A ‘Politics of Local Politics’: Praxis in Places that Matter

Pamela Moss¹

Studies in Policy and Practice, Faculty of Human and Social Development, University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada Email: pamelam@uvic.ca

Relevancy, intellectuals, reflexivity

In recent years, critical geographers have breathed new life into longstanding discussions about relevant research. Relevancy, among critical geographers, refers to actively changing the world in a progressive, anti-establishment, status quo disruption sort of way. Motives identified range from the ever increasing corporatization of the academy to having a life as an (activist) academic, from the structural to the experiential, from the political to the personal (e.g. Readings 1996; Harvey 1998; Mitchell 1999). Within these discussions, though never really developed, there is a common anguish over how geography as a discipline has limited impact beyond the discipline itself – moving into other disciplines, into policy formation, into society, into government, into law, into places that matter (see comments in Massey 2001 about policy; Harvey 1999 about radical analysis).

Rather than discussing the worth of pure and applied research, which might be the case for non-critical geographers, giving support for these discussions of relevant research for critical geographers are works interrogating the positioning of the academic as an activist in radical social movements. For example, Katz (1992) works toward a politics of engagement whereby intellectuals find common ground with the other from which to pursue change. She develops an aspect of the notion of ‘in betweenness’ to assist in negotiating the boundaries of being an intellectual interested in a postcolonial geography who intends to effect change. She encourages us to ‘position ourselves between description and analysis; between here and there; between the present, past, and future; between subject positions; between discourses; between us and them; between the exotic

and mundane; between the unique and the general’ (Katz 1992, 505). No positioning is to be advantaged; no positioning, static; no positioning, immune from deconstruction for it is only in these borders that intellectuals can be engaged in attempts at transforming multiple forms of exploitation, dominance, and oppression. Parallel in many ways to this ‘in betweenness’ is Routledge’s (1996) use of the concept ‘third space’ which he uses to make sense of his own contributions to effecting social change. In third space, subjects interact in a new, hybrid place, purged of the underlying dualisms that constitute subjects as dominant or dominated. Finding and then acting in this space permits relations to be resisted and challenged so that power itself can be reconfigured. Refreshingly, not all examples of positioning academics are about epistemological spaces. Blomley (1994) offers a more pragmatic explanation of his own activities claiming that he is drawn more toward the community than the university or the academy because in the community there are real manifestations of the issues that critical theory seeks to address.

Feminist geographers’ arguments about reflexivity in methodology, too, have informed this resurgence of positioning the academic, often times beyond the academy. Again, Katz (1994) argues for understanding the ethnographic act as one of ‘in betweenness,’ rejecting the privilege of any particular positioning, especially that of the researcher (read intellectual). England (1994, 2002), too, argues that there is no omnipotent expert (read intellectual) in control of the research process, nor is there a strict dichotomous definition of the researcher and those involved in the research process. Her point is that not only are subject positions under scrutiny (which is a basic goal of reflexivity), but so are the interactions of the people themselves. What these interactions show is that no one, not even the researcher, has a fixed, static, or easily recognizable subject position. Valentine (2002) illustrates the difficulty in positioning oneself as a researcher in interview interactions. She shows that different people find different commonalities with the researcher (read intellectual) that often shift within the context of one interview setting and that may or may not be accurate. To what extent this matters is at once integral to the ongoing interaction between the researcher and the person being interviewed (in that each person remains engaged in interaction) as well as connected to the analysis of the information gathered in the interview (in that the researcher must make sense of the interaction in the context of what was going on through the exchanges between the researcher and the person(s) being interviewed).

Making research relevant and effecting change in places that matter involve finding positions for intellectuals in radical social movements. Reflexivity helps in figuring out potential ways critical geographers might contribute. Contributors to two collections of articles, one in Area (1999) and one in Antipode (2000), pore over these issues in detail and enhance the arguments about the complexity of what issues are involved in thinking about being an activist in the academy. For example, Fuller (1999) provides a thoughtful account of how a transparent recognition of his own multiple identities and subject positions can contribute personally and professionally toward the accountability of his actions as an activist. Doyle (1999) argues that in and of themselves there are no research methods that are inherently liberatory, even reflexivity. Yet the recognition that research relations are laden with power is preferable than doing no research at all precisely because there are unequal power relations at play. Roberts (2000) reflects on three issues – teaching from a critical pedagogical standpoint, participating in the professionalization of graduate students, and recognizing the gendered nature of the
tenure clock – to show how the struggles around the immediacy of everyday life in the institutional setting of a university may be preventing academics the time and energy to consider critically their own contexts and the implications of their actions, both within and outside the academy. In these and the other contributions included in the collections, the points are poignant, having arisen from their passions for change.

