of anxiety in stressful environments, Mehrabian deduced they were unlikely to perform as well as screeners – men in fear-inducing situations.<sup>52</sup> Women as non-screener absorbed more stimuli than men in a given

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<sup>47</sup> Albert Mehrabian, *Public Places and Private Spaces: The Psychology of Work, Play, and Living Environments*, (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1976), ix.

<sup>48</sup> Albert Mehrabian, *Public Places and Private Spaces: The Psychology of Work, Play, and Living Environments*, (New York: Basic Books Inc, 1976), ix.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., ix-viii.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>51</sup> Mehrabian, *Public Places and Private Spaces*, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 29.

environment and were, therefore, more stressed. Admitting his observations correlated with existing sex-role assignments, he added non-screeners experienced greater anxiety in stressful environments because they were more sensitive to unpleasantness.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps ‘unpleasantness’ was euphemistic for assault. Consequently, Mehrabian concluded, non-screeners (i.e. women) could be expected to perform poorly in highly arousing and fear-inducing, environments.<sup>54</sup>

Some *W&E* writers agreed that women’s physiological make up explained their different behaviour in public spaces, they added that these differences were produced by the public spaces in question because of their patriarchal designs. For example, in 1984, *W&E* reported on its participation in the public hearings at Toronto’s City Hall, orchestrated by the Taskforce on Public Violence Against Women and Children in response to six savage attacks two summers earlier. Popular settings for the attacks were parks, streets, and transportation venues. At the hearings, *W&E* submitted a brief on women’s anxiety when using public transportation. These women had experienced male harassment, which had been expedited by the building and design of the public transportation system: “We described the possible problems created by building design and sitting which minimizes surveillance. We made recommendations for research and action. There were almost no other submissions on design...”<sup>55</sup> *W&E* representatives joined a subcommittee of predominantly female expert planners. After visiting the crime sites, the subcommittee delivered a report to the Metropolitan Police Department. The report stipulated that segregated land-use policies catered to homogenous industrial areas removed from residential neighbourhoods. Shopping centres were enveloped by vast parking areas. Poorly lit large parks or gaps along wide suburban streets created dark shadows along sidewalks. All of these areas put women at greater risk during dark and quiet hours.<sup>56</sup> *W&E* stressed crime prevention was possible if popular crime spots had better illumination and were made more visible to the public. The magazine advocated for shared surveillance and responsibility in the community. It strongly advocated for neighbourhood crime watch.

The 1986 Spring issue of *W&E* focused extensively on violence in urban spaces, specifically female students’ fear on Canadian university campuses. These women were justified in their fears.

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<sup>53</sup> Mehrabian, *Public Places and Private Spaces*, 5.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Gerda Wekerle, “Public Violence Against Women and Children – Design Factors,” *Women and Environments*, 6, no.2 (1984), 5.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

One *W&E* feature article reviewed recent studies of “women’s perceptions of fear” on York, Carleton, McMaster, and the University of Toronto campuses.<sup>57</sup> Surveys revealed that although “both men and women are susceptible to danger, popular belief holds that men are better equipped to deal with it because of their strength and more aggressive personalities. This suggests the traditional argument that women belong in the home...” or at least not alone after dark.<sup>58</sup> Fear inducing spaces included poorly lit areas at night. Because campuses are set apart from the rest of the city, there is little traffic after dark. Additionally, there are many areas without escape routes, such as tunnels, and areas lacking security services, such as emergency phones. The article concluded that quelling women’s fears required implementing changes that were informed by truly feminist perspectives. First, female students could adopt an air of confidence to increase their sense of security. Second, women should be able to defend themselves and feel secure in their self-defense abilities. Last, women should “be made aware of both the risks they take and of the strategies they can adopt to decrease those risks.”<sup>59</sup> According to the article, it was less effective to change physical environments than to instill a sense of safety and self-defense skills in female students. The former was either unfeasible or merely stopgap solutions that maintained women’s dependence on men (i.e. Carleton’s proposed walk-home service, where women would be escorted home by men after dark). Responding to Ottawa’s City police statement that “a woman walking alone is both a necessary and sufficient condition providing the opportunity for assault,” *W&E*’s authors pointed out: “This implies that if women never travelled alone there would be no assaults...but such a view serves only to promote women’s perceptions of themselves as victims.”<sup>60</sup> In the event of an attack, the best solution was for women to seize control of the situation. This kind of feminist rhetoric contended that when women feared violence or experienced an actual attack *they* should count on themselves. Women could empower themselves by taking control. This argument is the same one that supports the idea of women’s self-defense classes, which, while a good strategy for the interim, did not get at the root of the problem: systemic male aggression. A likely reason *W&E* narrowed its focus to physical changes in the environment relates to its leanings toward liberal feminism, while their

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<sup>57</sup> Belinda Leach, Ellen Lesiuk, and Penny Morton, “Perceptions of Fear in the Urban Environment,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.2 (1986), 10.

<sup>58</sup> Leach, Lesiuk, and Morton, “Perceptions of Fear,” 10.

<sup>59</sup> Leach, Lesiuk, and Morton, “Perceptions of Fear,” 12.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

radical counterparts wrote extensively on men's inherent aggression and violence, and women's natural non-aggressiveness.<sup>61</sup> *W&E* chose to focus on more immediate strategies to prevent violence against women as a step against the misogynistic attitudes in Canada's legal and political systems. These immediate strategies were, arguably, more pragmatic, and no doubt *W&E*'s pragmatism contributed to its survival; its editors believed that sponsorship for *W&E*'s production relied the practical nature of its politics. A few years later, Ali Grant wrote a short article in *W&E*, insinuating a more radical approach to violence against women on campuses. Highlighting the "pervasiveness of sexual assault in women's lives" she argued:

We have to fight against the advice to stay home, not go out, to behave in certain, prescribed ways...we can no longer hide behind the smokescreen of rape mythologists. We have to admit that many of the men with whom we have daily contact are, in fact, the men who rape or will rape.<sup>62</sup>

Grant referenced findings from a contemporary study, carried out by James V.P. Check, who along with fellow psychologist Neil M. Malamuth, found a correlation between males classified as high sex role stereotyping subjects and sexual arousal in depictions of rape. They analyzed two hundred and eighty-four students, male and female, at the University of Manitoba, and assigned to the group three stories about consenting sexual intercourse, acquaintance rape, and stranger rape. They found that the students with greater beliefs in sex role stereotypes more readily interpreted the rape victim, particularly in the acquaintance-rape story, showed a favourable reaction. Furthermore, both male and female students shared these beliefs. Such findings suggested that "acquaintance-rape situation may lead to ambiguities that can bias perceptions and may result in greater hesitancy about defining the situation as rape...many people do not consider acquaintance rape to be real rape."<sup>63</sup> This study did not go unchallenged. Donald Mould claimed that Malamuth and Check's findings were inconsistent. He argued the study was informed by a "mishmash of assumptions devoid of adequate theoretical development," that led to "a plethora of inconsistent and contradictory results."<sup>64</sup> Critiques such as these notwithstanding, articles like Ali Grant's demonstrated *W&E*'s participation

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<sup>61</sup> Nancy, Adamson, Linda Briskin, Margaret McPhail. *Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988): 32.

<sup>62</sup> Ali Grant, "Taking Space – A More Personal/Political Note," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.1 (1989/1990): 17.

<sup>63</sup> James V.P. Check and Neil M. Malamuth, "Sex Role Stereotyping and Reactions to Pictures of Stranger Versus Acquaintance Rape," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, no. 2 (1983): 353.

<sup>64</sup> Donald Mould, "A Critical Analysis of Recent Research on Violent Erotica," *The Journal of Sex Research*, 24 (1988): 339.

in the evolution of rape definitions among young women on Canadian campuses. Of course, violent crimes against women occurred less frequently in public view, and *W&E* reflected second-wave feminism's argument that domestic violence was a political issue. Canada's patriarchal-minded political leaders, however, were slow to accept what went on behind closed doors as state issues. During Question Period in 1982 in Ottawa, the NDP's Margaret Mitchell read aloud from a report on domestic violence. She stated: "One in ten husbands in Canada beat their wives regularly," at which male politicians jeered.<sup>65</sup> For many Canadian women, home was not a haven, but a prison. *W&E* participated in raising awareness and offered resources for women in abusive relationships. It published notes on assault shelters and transition homes throughout the mid-1980s. It highlighted unique situations for rural and isolated districts, such as Fort Nelson B.C. or Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. These communities established "safe homes" systems. Safe homes were actually private homes provided by town citizens in case of emergency. Staffed by community service workers and volunteers, safe homes offered counselling, child care, and care for elderly people fleeing violent families. Because they relied on federal funds, many rural-based safe homes closed following the government's cuts to social programs in 1984.<sup>66</sup> *W&E* condemned the collapse of safe homes as they offered the only escape routes for many women in remote parts of the country. Nancy Janovicek's history of safe homes in British Columbia's Kootenay region demonstrated that an out of touch assumption by safe home coordinators that battered women would be more comfortable staying with middle-class nuclear families: "Staying with a stable family could exacerbate women's feelings of shame and failure that they had not been able to make their family conform to social expectations."<sup>67</sup> Contrary to Janovicek, *W&E* recognized that safe homes were by no means perfect, but disagreed with critics of safe homes. The magazine stated that in many remote areas, these were the only opportunities for women, but provincial cutbacks and B.C.'s privatization of shelters were to blame the inadequacies of safe homes.<sup>68</sup> Homeless shelters also frequently appeared in the magazine. In *W&E*'s Spring 1987 special issue on women and shelters, an American environmental psychologist described why women valued staying in shelters or transition homes that

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<sup>65</sup> Margaret Mitchell, "Question Period in 1982," in *Status Quo: The Unfinished Business of Feminism in Canada*, directed by Karen Cho, released November 29, 2012 (National Film Board of Canada), [nfb.ca/film/status\\_quo...](http://nfb.ca/film/status_quo...)

<sup>66</sup> Women and Environments, "Shelters and Second Stage Transition Housing," *Women and Environments*, 6, no.3 (1984), 5.

<sup>67</sup> Nancy Janovicek, *No Place to Go: Local Histories of the Battered Women's Shelter Movement*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007): 89.

<sup>68</sup> Women and Environments, "Shelters and Second Stage Transition Housing," *Women and Environments*, 6, no.3 (1984), 5.

offered other social services. In interviewing women living in Brooklyn transition homes, she learned that a home was “more than a means of orientation and location in a geographical space. It encompasses one’s feelings toward place of birth and childhood, national identity and community. A sense of home is central to one’s psychological well-being; its loss can be devastating.”<sup>69</sup> In the following article, community psychologist and *W&E* member Brenda Farge reflected on Canada’s failed homeless system considering the recent death of Drina Joubert. Found dead from exposure while sleeping in an abandoned car one December night in 1985, Joubert was 41-years-old. With a history of addiction, mental illness, and criminal activity, Joubert was representative of many people living on the fringe. The majority of them came from disadvantaged backgrounds and were regulated by state agencies, such as the mental health system, whose moralizing views further disenfranchised them.<sup>70</sup> In a country where women earned less than 65% of men’s income, 70% of the elderly poor were female, and made up the majority of people reliant on social assistance to feed their single-parent household, it can be ascertained that Canadian women were among the most vulnerable of people cast out from mainstream society.<sup>71</sup> Ironically, society’s most vulnerable were those most reliant on an unsympathetic system.

### **Mental Health in Rural Canada**

Concerns about mental health issues among women in rural areas were commonplace in *W&E*. Maureen Reed’s research on women in rural British Columbia revealed that women’s marginalization stemmed from the geography of forestry and mining communities. While a small number of women broke into the industry, jobs were difficult to retain and in short supply. Rural communities were isolated, had rough climates, inadequate infrastructure and transportation, and overwhelming majorities of single men, who were the main recruits of these industries. Under these circumstances, women experienced feelings of exclusion, alienation, and overt sexism. Moreover, women’s spatial entrapment in rural towns posed even greater challenges than in urban areas.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Josephine Imbimbo and Rachel Pfeffer, “Reflections of Home: Women in Shelters,” *Women and Environments*, 10, no.1 (1987): 14.

<sup>70</sup> Brenda Farge Doyle, “No One Spoke for Drina,” *Women and Environments*, 10, no.1 (1987): 22-24.

<sup>71</sup> *W&E*, “A Women’s Housing Manifesto,” *Women and Environments* 10, no.1 (1987): 22-24

<sup>72</sup> Maureen Reed, *Taking Stands: Gender and the Sustainability of Rural Communities*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005): 79-95.

*W&E* made some effort to understand the effects of remoteness in women's lives in rural communities. *W&E* dedicated its Winter 1986 issue to mental health in rural environments. Its cover depicts an image of a vast field blanketed with snow. Dotted along a post and barbed wire fence are a scattering of trees, their bare branches blowing in the wind. The weather is harsh and the windswept pasture blurs with the bleak white sky not far in the distance. The scene represents the loneliness and desolation felt by women discussed in the first article written by Thunder Bay's Pat McInnis. Notwithstanding her urban perspective, McInnis spent time directly working with women in rural north west Ontario as director of Women's Crisis House in Sioux Lookout, Ontario. She conducted a study of women and cabin fever in Ontario's resource towns. After discovering that women represented a disproportionate number of users of mental health services, McInnis sought to learn how much one's surrounding could affect one's mental state. She defined "cabin fever" as symptomatic of irritability and depression occurring typically throughout the long, isolating, and confining months of a Northern Canadian winter.<sup>73</sup> Adherence to traditional labour divisions meant men worked outside the home, with other people, while women stayed cooped up at home, leaving them the key sufferers of cabin fever. McInnis travelled to different communities of roughly the same size, and discovered "the same words and phrases kept recurring in all the workshops" (i.e. loneliness and boredom).<sup>74</sup> Stressors causing women's depression stemmed from the cruel paradox of personal isolation and lack of anonymity in their communities. Due to the nature of a dominant resource industry, town populations were transient and lacking community spirit. Volunteering and entertainment options were sparse, leaving women with no outlets to create meaningful friendships in their spare time. Almost all socializing revolved around drinking.<sup>75</sup> These women shouldered their feelings alone, suffering in silent guilt and confusion about the underlying causes of their depression. The remedy, McInnis suggested, was not to burden women with the responsibility of solving their problems alone, but to educate them about the environmental factors causing distress. By encouraging self-determination for women, they could help improve communities at large.<sup>76</sup> McInnis cited a similar mental health intervention project undertaken by Rachel Aarons, a Toronto therapist who studied women in rural British Columbia who felt similar distress. In her paper – available

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<sup>73</sup> Pat McInnis, "Cabin Fever: Northern Women and Mental Health," *Women and Environments*, 8, no.1 (1986): 4.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> McInnis, "Cabin Fever: Northern Women and Mental Health," 4.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.



through *W&E* upon request – Aarons advocated for more discussion among women about “the commonality of women’s problems and the sources in the society we live in.”<sup>77</sup> Such action could be facilitated by mental health programs, like support groups, counselling, community-level changes to increase training and educational options, and encouragement to develop everyday comradeships among women.<sup>78</sup>

*W&E* also followed with a report on women’s feelings of isolation in rural Saskatchewan. In 1985, Saskatoon hosted a conference called Social and Physical Isolation Conference of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. They discussed the relation of loneliness and remoteness for farm women as well as Native women living on reserves. Geographical location was not the only factor contributing to women’s feelings of isolation. Urban women spoke of feeling restricted from equal participation in society for reasons based on “prejudice, language, law, religious beliefs and economics.”<sup>79</sup> For example, the segregated labour force led to a kind of organizational isolation. Women working outside “traditional-lace ghettos” reported feeling extremely lonely in the workplace.<sup>80</sup> Echoing McInnis and Aaron, the report concluded with solutions for dealing with feelings of isolation and subsequent mental health stress: “Overcoming physical barriers is only one way of ending female isolation; we need also, to learn more about other forms, both environmental and non-environmental.”<sup>81</sup>

## **METRAC and *W&E***

The subject of violence in public space returned in full force for the Fall 1989/Winter 1990. The issue honoured the École Polytechnique massacre that occurred December, 1989, a terrible tragedy that saw the assassination of over a dozen female students by “a lone gunman who blamed feminists for his problems.”<sup>82</sup> It was sponsored by the organization, Metro Action Committee on Public Violence against Women and Children (METRAC), a Toronto-based organization that

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<sup>77</sup> Rachel Aarons, “Women and the Small Town Syndrome,” National Rural Mental Health Conference, (1981), 9-10, quoted in Pat McInnis, “Cabin Fever: Northern Women and Mental Health,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.1 (1986), 5.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>79</sup> Paula Bourne, “Women: Social and Physical Isolation Conference of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women carried out in Saskatoon in 1985,” *Women and Environments*, 8, no.1 (1986), 6.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Paula Bourne, “Women: Social and Physical Isolation,” 6.

<sup>82</sup> Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution*, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2005), 226.

provided *W&E* with research and methods on women and safety in urban environments for the issue. A reprint from METRAC featured several of its projects. One was a blueprint for municipal action against crime in Toronto that METRAC created jointly with WPT called WISE Report (Women in Safe Environments). The report paid particular attention to those women most vulnerable to attacks, such as elderly, immigrant, and disabled women – none of whom were victims of the Montreal Massacre, of course. The WISE report was informed by METRAC's most successful project: the safety audit kit, developed for women to assess and document their safety concerns in public and semipublic places. For instance, METRAC assessed the accessibility, safety and distance of Toronto transit systems in sixty-five stations and proposed sixty-three recommendations to improve safety in transit buildings and grounds adopted by the Toronto Transit Commission. METRAC also carried a safety audit of High Park, where it made similarly extensive recommendations for women and children's safety.<sup>83</sup> In 1989, METRAC's safety kit was adapted by the DisAbled Women's Network (DAWN), which amended several points in the safety kit, such as wheelchair ramp installation or replacement in several areas around the city. It also suggested an appointment of City Hall staff to wait with wheelchair users until they were picked up from certain locations after hours.<sup>84</sup> Vocalizing formerly overlooked concerns within the women's movement, DAWN made some of the most vulnerable, but strong-willed feminists visible.