These works (and similar ones outside geography, e.g. Roberts 1981; Smith 1983; Lather 1988; Stanley 1992; Wasserfall 1993; Gottfried 1996; Sandoval 2000) have spurred me to write this chapter. Instead of engaging with arguments in the literature, point for point, I want to add to these discussions – much like Roberts (2000) did – by writing about some of my own experiences of being an activist. I chose these experiences (among others) because they have shown me over and over that effecting change is not about ‘out there,’ wherever ‘out there’ is; it’s about right here, right now, wherever here and now are. And, although the issue has found a home in various sets of literatures – relevancy, intellectuals, reflexivity – I locate my discussion in terms of praxis because this is how I make sense of the world around me, the environments I move through, and the ideas that shape my thinking.

In the rest of this chapter, I define what I mean by a ‘politics of local politics’ by showing where I think praxis takes place. I first give some background about a housing group I work with/belong to/am a member of that provides housing and support services to women who have left abusive, intimate relationships. I next detail a set of three tensions arising through the interactions in this housing group. I close by reflecting on my experiential account of activism and suggest that there is room for an exchange of ideas in the literature in critical geography about feminist politics and feminist praxis.

The housing group

The Women’s Housing Group (WHG) was formed in 1986 with the intent of developing, sponsoring, and running innovative programs that would provide housing and support for women and children and, through that process, facilitate empowerment and independence from abusive (ex-)partners. WHG consists of anywhere between six and twelve board members at any given time. All decisions are made by consensus; for the group, consensus means that everyone must agree for any decision to be recorded and acted upon. This is a long, drawn out process whereby one decision can span several meetings. Very few times has consensus been blocked or has a person left the room for the group to come to consensus. The only members of WHG are the individuals on the Board of Directors, who stand for election each year. Although employees are technically members of the society, they do not vote for directors, nor are they involved in the consensus decision-making process. The board solicits input from employees as well as outside consultants and activists on most issues – personnel, programming, and projects.

2 I am no longer a member of WHG. After a leave of absence coinciding with research leave from the university, I decided to work with a newly emerging housing group that focuses on similar issues but from a different model. The new group is trying to find a co-operative model of administration that includes women with mental illness needing housing, service providers, housing activists, and owners, landlords, and management companies.

3 This is a pseudonym, as are the program names.
When I joined, in January, 1993, the group had just completed fundraising to build six units of second stage housing. Second stage housing consists of stable housing and social support for women leaving abusive relationships who have already been through initial emergency assistance. One type of emergency assistance is transition housing that provides safe places for women leaving abusive relationships for a short period of time, usually only thirty days. Second stage housing is for a longer period of time, usually between 12 and 18 months. With on-site support in place, women are able to continue the transition toward a violent-free life with their children. As part of the program, staff assist women in moving to permanent housing at the end of the residency.

WHG opened six second stage units of housing in Fall, 1995. WHG also sponsored, administered, and ran a multi-million dollar training and construction project for an emergency shelter. Street women4 were trained in various construction trades who then renovated an old building on the edge of downtown. Eighteen new emergency spaces were created along with a drop-in center for women living on the streets. This shelter and its program are now part of another emergency shelter group in the city.

WHG also runs two other women’s housing programs not associated with specific housing stock: Scattered Housing for Women (SHW) and Women in Transition (WIT). The SHW employs two psychiatric nurses that assist women in finding housing after leaving the acute psychiatric care facility serving the city. WIT is a similar program, employing one psychiatric nurse, that focuses on women leaving abusive relationships (often with mental health issues) who have no access to other services, little or no income, and no housing. These programs are low-cost, $97,000 and $30,000, respectively for 2002.5 WHG initiated both programs as ‘scattered housing’ because the intention was not to have one specific housing complex associated with any one program. Women almost always find housing in the general rental market because social housing does not usually immediately place single women, especially with mental illness.