### **Ableism in the Canadian Feminist Movement**

*W&E* explored the topic of disabled women further, in the Spring 1990 issue, dedicated to women and social environments. Planning for the issue “involved a series of discussions with over 30 women between the ages of 24 and 66, including students, homemakers, academics and retired women...” with the purpose of giving “voice to a range of women describing their personal experience of various types of social environments.”<sup>85</sup> During the two decades surveyed in this study, *W&E* reprinted over 10% of its material. Much of these reprints were the scattered excerpts from a *Resources for Feminist Research* (RFR) special issue on women and disabilities, published originally in 1985. *W&E* network member, Francis Rooney, authored an RFR reprint about a

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<sup>83</sup> METRAC, “METRAC: A Catalyst for Change,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.1 (1989/1990): 4-5.

<sup>84</sup> METRAC, “The DAWN Audit,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.1 (1989/1990): 8.

<sup>85</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word from Us,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1990), 3.

mother of five children who raised her family from a wheelchair, noting the lack of empathy able-bodied mothers lent to disabled mothers: “As for living in a wheelchair being not bad – maybe we should all try it for six months...As for not needing to be superwoman, has she ever changed a diaper with her mouth?”<sup>86</sup> In another article – an original *W&E* submission – targeted the prejudices disabled women felt within the mainstream women’s movement: “Perceiving disabled women as childlike, helpless and victimized, non-disabled feminists have severed them from the sisterhood.”<sup>87</sup> Calling disabled women “handicapped” for example, was offensive and inaccurate. The latter was a functional limitation of someone’s ability to do something, but society’s environments created handicaps, such as inaccessible buildings or condescending attitudes. They limit disabled people’s interactions with an environment. Like much of the rest of society, second-wave feminism was guilty of ignoring disabled women. Problematically, “the exclusion of disabled women by the mainstream movement divides us from women’s groups and makes us all easier to conquer.”<sup>88</sup> By highlighting the prejudice within the women’s movement, *W&E* illustrated how feminists took part in creating unsafe spaces for their sisters with disabilities.

### **Childhood Trauma: Barbara Sanford (1990)**

In the magazine industry, guest editors are usually invited to edit a thematic issue of their expertise. *W&E* named Barbara Sanford as special guest editor for the Spring 1990 issue on social environments due to her expertise as a consultant in community planning and social research. Her clients included government agencies and non-profit organizations, such as Young Mothers Resource Group and Community Health Clinics. Sanford had been *W&E*’s graphics coordinator and one of its editors from 1984 to 1993, but contributed just one article throughout her years with the magazine. Perhaps more than her career, Sanford’s motivation to guest edit the special issue was related to her traumatic experience in her childhood home. Her article recounted her history of sexual abuse by her father when she was a child.<sup>89</sup> Her father, former director of the Department of Health and Human Services in the San Francisco Bay area, was still living in California at the time of

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<sup>86</sup> Francis Rooney, “Feminists on Disability,” RFR in *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1990), 18.

<sup>87</sup> Meryn Stuart and Glynis Ellerington, “Unequal Access: Disabled Women’s Exclusion from the Mainstream Women’s Movement,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1990), 18.

<sup>88</sup> Stuart and Ellerington, “Unequal Access,” 18.

<sup>89</sup> *Women and Environments*, “Network Directory,” 9, no.3 (1987), 10; *Women and Environments*, “Network Directory,” 10, no.3 (1988), 13.

her writing, free from criminal persecution under state law.<sup>90</sup> Sanford explained that journaling and sharing her story gave her a better understanding of her emotions and thoughts: “I have discovered that my ability to ‘disassociate’ or separate my conscious self from the traumas inflicted by my father was what allowed me to survive and function.”<sup>91</sup> Ultimately, she wrote the article for the purpose of self-empowerment and to empower others in similar situations. The article ends with a resource list of centres for survivors of incest and assault as well as readings about research and personal testimonies of overcoming sexual child abuse.<sup>92</sup> Her piece was the first *W&E* article to openly discuss personal stories of sexual abuse. The magazine’s engagement with environmental psychology and social environments, nevertheless, enriched their feminist readers’ notions of environments and expanded environmental critiques to include spaces that one cannot exactly see, but that impact peoples’ daily experiences. These are social environments within physical built places - spaces within spaces.

### Natural environment

As the late 1980s approached, magazine material showed greater attention to natural environments. Canada participated in the rise of global environmental issues, marking a kind of “second wave” of environmentalism that differed from its predecessor's more local scope.<sup>93</sup> By then, new ecological issues had surfaced – toxic chemicals in products, ozone layer depletion, global warming, and non-sustainable development – and had come to unite some Canadians in a national movement. Canada established the Environmental Monitor in 1987, which was “Canada’s only syndicate public opinion survey focusing exclusively on environment and resource issues.”<sup>94</sup> Survey results showed an unprecedented shift in public interest in environmental damage, primarily as it related to human health: “This is not the environment issue of the sixties or the seventies that we are talking about, but has been redefined in the current period as concern about health.”<sup>95</sup> One factor distinguishing this second wave from the first was the growing sense of empowerment for the

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<sup>90</sup> Barbara Sanford, “A Package from My Father: Remembering and Recovering from Childhood Sexual Abuse,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1990): 13.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>92</sup> Sanford, “A Package from My Father,” 15.

<sup>93</sup> Robert Paehlke, “The Canadian Environmental Movement: Remembering Who We Are,” *Group Politics and Social Movements in Canada*, ed. Miriam Smith (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 298.

<sup>94</sup> Doug Miller, “What the Polls Tell Us,” *Women and Environments*, 13, no.2 (1991): 68.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 68.

individual: “The focus on individual responsibility is a very grassroots kind of approach to the environmental issue...Women are leading the trend toward individual ownership of environmental protection that is increasingly a view of all Canadians” said Doug Miller, President of International Environmental Monitor Limited.<sup>96</sup> The second environmental wave was also “more oriented to global environmental issues, and the problems addressed increasingly could only be resolved by multilateral, even global action.”<sup>97</sup> *W&E* echoed the surge of public and media interest in the natural environment, and immediately saw the treatment of nature as a woman’s health issue, particularly reproductive health and the effects of pollution on feminine hygiene products. Articles about the natural environment increased in number, and length, particularly between 1991 and 1993. The shift was solidified by changes at the executive level: “Women & Environments, Education Development Foundation, [(WEED),]\* reflecting the fact that the magazine had helped to generate a powerful network of women concerned about and involved in environmental issues.”<sup>98</sup> The following discussion of *W&E* and natural environments includes its treatment of ecofeminism, which arguably became the framework for its perspective of women’s health.

### **Incorporation into WEED Foundation and the Adoption of Ecofeminism**

In conjunction with its incorporation into the Women, Environment, Education, and Development (WEED) Foundation, *W&E* commenced its exploration of ecofeminism. As an umbrella organization, WEED coalesced several small feminist and environmental groups and introduced new readers to the magazine while opening the magazine up to funding opportunities. While urban planning experts remained on the editorial board and content about artificial environments maintained a presence, WEED connected the magazine to much larger environmental networks, such as the Ontario Environmental Network and the Canadian Environmental Network.<sup>99</sup> One of its first editorials under WEED’s ownership vividly depicted the magazine’s newly adopted identification with non-human nature using the image of weeds as a metaphor for the unstoppable growth of the network: “Help us continue pushing up through the foundations and rooting in

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>97</sup> Robert Pahlke, “The Canadian Environmental Movement,” 298.

<sup>98</sup> Women and Environments, “A Word From Us,” *Women and Environments*, 10, no.3 (1988) 3.; Choice of acronym did not intentionally mirror that used for marijuana (weed) as editors would have been of the generation when marijuana’s street name was ‘grass’.

<sup>99</sup> *W&E* “A Word from us,” *Women and Environments*, 11 no.2 (1989): 3.

cracks; help us to invade the ordered design of man's labours. Together, the weeds will spread...If left to themselves they spread and can quickly take over."<sup>100</sup> WEED's co-founder, Miriam Wyman, guided *W&E*'s shift toward the natural environment.<sup>101</sup> When Wyman joined *W&E*'s editorial board in 1984, she belonged to WPT. However, Wyman is never mentioned in WPT reports, suggesting her involvement was minimal. At the time, Wyman was pursuing her doctorate on the experience of nature in urban green spaces, but never finished.<sup>102</sup> Following her decision to leave academia, Wyman became a mother and environmental activist.<sup>103</sup> Her interests devoted to the natural environment contrasted with those of her *W&E* predecessors.

As Joni Seager noted, "it is impossible to do work under the rubric of feminist environmentalism, or even to talk about it, without first explaining or positioning oneself in reference to ecofeminism."<sup>104</sup> *W&E*'s perspective on the natural environment was largely informed by the concept of ecofeminism. "Ecofeminism," writes Heather Eaton and Louis Lorentzen, "is considered to be a third wave of feminism, but the exploration of ecofeminism led to disagreement on the editorial board."<sup>105</sup> American environmental historian, Carolyn Merchant, laid the foundation for *W&E*'s perspective of the natural environment. Applying "ecofeminism" in her historical examination of Western culture, Merchant claimed cultural constructs of modern woman and nature emerged with the values of the Scientific Revolution.<sup>106</sup> *W&E* published a review of Merchant's book, *The Death of Nature*, the year it was published, in 1980. Given *W&E*'s predominantly urban focus, however, it did not officially recognize ecofeminism as a legitimate branch of feminism until 1987, when the magazine came under the ownership of the WEED Foundation, and became WEED's mouthpiece. Its Fall 1987 editorial read: "This is in keeping with the opinion of the Editorial Board that 'the social movement which connects the devastation of the earth with the exploitation of women' ([Susan Griffin]) is an integral part of our concern."<sup>107</sup> *W&E* published its first feature article dedicated to the topic of ecofeminism in 1986. It was written by Katherine

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<sup>100</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word From Us," *Women and Environments*, 10, no.3 (1988), 3.

<sup>101</sup> Miriam Wyman and Rosalind Cairncross, "The Road to the Conference," *Women and Environments*, 13, no.2 (1991), 76.

<sup>102</sup> Women and Environments, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 5, no.3 (1982), 4.

<sup>103</sup> Wyman, "About the Editor," 356.

<sup>104</sup> Joni Seager, "Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism," *Signs: The Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28, no.3 (2003): 945.

<sup>105</sup> Eaton, Heather and Lois Lorentzen, *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*, ed. Heather Eaton and Lois Lorentzen, (Toronto: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 5.

<sup>106</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Liveable World*. New York: Routledge, 1992, 194.

<sup>107</sup> Miriam Wyman, "Explorations of Eco-Feminism," *Women and Environments*, 9, no.2 (1987), 6.

Davies, who joined the editorial team the following year. Because Davies' time on the board coincided with the magazine's overt attention to the idea of ecofeminism, it is plausible to conclude that she was responsible for the majority of the discussion. Davies claimed ecofeminism gave her insight into her work as the director of the Environmental Protection Office within Toronto's Public Health Department.<sup>108</sup>

In the 1987 Spring issue, Davies wrote an article, praising Merchant's ideas of colonialism in the Americas as a product of patriarchy: "Explorers' reaction to the vastness of the North American wilderness was to classify it as a hostile environment. To survive in this new environment, men thought, demanded and defined true virility."<sup>109</sup> Survival entailed dominating the natural landscape. Davies carefully avoided employing reverse sexism, noting, "this should not be taken to mean that men are inherently less natural. Nature is neither male nor female. Continuing to stress the links between women and nature could reinforce the subservient roles usually accorded to both."<sup>110</sup>

Davies' take away message – and ultimately *W&E*'s – was this: nature and human beings were both cultural constructs. Women's social position, rather than their "natural" one, made them more akin to the natural world. This common position was thrust onto them by patriarchal thinking and actions over the centuries. Women's freedom from this position relied on their recognition of common goal that they shared with nature. The women who ascribed to this belief aligned themselves with environmentalist goals and became ecofeminists. Miriam Wyman included an annotated bibliography of ecofeminist works compiled for a university summer course she was teaching.

It is important to remember that while *W&E* officially began its exploration of ecofeminism, it did not endorse it fully. It editorialized that ecofeminism, like feminism, was fundamentally contentious. The issue's editorial reminded readers that *W&E* aimed to deliver, "a variety of feminist perspectives, rather than a single, unified or consistent viewpoint. Our feature article on ecofeminism is a case in point because it is an area about which we on the editorial board hold highly divergent opinions."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Katherine Davies, "Historical Associations: Women and the Natural World," *Women and Environments*, 9, no.2 (1987):4; Katherine Davies, "Ecofeminism: A Personal Perspective," *Women and Environments*, 8, no.1 (1986), 23.

<sup>109</sup> Davies, "Historical Associations," 5.

<sup>110</sup> Davies, "Historical Associations," 6.

<sup>111</sup> *Women and Environments*, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, 10, no.3 (1988), 3.

Feminist periodicals of the 1970s were known for their collective decision-making, but naturally friction among editors occurred. A periodical's production required amicable collaboration. Its survival relied on an avoidance of destructive debate among editors. What *W&E* editors found most problematic with ecofeminism had to do with its tenet of women's inherent spirituality with nature.<sup>112</sup> For example, then sociology graduate, Susan Prentice, apparently only knew about this 'one brand' of ecofeminism. When Prentice joined the editorial board, she wrote a scathing article about ecofeminism: "I don't like it, I don't approve of it, and I don't feel personally touched by it...In simple terms, this is a feminist assertion that 'biology is destiny.' This means that domination...is basic to men, and can never be overcome."<sup>113</sup> She condemned ecofeminism for being relying on essentialism and called ecofeminism "a product of North American privilege which takes its privilege so for granted that it cannot even notice it enough to comment on it."<sup>114</sup> Prentice's piece followed two feature articles, both in favour of ecofeminism. Prentice left *W&E* altogether shortly after her criticism. Reasons for her departure were unspecified, presumably. Still, she could not condone the magazine's support of ecofeminism. While it was not a main focus of the magazine as a whole, articles continued to reference ecofeminism warmly. They defended ecofeminism as an adaptive theoretical approach useful for feminist activism. For reasons unknown, *W&E* did not explore the Women's Peace Camp at Clayoquot Sound, British Columbia in 1993 – Canada's largest demonstration of civil disobedience, which was framed as an ecofeminist action. The only mention of Clayoquot appears in the form of a praiseworthy review of a memoir by ecofeminist protestor, Betty Krawczk, who spent four months in jail after she joined the blockades to stop clear cutting.<sup>115</sup> It is possible, though by no means verifiable in the scope of this project, at the time of the Clayoquot Sound Peace Camp in 1993, *W&E* was preoccupied publishing a much articles by a more global group of women. The year 1993 was also the first and last bilingual issue, so perhaps resources were stretched. Yet, in the 1994 issue, most articles dealing with the Canadian women and the natural environment dealt with central Canada, specifically Hamilton Ontario, because the Rosemary Foulds, an administrator in Hamilton's municipal government, acted as managing editor.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *Women and Environments*, "A Word from Us," 3

<sup>113</sup> Susan Prentice, "Taking Sides; What's Wrong with Eco-feminism?" *Women and Environments*, 10, no.3 (1988), 10.

<sup>114</sup> Prentice, "Taking Sides; What's Wrong with Eco-feminism?" 10.

<sup>115</sup> *W&E*, "In Print: *Clayoquot: The Sound of my Heart*," *Women and Environments*, no. 41 (1997), 25.

<sup>116</sup> *W&E*, "A Word From Us," 14, no.1 (1994): 3.



Arguably, this speaks to the magazine's regional tendencies.

### **W&E Aligning with Socialist Ecofeminism**

Mindful of its principle to represent “a variety of feminist perspectives, rather than a single, unified or consistent viewpoint,” *W&E* never openly subscribed to socialist ecofeminism. Many of its articles, nevertheless, espoused socialist ecofeminist tenets. Critics like Prentice forced ecofeminists to redefine their theories. While writing *The Death of Nature*, Merchant recalled that she had in fact recognized the pitfalls of essentialism and the nature/culture dualism. She recalled that in formulating her theory of ecofeminism she was trying to articulate a kind of feminism rooted in material change. It took her until 1992 to formally label this kind of ecofeminism as socialist ecofeminism. Still, this kind of ecofeminism was grounded “not in dualism but in the dialectics of production and reproduction that I had articulated in *The Death of Nature*.”<sup>117</sup> There she had argued that in the transition to modern capitalism, women had lost ground in both the spheres of production and reproduction.<sup>118</sup> Socialist ecofeminism sought to overturn current modes of production and reproduction on a global scale, and work in solidarity with women's movements in the underdeveloped world.<sup>119</sup> *W&E*'s viewpoint was developing along the same trajectory as Merchant. Its position in the woman/nature debate aligned very much with socialist ecofeminism. It increased content on women's traditional role in global environmental sustainability, taking measure to seek out more non-western ecofeminist authors, such as Vandana Shiva. Most articles maintained that all women – more or less – have reproductive capacities. By this logic, women were universally at risk if environmental problems affected reproductive health, in ways that men were not. Yet, socialist ecofeminism acknowledged that because of the disproportionate amount of environmental damage experienced by poorer women in the west or women in developing countries, they were at a greater risk.<sup>120</sup> Solutions to these problems required an understanding of the contexts wherein they surfaced: “A socialist ecofeminist movement in the developed world can work in solidarity with women's movements to save the environment in the underdeveloped world.”<sup>121</sup> *W&E* advocated

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<sup>117</sup> Merchant, “The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature,” *Iris*, The History of Science Society, 97 (2006).

<sup>118</sup> Merchant, “The Scientific Revolution and The Death of Nature,” 2006.