A set of three tensions

As in any form of praxis, there has been conflict in the group. The conflict has not been randomly provoked by events that can be easily blamed on ‘the system’ or on ‘personality conflicts’; it has been an inevitable outcome of community organizing (Lee 1986; Adamson, Briskin and McPhail 1988; Forsey 1993). How conflict emerges and is resolved within specific activist groups varies, because, as has been demonstrated over and over again, place matters. Place matters because of the specific ways institutional, legal and ideological practices regulate and govern the local (social, cultural, economic, political) social environs through which community groups engage (radical) praxis. And place matters, too, not only in terms of the construction of the meaning of specific spaces, but also in the way power is expressed and deployed through specific sets of socio-spatial

4 ‘Street women’ is the local term used to describe women living in and on the streets for any reason.
5 In early fall, 2003, during the SHW contract renewal process, WHG was given notice that this program needed to meet a new set of criteria. As well, the contract offered was reduced by a third of the money needed to maintain the program. WHG decided not to change the program and sought funding from a different branch of the same regional health authority – instead of Special Needs Housing, the new proposed contract request was submitted to Mental Health and Addictions. The proposal was rejected and the program closed March, 2004.
relations (recent examples are included in Adams, Hoeschler and Till 2001; see especially chapters by DeLyser, Relph, Smith, and Till; see also Parr and Philo 1995 and Pulido 1997; within the academy see Houston and Pulido 2002; see also essays in Ainley 1998; see McDowell 1999 for a review of feminist works about place). For example, within spatially-grounded (emerging as place-specific) practices, activists, community workers, and women (children, and men) accessing community services are often forced to take up particular subject positions that permit active negotiation with both the provision and consumption of these services. So, in this respect, issues arising over second stage housing in Ontario have been different to those arising in British Columbia, just as issues with second stage housing projects in Victoria have been different to those in Vancouver (Hall 1998).

Just as place matters, time does, too. One of the difficulties in being an activist is the time involved in getting projects off the ground. Outside the academy, once funded, projects go at a fast pace. For the WHG, change took anywhere from one day to six years, with the longer time frames including large construction projects. But inside the academy, as Harvey (1999) notes, it takes a long time for ideas to be translated into a concrete projects. Koikari and Hippensteele (2000) illustrate this point with their efforts at trying to establish a sexual harassment office at the University of Hawai‘i. They argue that it took until 1990 for second wave feminist arguments to take hold and create a position on campus for sexual harassment. Immediately, however, the position became constraining because it was only a sexual harassment position – no other claims of discrimination were permitted to be filed. One of the advantages of being ensconced both in local activist communities and in the academy is the opportunity to speed up the translation of ideas into real projects as well as circulate innovative ideas and activities back and forth. Such an activity, however, causes its own set of tensions, some of which are explored in Atlantis (1996), a collection of papers presented at a conference devoted to feminist research within and outside the academy/community.

Knowing that place and time matter does not always make it easy to decide what to do. It does, however, make one consider how power mediated through various sets of socio-spatial relations is affecting attempts at implementing social change programs. With this in mind, identifying the tension giving rise to a disagreement, controversy, or fracas within this web of power relations is an effective way to frame and deal with conflict arising within a specific activist group. Maneuvering through power relations within and outside the group in order to make sense of both one’s own quarrelsome interaction and the place of our praxis in the wider communities we work in is what I refer to as negotiating ‘a politics of local politics’. Practically, the process includes identifying and then working with/through what can been tagged as a source of tension. The tensions I have identified in the WHG that have caused the most prominent conflict within the group since 1993 fall into one of three categories: structural, institutional, and personal.

**Structural**

The second stage housing project in many ways has challenged the extent to which feminists in the WHG can be feminist in their praxis. The board, until most recently, has been an amalgam of many types of feminists, all of whom have sought social change through working toward social justice for women. Yet the role the board had to take on as employer caused discord among the members, none of whom were really prepared for the
types of decisions that had to be made. For example, early on in my tenure with the WHG, we had to hire counselors to work on-site with the women entering the second stage program. Our initial budget did not cover the staffing we needed to run the program. The discrepancy between what was available and what was needed increased further when, after a year, we wanted to provide more benefits and higher wages. This shortfall caused a stir in our group. We spent hours bickering over how to come up with more money. The biggest issue was whether or not to apply for casino funds, the central question being ‘is it ethical for feminist activists to use gambling money to fund programs securing women’s right to safe housing?’ Other grant programs did not fund salaries. The squabbling went on until we realized that the scrutiny of our own ethics should probably be second to going to the government agency and asking for money to cover the expenses. This happened again and again. Sometimes the agencies provided it, and sometimes they didn’t. This activity of internal scrutiny, however, turned into a recurring theme – keep an activist group embroiled in an ethical quandary and/or scrambling for money to occupy its time. Such a strategy would be one used on our group by various funding agencies several times over in the ensuing years. Our requests covered the fundamentals but produced no additional money for breathing room. We applied for and received casino money, and have relied on casino money nearly every year it was available.6