<sup>119</sup> Merchant, Carolyn, *Radical Ecology*, 197-198.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

that solving environmental crises on a global scale required a sensitivity to different cultures. The Winter 1991 issue dedicated to WEED's landmark conference held the year before, *Women and Environments: Charting a New Course*, and featured summaries of all the conference papers. Wyman called the conference as "Canada's first conference to bring together women involved in environmental activity."<sup>122</sup> In her paper, British Columbia NDP politician Rosemary Brown – "the first woman to run for the leadership of a national political party and the first black woman to serve in a provincial legislature" – cited Vandana Shiva in arguing that "development has been guided by the logic of growth and affluence, it has set unsustainable targets based on western consumption."<sup>123</sup> Brown served as the director of MATCH International, a Canadian NGO that worked with women in developing countries. Her time at MATCH taught her that lessons of feminism, namely "that there is never one right way of responding to social issues," should be applied to one's understanding of environmental problems.<sup>124</sup> According to Brown, a feminist perspective on ecology was required because it asserted "a holistic perspective and inclusive agenda," instead of Western capitalism "based on a patriarchal linear philosophy."<sup>125</sup> Brown went on to explain that Canada's international development policies were based on self-interested motives. Largely influenced by the United States, Canada's projects in Third World development were short-sighted and misogynist; they satisfied immediate capitalist goals that relied on the cheap labour of Third World women, and caused industrial pollution for those living and working in the proximity. By destroying ecologically sound traditional work done by women, Canada's state sanctioned businesses accelerated the rate of feminized poverty in those societies.<sup>126</sup> Brown encouraged women in Canada to communicate with honesty the ideas and values of women in developing nations to their own governments: "We are in a unique position to speak out when industrial nations seek to dump their hazardous industries and technologies on developing countries... We have to educate our politicians about establishing priorities based on long term considerations."<sup>127</sup> *W&E* demonstrated a genuine effort to understand

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<sup>122</sup> Miriam Wyman, "Introduction," *Sweeping the Earth: Women Taking Action for a Healthy Planet*, ed. Miriam Wyman (Charlottetown: Friends of the Earth, 1999), 16.

<sup>123</sup> Rosemary Brown, "Matching Women, Environment and Development Around the World," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 39.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Rosemary Brown, "Matching Women, Environment and Development Around the World," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 39.

<sup>126</sup> Rosemary Brown, "Matching Women," 39; Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution*, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2005).

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 40-41.

the specific needs of Third World women. Aware of identity politics, *W&E* tried to avoid speaking for women in the developing world by including non-Western contributors, excerpts from other publications, and the occasional interview. The exclusion of Third World women's stories generally stemmed from costliness or time budgets.

### **Motherhood and the Environmental Activism**

Ecofeminism frequently used women's role as mothers to amplify its message. In her recent research on ecofeminism from Clayoquot Sound's peace camp in 1993, Niamh Moore aptly acknowledged that extensive research on "women's environmental activism through the lens of maternalism" overshadowed other perspectives.<sup>128</sup> It is conceivable that this was because of its compelling premise: "Women, as mothers," Moore explained, "have been perceived as the particular victims of environmental degradation because pollutants and toxins often manifest themselves first and most visibly in the bodies of pregnant women through miscarriages, fetal abnormalities, and birth defects, and through illnesses in children."<sup>129</sup> Illustrations and titles of maternal rhetoric, such as drawings, photos, and slogans of motherhood, peppered *W&E*'s pages throughout the years under review. One drawing featured a mother looking down reassuringly at her baby--a sick planet Earth. One photograph depicted a mother making a cook stove in Sri Lanka, while her young daughter leans on her shoulder, with its accompanying article titled "Custodians of the Environment."<sup>130</sup> The 1997 network directory's only long was entitled "Mother Herb," which featured a Markham activist's fight against "Canada's Bill C-7, a controversial Controlled Drugs and Substances Act," that restricted "the use and sale of medicinal herbs."<sup>131</sup> The term "Mother Earth," frequently appears, invoking maternal instincts to save the planet. Some articles cited women's biological and social roles as mothers as pivotal factors in the environmental crisis. Utilizing the image of the "Moral Mother" in direct activism, feminists have capitalized on motherhood throughout history.<sup>132</sup>

Stemming from the days of Nellie McClung – Canada's foremost maternal feminist of the

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<sup>128</sup> Niamh Moore, *The Changing Nature of Eco/Feminism: Telling Stories from Clayoquot Sound*, (UBC Press, 2015), 152.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Prabha Prabhakar Bhardwaj, "Custodians of the Environment," *Women and Environments*, 13, no.3/4 (1993): 30-31.

<sup>131</sup> Brigit Ruff, "Mother Herb: An Interview With Waltraut Richter," *Women and Environments*, no.41 (1997): 20-21.

<sup>132</sup> Moore, *The Changing Nature of Eco/Feminism*, 166.

first-wave – maternal rhetoric was employed by second-wavers such as Ursula Franklin and VOW, who appealed to women’s maternal responsibilities: “Mothers became engaged because to do otherwise would be considered a form of neglect.”<sup>133</sup> For Susan Prentice, maternal feminism had been the crucial weakness of ecofeminism, and argued ecofeminism “set the feminist movement back a good 15 years.”<sup>134</sup> But several articles utilized women’s biological experience as mothers to get their point across. The Winter 1991 issue included articles by female scientists and politicians at all levels, such as Etobicoke’s member of parliament, Linda LeBourdais, who linked women’s health and the polluted environment to their subsequently affected unborn children. The effects of radiation found in women’s bodies living near nuclear facilities in Ontario correlated with higher levels of leukemia in children.<sup>135</sup> NAC’s Voice of Women activist, Betsy Carr, discussed how “virtually all household appliances emit a potentially hazardous electro-magnetic field. Pregnant women sleeping with an electric blanket on, for example, have shown higher rates of miscarriage.”<sup>136</sup> Sheila Malcolmson from Energy Probe used Finland as an example of the ways in which Canadian women could organize against their country’s nuclear power projects by postponing childbearing until all nuclear power plants were shut down.<sup>137</sup> The current Green Party leader, Elizabeth May, spoke on behalf of Sierra Club Canada to discuss women’s response to the ozone layer. She thanked the women in her family for demonstrating empowerment and organization. Quoting her grandmother, May said, “‘if you want to get anything done, ask a busy person.’ This is why women have to do all this work; we are the only ones who will get it done.”<sup>138</sup> Referencing the International Conference for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, May reflected, “this male approach to the problem was basically a trade conference. It was a question of who had bargaining power, and which companies and countries were going to maintain market share. No one was dealing with the obvious need to minimize disaster here.”<sup>139</sup>

Articles also tapped into mothers’ purchasing power. They prioritized non-toxic green

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<sup>133</sup> Adamson, *Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women’s Movement in Canada*, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), 31; Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*, 91.

<sup>134</sup> Prentice, “Taking Sides; What’s Wrong with Eco-feminism?” 10.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Betsy Carr, “Opening Pandora’s Box: Women and Electro-Magnetic Radiation,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 21.

<sup>137</sup> Sheila Malcolmson, “Power for the People: Energy and the Environment,” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 18.

<sup>138</sup> Elizabeth May, “Why Talk about Women and the Environment?” *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 11.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

products, such as unbleached diapers and sanitary napkins. Raging Granny, Ruth Johnson, organized a Conserver Shopping Tour to help women become aware of their 'green' purchasing power: "In North America, 75% of the purchase of goods and services is done by women. A 15% shift in purchasing patterns can move an item right off the shelf."<sup>140</sup> The magazine used the mantra "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" in their discussion of non-disposable products piling up in landfills. Articles conveyed mothers as role models who set positive examples by composting, and conserving energy in the home, and playing an instrumental role in the "think globally, act locally" campaign. The magazine did not see ecofeminism as necessarily regressive. The majority of writers thought of women as keepers of the home and their relationship to nature as empowering. For example, NAC president, Chavia Hosek writes of Ellen Swallow Richards, a pioneer of household science, who coined the word ecology derived from "oikos," the Greek word for house: "Seeing the earth as our household is one of the ways in which women have been comfortable with environmental concerns."<sup>141</sup>

### **Stop the Whitewash 1992**

Joni Seager has argued, "health issues brought many women activists to environmentalism."<sup>142</sup> WEED's Stop the Whitewash campaign in the early 1990s epitomized this realization exactly. A campaign for non-bleached women's hygiene products, Stop the Whitewash was also demonstrably ecofeminist insofar as it harnessed support by appealing to women's reproductive health and responsibilities as mothers. The 1992 issue, which was principally devoted to WEED's Stop the Whitewash campaign, included 5-pages of reprinted excerpts from the book *Stop the Whitewash: Exposing the Health and Environmental Dangers of Women's Sanitary Products and Disposable Diapers*, written by long-time *W&E* editor Adrienne Scott. Stop the Whitewash publicized "the health and environmental problems associated with chlorine-bleached, single-use disposables."<sup>143</sup> The production of these items caused chlorine to leak into the Canada's waterways, eventually spilling into international waters. A corrosive chemical, massive amounts of chlorine

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<sup>140</sup> Ruth Johnson, "The Conserver Shopping Tour," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 48.

<sup>141</sup> Chavia Hosek, "Coming Together," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 14.

<sup>142</sup> Joni Seager, "Rachel Carson Died of Breast Cancer: The Coming of Age of Feminist Environmentalism," *Signs: The Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28, no.3 (2003): 958.

<sup>143</sup> WEED, "Stop the Whitewash and Help the WEED Foundation," *Women and Environments*, 13, no.2 (1992):

endangered all species reliant on the affected water. Heavily populated regions, namely communities around the Great Lakes, “are one of the best places in the world to study the health consequences of toxic compounds, especially organochlorines.”<sup>144</sup> Disposal of these products resulted in mountains of non-biodegradable waste. Plastic tampon applicators were floating out of Halifax and into the Atlantic. On the west coast, Victoria, B.C. dumped its sewage directly into the Pacific; and the Greater Vancouver Regional District pumped its untreated sewage, including tampons and sanitary pads, into the Fraser River. In Quebec, thousands of sanitary pads, found in Montreal’s raw sewage, littered the St. Lawrence.<sup>145</sup>

The main goal was getting chlorine out of all Canadian pulp and paper consumer products, such as sanitary napkins and diapers “and eventually out of all paper products.”<sup>146</sup> The campaign sought to empower women by overturning the taboo subject of women’s sanitary products – a taboo that enabled companies that produced these products to continue manufacturing using dangerous chemicals: “We know the idea of actually discussing sanitary napkins, tampons and menstruation is inconceivable to some... But breaking the silence has been fascinating, informative and not at all embarrassing.”<sup>147</sup> According to Catriona Sandilands, this campaign was a classic example of ecofeminism, and it was arguably the magazine’s most radical publication. The campaign dealt with the extremely personal issue of women’s menstrual products. However, WEED used women’s hygiene products and health as a spring board to the larger question of water quality and chlorine’s effects on human health. They depicted women’s bodies as physical evidence that environmental problems endangered human health.<sup>148</sup> The campaign began with a very personal issue, but extended to include everyone.

### **W&E at International Conferences ‘Women for A Healthy Planet’ and Rio Summit 1992**

The *Women and Environments* conference attracted over two hundred attendees, and became the blueprint for WEED’s position on the international stage. In 1991, WEED representatives attended the World Women’s Congress for a Healthy Planet in Florida, where “more than 1500

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<sup>144</sup> Adrienne Scott and Liz Armstrong, “Exposing the Sanitary Products’ ‘Whitewash’...and What You Can Do About It!,” *Women and Environments*, 13, no.2 (1992): 7.

<sup>145</sup> Scott and Armstrong, “Exposing the Sanitary Products,” 10.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>147</sup> Scott and Armstrong, “Exposing the Sanitary Products,” 11.

<sup>148</sup> Sandilands, *The Good Natured Feminist*, 178-179.

women from over 80 countries arrived at a common position on environmental and development concerns, summed up in the document “Women’s Action Agenda 21.”<sup>149</sup> At this conference, WEED accepted a request by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation to participate in the creation of the project *A North-South NGO Dialogue*, wherein WEED would devise a report exploring Canadian women’s experience with poverty, development, and the natural environment. The report was to draw on common situations faced by both northern and southern women. Using *W&E* as an outreach, WEED effectively brought together small collectives of women’s environmental groups in Canada. The final report outlined the need for healthy and environmentally friendly consumerism, and a stop to colonization and the extraction of finite resources.

*A North-South NGO Dialogue* played a considerable role in Canada’s contribution to the “Women’s Action Agenda 21.”<sup>150</sup> Thereafter, the Women’s Action Agenda 21 contributed the female perspective in the Agenda 21, produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at the Rio Summit in 1992, which was a blueprint for the steps industrialized nations would take to channel 7% of their GDPs toward sustainable development over a fixed number of years.<sup>151</sup> Of the five WEED representatives in Brazil, two sat on *W&E*’s editorial board. Despite having virtually no funding, WEED – a tiny, volunteer organization working out of a downtown Toronto church basement – lobbied and mobilized women’s involvement with the Canadian Participatory for UNCED (CPCU) and its delegation.<sup>152</sup> The conference culminated with each country delivering a mandatory report about its activities and efforts regarding sustainable development and the environment. According to WEED, Canada’s National Report of the conference left women out completely, much to the organization’s disappointment, so WEED prepared a statement on women in the environment and development. Once at home, WEED coordinated a public event to bring reports from women at Rio to Toronto.<sup>153</sup> Overall, WEED had a positive view of the conference and Canada’s role therein.

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<sup>149</sup> Pamela Sayne, “Women for a Just and Healthy Planet,” *Women and Environments*, 13, no.2 (1992): 17.

<sup>150</sup> Kim Pearson, “Report on a Project...and a Process,” *Women and Environments*, 13, no.3/4 (1993): 41.

<sup>151</sup> Suzuki, *The Autobiography*, 286.

<sup>152</sup> Miriam Wyman, “Life in the UNCED Lane,” *Women and Environments*, 13, no.3/4 (1993): 45.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

## After Rio and an Increased International Scope

At the Rio Summit 1992 and thereafter, *W&E* provided more room to international voices and concerns. Its editors used the opportunity to publicize the collaborative publication, *Power, Populations, and the Environment: Women Speak*. Written by women from seven countries who were working in three different languages, the book was first distributed at the Rio Summit. *W&E* published just one issue in 1993 – the only issue to incorporate French translations of articles. The issue consisted of excerpts from the book, in an effort to make the ideas of these southern women better known in Canada. For example, India's Vandana Shiva, a physicist turned ecofeminist, applied a postcolonial approach to dismantle arguments by Western population critics who blamed the third world population for environmental destruction. On the contrary, she argued, "resource alienation and destruction of livelihoods, first by colonialism and then by Northern imposed models of development" caused the environmental crisis, not Third World population numbers.<sup>154</sup> Shiva argued that not only had the developed world taken over control of traditional women's work – resource production – it was now taking control of their reproductive powers, namely via Western population policies proposing the sterilization of extremely poor women in certain Latin American countries to curb global poverty. Not only did this population policy fail to achieve its goal, it further undermined Southern women's autonomy.<sup>155</sup>

Founder of the first indigenous grassroots NGO in Nigeria, Chief Bisi Ogunleye wrote about local women's initiative to making healthy environments in Africa. Ogunleye defined environmental problems as injustices to Indigenous women in rural Africa. "African women contribute to 85 percent of the labour in the production and processing of cocoa, palm oil, coffee, tea and rubber."<sup>156</sup> Unfortunately, rural women's experiential knowledge went unacknowledged in decision-making plans, in favour of Western scientific farming, which Ogunleye deemed unfit for Indigenous agriculture in rural Africa. Ogunleye found that despite the reality of women's contributions, Western influences made "African men consider [women's] participation as limited to cooking and nursing babies at home."<sup>157</sup> Using *W&E*, Ogunleye demanded rural women be

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<sup>154</sup>Mira Shiva and Vandana Shiva, "Population and Environment: An Indian Perspective," *Women and Environments*, 13, no.3/4 (1993): 20.

<sup>155</sup>Shiva and Shiva, "Population and Environment," 20.

<sup>156</sup> Chief Bisi Ogunleye, "Local Initiative: Key to Women's Voice in Global Decision Making for a Healthy Environment in Africa," *Women and Environments*, 13, no.3/4 (1993): 15.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.



included in decision-making regarding natural resources and food production.

In contrast to discussions about sustainability in the Third World, *W&E* wrote very little about sustainable development in Canadian cities. Some articles suggest that many were skeptical were negative toward Canada accomplishments in sustainability. For example, *W&E* subscriber Jill Grant, criticized Canada for failing to implement sustainable development plans in city planning because many urban centres continued urban sprawl and their continued reliance of non-renewable resources proved regressive.<sup>158</sup> The keynote speaker at *W&E*'s conference, environmental health expert and activist, Rosalie Bertell, accused the Canadian government of undermining the Brundtland report when *The Globe and Mail* published an article stating the "Canadian government initiatives would no longer be subject to any environmental assessment."<sup>159</sup>

The magazine's consideration of sustainable development for developing countries was much more promising. On its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Spring 1996 issue, *W&E* dedicated an issue to women's role in sustainable development in Third World countries. In terms of an international scope, environment types, and even themes, this issue was *W&E*'s most diverse single issue. Articles discussed "the cross-fertilization of south to north, with organic agriculture, community kitchens, locally-based small-scale community development, etc."<sup>160</sup> They discussed women's orchard work in rural Turkey, and Indian woman's experience in leading tribal protests to a dam construction, and women land rights struggles on a farm in Bangladesh. Much of *W&E*'s international support came from the connections made by *W&E* editors and WEED members at the Habitat II Conference in Turkey that year. *W&E*'s network directory in 1997 bore the heading "the journal for a feminist globe."<sup>161</sup> Its editors applauded its truly global readership of 2000: "The magazine travels around the globe to Indonesia, China, Japan, the United Kingdom, U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand, Malawi, Botswana, Turkey, Germany, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Africa, Switzerland, Belgium, and Holland..."<sup>162</sup> The issue contained several reader profiles, along with accompanying photographs, "of women around the world who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to their communities and to their environments."<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Chief Bisi Ogunleye, "Local Initiative," 148.

<sup>159</sup> Rosalie Bertell, "Charting a New Environmental Course," *Women and Environments*, 12, no.2 (1991): 7.

<sup>160</sup> Alexander, "Vancouver to Istanbul," 6.