During our ethical deliberations, the workers in both the second stage housing program and the shelter7 decided to unionize. The WHG wanted to support organizing and tried to make the process as smooth as possible. But we were not prepared for being on the ‘other side of the table’, as it were, and conflict arose within the group. We came to frame the conflict as inevitable given the structural position as employer was in opposition to our politics. Being forced to say no to what we were structurally positioned to see as ‘outrageous demands’, even though had we been workers we would have had to ask for, was distressing. Eventually two board members negotiated the contract for the WHG, one which we came to think as ‘fair’, for no other words could describe the contradictory position we found ourselves in as employers. Once through the negotiations, we turned to our obligations. We as a group developed day to day management skills (carried out at a distance with regular on-site meetings) that dealt with everything from choosing which coffee machine to buy and creating confidential spaces for counseling sessions, to reviewing counseling skills and reprimanding, disciplining, and firing workers. At one point, we were left again with a shortfall in funding for the second-stage housing project. As we were mulling over the few options facing us – finding more money or cutting positions – one of the workers quit. It was only through this fortuitous shift, that we were able to continue funding the one full-time position.

I realize that this discussion is not about what is usually considered praxis, that actual act of making life a better place for women marginalized by government

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6 Lottery and casino money in British Columbia is no longer available for established programs. Since 2001/2002, the money has been directed toward groups with innovative programming and new projects that will seek operating funds elsewhere.

7 Conflict arising from a different set of issues outside unionizing – arising from structural, institutional and personal tensions – strained relations between the WHG and the employees at the shelter. WHG and the shelter split unaffably, and the shelter became part of another housing association that had paid management, an executive director, and numerous other employees. There were over 20 employees at the shelter at the time of unionizing.
bureaucracies and patriarchal values, of challenging dominant and oppressive power relations that condone, reproduce, and naturalize violence in intimate relationships as an everyday occurrence, of effecting change. But this is exactly my point. In order to do any of this, we are constrained structurally. We are forced to take up a specific slot in historically constituted apparatuses, as for example, the state and the union, in order to be able to sustain our efforts at innovative change. The activity of securing funds for a new or out of the ordinary project cannot be conceived entirely within the politics of ‘within and against the state’ (as argued in London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group 1980). Rather, in order to effect change at a scale that might shape policy and practice beyond its own immediacy (as for example, influencing policies that might shape decisions about the women who go through the second stage housing program as well as the practices that support their transition to a violent-free home life), one has to engage with and negotiate the context within which such programs exist and where deep-seated change can take place (for example, in government agencies involved in determining what constitutes income, illness, and job training as well as in legal practices that detail reporting of violence in private spaces).

Institutional

Members of the WHG consider the SHW its most successful effort at change. The model has drawn lots of attention provincially and has been copied and adapted for other marginalized groups of people. The program is designed to carry a large client list with minimal resources. Although originally set up to serve women leaving an acute psychiatric care facility, the program became a sensation, grew tremendously in the first few years, and expanded its referral base. Women are now referred to the program from various social and health agencies within the city.8

Successful projects, however, are not immune to conflict. Initially, the program served women with situational depression and intermittent occurrences of schizophrenia. Most of the women entering the program were not familiar with the range of mental health services available to them, nor were they receiving social assistance benefits. The nurses assisted the women in finding a place to live and setting up a household, and provided emotional support over a period of up to six months with most needing only half the time. Around the mid-to-late 1990s, there was a marked shift in the base clientele. Women in the program were being treated for more severe mental health issues resulting in an lengthening of the time required for support. Among other things, an exhaustive program review, including reflections from the nurses employed in the program, revealed that social workers, nurses, and doctors in the health system were referring women with the most severe mental illness issues to the program because it was one of the few that accepted these women.

8 This particular program is unique in that the funding for the program was in place before the program was designed. The WHG had raised over $90,000 in a bid to renovate existing housing stock to create 20 second stage housing units. The proposal was turned down (because the proposed units were ‘too nice’ for social housing) and the board members had to decide what to do with the money already raised. WHG tweaked the definition of second stage housing to include more widely women in crisis. It was no surprise to find out that many of the women leaving the acute care facility had recently experienced violence in their intimate relationships.
The continuing increase in severe diagnoses and in length of stay in the program caused some conflict within the WHG. We saw the shift in program focus as institutional pressure to transform the program from a supportive housing initiative to an outreach program for the hospital. There was even a request to include men in our mandate. Such a request was easy to reject for at the time there was a Ministry of Women’s Equality, which gave some authority to our decision. The program then was adapted for men and was run as a formal program through the hospital. But this did not cease the practice of referring women with severe mental health issues who needed intensive, longer-term support. The direction the program seemed to be moving toward concentrated individual and group support, rather than finding housing and establishing households for women needing interim support.