<sup>161</sup> *W&E*, "A Word from Us," *Women and Environments*, no.41 (1997): 1.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

*W&E*'s emphasis in recognizing its global readership was no coincidence; rather it was a response to the bleak financial situation for state agencies like the Women's Program, as chapter one covered. Barbara Goddard recalled that by 1997, the political climate tended to favour "a decreased role for state intervention to counterbalance market-place forces."<sup>164</sup> That year, *W&E* joined Earth Appeal, a Canadian charity modeled on its successful American counterpart, Earth Share. Earth Appeal enabled *W&E* to access funds through targeted donations, and corporate employee payroll deduction programs. Mountain Equipment Co-op signed on to be Earth Appeal's first corporate rate access participant. The magazine also introduced selective, paid advertising, such as Eco Logique and Terra Femme, both Ontario-based corporations that produced chlorine and dioxin-free sanitary products.<sup>165</sup>

The Fall 1997/Winter 1998 issue marked *W&E*'s conversion to an officially international publication. The transformation entailed a change in format, layout, and several new volunteers. New sections and new section titles were added, solidifying its reputation as a constant work in progress. The biggest change perhaps was *W&E*'s consideration of the Internet, reflected in its attempt to design that particular issue in the style of a webpage. More importantly was the magazine's enthusiasm in exploring a new type of environment – the electronic space. For *W&E*, the electronic medium enhanced women's experience with the natural environment, notably through an ecofeminist lens. One feature article described cyberspace as a metaphorical reality mediated through technology. Non-hierarchical and non-linear, its nature suited women and women's modes of discourse and enabled women to expand their abilities. Cyberspace "is flexible enough to do what we want it to do. Women can construct an environment that is transparent and independent."<sup>166</sup> *W&E* saw the Internet as an imperative tool required for women around the world. Fast and far-reaching, the new medium was a new meeting ground for the network.

## Conclusion

*W&E* showed tremendous variability in its dedication to different environment types over the course of the twenty-one years under review. Channeling their expertise, while at the same time

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<sup>164</sup> Goddard, "Representation and Exchange," 105.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Susan Myburgh, "Cyberspace: A New Environment for Women," *Women and Environments International*, no. 42/43 (1997/1998): 22.

responding to larger forces at play, *WEED* connected feminists who were, at first, limited in number, to stimulate what it saw to be a growing field of knowledge. The women of *WEED* saw the twentieth century was an exciting period of time – one of self-discovery for women breaking into male-dominant areas of employment, and researching topics related to the “man-made” built environment. This was reflected by the motivations of readers who subscribed to make connections and learn about new findings in scholarship, or network with other professionals in planning occupations. Additionally, *WEED* evolved in the wake of Toronto’s urban reform movement and used the momentum of citizen participation to bolster grassroots feminist activism, namely Women Plan Toronto. Originally inspired by their American counterparts, *WEED* quickly applied feminist perspectives unique to Canadian environments and culture, hoping to attract a Canadian audience. By the early 1980s, it was writing for a predominantly Canadian urban audience. Stories relevant to Canadian interests and agendas predominated. As environmental psychology was recognized as a legitimate field, readers longed for the raw emotion and profound thoughts of women within built, social spaces. *WEED* was tapping into the more common experiences of women – personal feelings and perceptions. Violence against Canadian women was a reality. Women needed safe surroundings. *WEED* provided resources to underfunded shelters to offer encouragement, and to make their readers aware of women who desperately needed such social services. Mentally ill and marginalized homeless women needed recognition, understanding and acceptance, as well as shelter.

As the 1980s came to a close, highly politicized cases of violence against women maintained a presence within the magazine’s pages. Yet, its precarious financial situation and the surge of interest in the natural environment changed the direction of the magazine. *WEED*’s ownership signaled the formal endorsement of Carolyn Merchant’s ecofeminism and sparked admiration amongst readers, as well as heated debate at the executive level. It took until *WEED*’s incorporation in 1987 for the magazine to extend the conversation about women and environments to women beyond Toronto and their interactions with their natural surroundings, and to explore ecofeminism because *WEED* itself was a charity with a mandate about natural environments. *WEED*’s executive members, like Miriam Wyman, were more interested and involved the standard environmental movement. *WEED*’s generalization of women’s experiences failed to account for a Canadian feminist movement that was becoming increasingly less cohesive. To avoid further tensions, the magazine diplomatically abandoned outspoken adherence to the ideology, but maternal rhetoric continued to

fuel many of WEED's pages, specifically the effects of environmental degradation on women's health. By the 1990s, an intense conversation on the natural environment took over. WEED's direct participation in international conferences, such as the Earth Summit at Rio, made the magazine's presence known to readers. It also brought *WE* readers, absent from the Summit, to Rio, allowing them to experience feminism's efficacy in global environmental decision-making processes. By the mid 1990s, the magazine had established formidable links with women in a wider range of countries. It officially had a presence in nearly every continent. Looking ahead to the new millennium, *WE* optimistically looked forward to a new type of environment offered by the Internet and the expediency of its international accessibility through modern technology. Its editors had come a long way since the days of mailing lists on handwritten index cards, and being afraid to use male technology – the computer! With a new technological medium, *Women and Environments International* would connect network members, and continue to build and enrich a lasting network of like-minded people, seeking to learn about and work for women's positive social change.

## Conclusion: The Legacy of *Women and Environments* Magazine

“[P]eople are craving ways to meaningfully engage; we want to believe that we *can* make positive change. We don’t want to be complicit in the injustice we see all around us...We hope this writing will also inspire you to get involved for change.”<sup>1</sup>

These words, taken from the Fall 2016 *Women and Environments International* editorial, reiterate the position *Women and Environments* adopted roughly forty years ago. *Women and Environments* was a constant work in progress; personified by the editors as “the child” that was always maturing and filling its parents with pride. Now, after four decades of uninterrupted publication, this middle-aged “child” continues to receive nourishment from a millennial editorial team that still believes in the continues relevance of a mission created in 1976. Today, its editors are working to digitize the magazine to make accessible the hidden stories of women’s decision-making and particular experiential knowledge of all environments, everywhere.

By detailing the birth and growth of *Women and Environments*, this thesis illuminates a virtually unknown periodical that offered a truly innovative portrayal of the interface between women and environments. Though the magazine had international ambitions at the outset, its scope and impact was chiefly limited to English-speaking Canada from 1976 to 1997, before transitioning explicitly into an international magazine. The magazine’s equally ambitious attempt to provide balanced coverage of built, social, and natural environments was also slow to come to fruition. While quantitative analysis suggested the magazine was primarily concerned with urban environments, a closer examination of specific issues excluded from sample years showcased its extensive exploration of women’s relationship to the natural environment. *WE*’s coverage of a variety of environments demonstrated its versatility. In short, this study of *WE* illustrates that since 1976, English-speaking Canadian women have grappled with the gendered nature of environmental design and interaction, and provided nuanced interpretations of the term ‘environment.’ In doing so, *WE* pushed the boundaries of both the feminist and environmental realms in Canada. In telling its story, this study illuminates a previously unexplored niche of Canada’s gendered environments.

Born into a fresh phase of Canada’s alternative press, *WE* earned its place among feminist

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<sup>1</sup> *WEI*, “WE Speak: Ethical Engagement in an Age of Sustainable Consumerism,” *Women and Environments International*, no.96/97 (2016): 4-5.

and environmental periodicals. Underground newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and journals emerged to tell alternate viewpoints. Alternative magazines, like *W&E*, were created with the goal of promoting news and information without being restrained by corporate advertising and its unspoken political agendas. Untethered by the ropes of private advertisers, alternative publications often published controversial ideas and topics. An existence on the fringes of the corporate media, nevertheless, meant perpetual anxiety. It meant reliance on insecure funding bodies, such as the Status of Women's funding agency, known as the Women's Program. Large numbers of its peer publications "fell by the wayside," due to the conservative financial and political climate.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, *W&E*'s stable base at two prestigious academic institutions offered a safe haven. The university home also provided *W&E* with access to ample material on women and planning, funding opportunities, and a relatively consistent editorial renewal. Beyond these attributes, the magazine's subtle coverage of radical feminist perspectives, and its ability to come under the ownership of the charity, Women, Environments, Education, and Development Foundation (WEED), secured its long-term viability.

People created alternative publications, like *W&E*, because they believed that no matter how small, obscure, and underfunded, they were capable of effecting change. Even something as so seemingly ephemeral as a periodical, alternative voices actualized a right to be heard. They were crucial for niche sectors of society, and given the right atmosphere, they helped facilitate social movements. *W&E* may not have been a best-seller; it may not have reached millions of readers, but its existence testifies that at minimum thousands of readers in Canada were familiar with its ideas. It may go against utilitarian doctrine to argue, but a niche market is not without worth, and should not be dismissed. *W&E* should not be thought of as having had a monumental influence in Canadian feminist and environmental pasts, but history is *not* all about the big actors. Especially histories of social movements, which are collections of voices and events, whose strength relies on numbers. Like its contemporaries, *W&E* helped women recognize their agency by making known their experiences and philosophies. It emerged when little consistent work was underway on the subject of women's environmental design, development, research, and activism in Canada. Within the pages of *W&E* a coalition of environmentalists, feminists, and urban planners were engaged in a dialogue

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<sup>2</sup> Wordsworth, "In Focus," 5.

about gendered design and the use of urban spaces. *W&E* did not exist in a vacuum. Ten percent of its material came from other publications, mainly other alternative news sources. Its editors took care to credit each source and made copies of the originals accessible free of charge. Therefore, *W&E* operated as both a clearinghouse and an original publication. It stands today as vehicle for lesser known ideas within Canadian feminism and environmental activism. By seeking to “fill a gap in the women’s movement,” *W&E* offered a distinct voice in the feminist and environmental zeitgeists of the late twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

A quantitative analysis of *W&E* led me to acquire what Robert Scholes and Sean Lantham call “the language of magazines.”<sup>4</sup> More specifically, my methodology developed specific characteristics that allowed me to understand *W&E*’s particular dialect. Carrying out quantitative analysis of the magazine’s contributors, content, and readers resulted in concrete data to support my hypothesis that *W&E* evolved over time in response to specific issues over the twenty-one years of this study. It also gave me a firmer understanding of the writer/reader relationship. Cross-referencing reader interests with magazine output verified my initial conjecture that *W&E* operated as a genuine collective. Its editors, writers, and readers enjoyed honest, stimulating, and constructive relationships. Readers confidently expressed their requests, which the editors generally satisfied.

Collecting and collating data also allowed me to verify that the *W&E* narrative was indeed a Canadian story. The magazine’s attempt to offer an international perspective since its conception was hopeful at best during its first twenty-one years. *W&E* was predominantly written by and for Canadian women living in the country’s largest city. Built and urban spaces and topics on urban and community planning had the most sustained presence within the magazine during the time period. While one fifth of the articles focused on city infrastructure, and general urban issues, another 9% dealt with the suburbs. Furthermore, the majority of articles were tailored to the themes of social experiences and psychological influences of life in major cities. Over a quarter of the magazine was devoted to built spaces, which meant that whether an article was about a rural or urban setting, it chiefly focused on human-designed and created structures. *W&E* was conceived by urban environmental academics, Gerda Wekerle and Rebecca Peterson from York University, which

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<sup>3</sup> Women and Environments. “Editorial,” *Women and Environments International Newsletter* 2, no.2, (1978): 1.

<sup>4</sup> Scholes and Lantham, “The Changing Profession: The Rise of Periodical Studies,” *Modern Language Association of America* (2006), 529.

partially explains why *W&E* attracted so many Canadian urban academics. Although the founders always dreamed of being international, the financial struggles that plagued so many feminist periodicals of the era meant that the magazine focused primarily on the Toronto region for the better part of its first two decades. Because it gained recognition in feminist print culture – and instituted a subscription cost – it had more funds to transform the magazine into a structured and professional periodical. Nevertheless, it maintained its creative presentation, fluid content, intimate language, and loyalty to its readers’ interests.

Toward the mid-1980s, new editors joined *W&E*. Regula Modlich, Judith Kjellberg, Miriam Wyman, and Barbara Sanford diversified the magazine’s view of built environments. They were primarily responsible for initiating the conversation of environmental psychology and social environments. There was an increased number of articles related to social services and identity politics. A greater number of articles focused on women in rural and remote environments, homeless women, and women with disabilities. In 1990, these topics made up 38% of the magazine’s content. Fresh perspectives facilitated by editorial renewal allowed *W&E* to explore invisible types of environments that are so prevalent in women’s lives– spaces within spaces so to speak. By politicizing women’s social and psychological relationships to a space, and to each other within spaces, *W&E* offered a fresh meaning to the notion that the “personal is political” for women in English-speaking Canada.

Gathering data from a periodical that printed thematic issues came with challenges. Most notably, thematic issues skewed the data. Overall, just over 6% of the magazine addresses aspects of non-human nature. Yet, as had been expected, drawing conclusions from a sample of years proved incomplete. It overlooked the magazine’s significant attention to the natural environment and its engagement with feminist environmental activism and research. A close reading of issues from the years outside of the sample confirmed *W&E*’s awareness of Canadian and global discourses about women and the natural environment. Themes emerged largely from the editors’ interests as well as external factors, and readers’ requests. The WEED Foundation’s absorption of *W&E* in 1987 facilitated its extensive coverage of women’s relationship to the natural environment, particularly from 1991 to 1993. Accordingly, *W&E* became a Canadian forum for the socio-political philosophy known as ecofeminism.

Carolyn Merchant’s history of women’s disempowerment via environmental degradation



principally informed *W&E*'s engagement with ecofeminism. In the face of internal resentment toward ecofeminism among *W&E*'s editors, the magazine evolved to express what Merchant later labeled, socialist ecofeminism, evidenced by their increased attention to cultural sensitivity and the western women working in solidarity with women in the developing world. In conjunction with this shift, the magazine fostered feminist interests in health and environments through its discussions of women's reproductive health and the health of their children. Despite editorial tensions sparked by the subject of ecofeminism (and the magazine's reluctance to openly ascribe to the term) *W&E* continued to give exposure to authors who endorsed ecofeminism. *W&E*'s heightened awareness of natural environments was triggered by international conferences, such as the 1992 Earth Summit at Rio. Here, magazine representatives made contacts with women from the global south and articulated Canadian women's views of national and worldwide sustainable development plans. As the millennium approached, the magazine transitioned into an officially recognized international periodical to reflect its more global scope. In 2005, Heather Eaton mistakenly observed that "the ecological crisis is not of central concern to influential constituents of the feminist movement in Canada."<sup>5</sup> Perhaps she simply did not find the magazine or *WEED*, terribly groundbreaking, or perhaps she believed *W&E*'s scope had been too limited to Toronto. A more plausible reason for Eaton's statement, as mentioned at the start of this thesis, is her preference for a specific strain of ecofeminism that is quite close to cultural ecofeminism. Eaton writes from a theological perspective, and advocated for a *spiritual* ecofeminism, and seems to be calling for a new kind of religion, one that blends gender, environmentalism, and spirituality: "The time is ripe for profound spiritual and cultural renewal. Ecofeminism is a part of that renewal, but for it to become a player on a more significant political scale, it needs to be rooted in a political spirituality."<sup>6</sup> Still, when acknowledging *W&E*'s engagement ecological crisis in the early 1990s nationally and later internationally, Eaton's holds less credence.

Returning to the consideration of *W&E*'s association to a particular frame of feminism, this study deduces that the magazine by and large aligned with liberal mandate with some interest in socialist feminism in its early years of production. Its articles dealt with women who were breaking into male dominated professions, and dealing with issues specific to women in workplaces. As time

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<sup>5</sup> Heather Eaton, "A Vision of Transformation," 302.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

progressed, the magazine incorporated issues related to radical feminism, namely violence against women. Later on, this thesis applies a socialist ecofeminist reading to its later years, particularly in 1987 when *W&E* announced its official exploration of ecofeminism. It heeded some ideas within the ‘cultural turn’ advocated in feminist scholarship. Albeit, it is important to remember that *W&E*’s reluctance to identify with one particular feminist strain stemmed from its fear of isolating women. Perhaps some readers found the magazine misleading once they read past the editorials to find that some issues aligned with particular feminist strains. But it could be proposed that the magazine’s openness to all types of feminism reflected its mandate to represent all types of environments.

One of the most interesting aspects of *W&E* was its title. One may argue that perhaps the magazine’s broad definition of the environment posed a problem, and that perhaps it misled those who subscribed under the pretense that the magazine was mainly about nonhuman natural environment. Given *W&E*’s sustained attention to built spaces, perhaps, they thought, the magazine was mistitled and it missed its opportunity to find readers interested in the topics actually covered. In response to such hypothetical, this thesis argues that readers needed to remember that the magazine did not wish to isolate anyone. Anyone interested in the interface between women and space was invited to explore and contribute to the magazine because it was a *network*. The magazine conveyed a distinct notion of ‘the environment.’ For network members, the environment meant something quite different from what is likely today’s primary definition, particularly to a first world society fully aware of global warming. *W&E* was conceived with the ambition to cover a variety of environments. For the first decade or so, it prioritized issues related to built spaces, such as architecture, design, construction, and urban planning. It was only when the second thrust of ecological interest spread across Canada in the late 1980s, and when a change in ownership of the magazine occurred that *W&E* expanded its scope of ideas – at times allotting the majority of space to modern environmentalism without losing its urban planning focus. Catriona Sandilands’ co-edited anthology, *This Elusive Land* recognizes that “there is no one size fits all women and all natures. We have only just scratched the surface.”<sup>7</sup> This anthology concludes with a call for scholarly consideration about the intersections between women and the environment in Canada. This thesis is a response to such calls for more research. As noted in the beginning of this project, there is no

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<sup>7</sup> Catriona Sandilands et al., “Conclusion,” *This Elusive Land: Women and the Canadian Environment*. Vancouver: UBC Press, (2005), 336, 338.

scholarly work on the history of environmental-leaning periodicals in Canada, let alone one dealing with gendered environmental analyses. It may be worthwhile for someone to take up this endeavor. The story of *W&E* is important to the field because since 1976, English-speaking Canadian women have grappled with the gendered aspects environmental design and interaction, and provided nuanced interpretations of the term ‘environment.’ *W&E*’s recognition of multiple environments is exactly what makes this a truly fascinating and unusual periodical. Whether built, social, rural, or natural environments, *W&E* successfully illustrated the damage of patriarchal design, decision-making, and day-to-day experience in all types of environments. An account of its endeavors enriches Canada’s environmental, feminist, and cultural historical knowledge.

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