Unlike structural tensions, where we were familiar (at least vaguely) with the politics of the claims being made, there was no single entity toward which to direct a plea for respecting the limits of the program. The nurses working for the program tried tirelessly to maintain the focus of the program, but with women needing immediate assistance, it was difficult for them in practice to stick to program policy. All of us were, and still are, extremely resistant to focusing the program only for supporting women with severe and chronic mental health issues. I see this as the offloading of services to non-profits in order to cut costs in healthcare. I also see that singling out women with chronic mental illness and transferring responsibility for psychiatric treatment for more severe diagnoses to overworked community-based nurses is unconscionable. Yet when there is no specific policy to regulate referrals, there is little institutional recourse to rectify the practice. This particular situation brings to the fore the negative aspects of any innovative program that maneuvers through existing sets of formal and informal power relations in the rumpled creases of the institutions of social housing and health.

As an alternative to being (institutionally) forced to serve a group of women defined by the health providers making the referrals, we went back to the original purpose of the SHW – to provide support to a group of women not getting the support they need. The group thought it might be interesting to design a supportive housing program for women who are not part of the institutionalized health system (akin to those being newly released from an acute psychiatric care facility which was the novelty of the SHW). We began a new project in 2001, the WIT, that focuses on women needing housing with abuse in their life who have access to no other programs in the community. So, rather than having a set of criteria women have to meet to get into the program, the only criteria are that they can find assistance nowhere else and need housing. To date, most of the women going through the program have been diagnosed with personality disorder, a diagnosis that prevents participation in many support programs within the health system.

**Personal**

With any group there is friction among members, sometimes resulting in open conflict and ongoing hostility. Such conflict in the WHG has resulted in resignations, broken relationships, and ruined friendships. My experience has been that most of the personal conflicts have arisen because there has been a fundamental disagreement as to how to approach an issue or resolve a problem, spurred by a practical consideration but underlain by a competing feminist ethic. The most obvious point of possible conflict – competing interpretations of violence against women – is the primary political position
accounted for in the membership process. Membership in WHG is based on interviews with women who have contacted the group to join. Preference is given to those with institutional and structural interpretations of violence who pay attention to the complexity of women’s daily lives (see Harway and O’Neil 1999 for an overview of theories of violence against women). Arguments over types of programming, as for example, programs in violence prevention, transition, and children witnessing violence, have not been prominent. The women who end up being invited to join the board are the ones who are looking for innovative ways to negotiate institutional settings and maneuver through bureaucratic rules.

Thornier issues, dealing with perspectives on power and social relations, have caused more tension in the WHG. For example, three members resigned at one meeting because there was no liability insurance in place for the building of the emergency shelter and they refused to put their families in financial peril. Another spate of resignations came soon after when the workers were unionizing. The split came when the women resigning did not like the way the workers were being treated by the group and, to a lesser extent, felt split allegiances around being an employer. In retrospect, it is easy to see that the resignations were along variations in feminist politics. The less radical and more liberal feminists resigned over money issues and the feminists rooted in socialist politics resigned over labor issues. The women remaining on the board after these upheavals were the pragmatic ones; the ones who had a feminist ethic that would permit them to adopt a mixture of strategies so that the group as well as the programs survived relatively intact.

There is also the potential for style to alienate members, being lackadaisical about recording minutes can provoke tension as intense as a doctrinaire, antagonistic oration. I am on leave from the board as I write this chapter. I had already planned to be on leave from the board to coincide with my research leave at the university. We were in the midst of discussing a major overhaul of the second stage housing program. We had two independent reports to draw on, notes from two planning retreats, and research information we had done on our own. But after several tension-filled meetings resulting in too many sleepless nights, I decided to go on leave immediately, six months ahead of schedule. With my departure, consensus was rerouted: I left so as not to have to participate in consensus. By the end of 2002, a set of revisions had been implemented; the program was restructured resulting in one worker losing her job and two new women being hired – one managing counselor and one counselor.

Moving through a politics of local politics towards praxis in places that matter

Drawing on my experiences as a feminist activist employed as a faculty member in a Canadian university has been a segue into a discussion of praxis. I use these experiences as a way to be critical, critical in the sense of not only in not taking things a face value, but also in scrutinizing a statement or an act for its liberatory possibility or its possible contribution to an emancipatory practice. The experiences and events I write about are not intended to be either a claim to access a more accurate truth or a blanket statement supporting the claim that by drawing on one’s own experience is the same as showing that ‘the personal is political’. Rather than claiming a patented ‘truth,’ my rendition of working with a feminist housing group as laid out here is really a feminist critique, critique in the sense of examining ‘assumptions, ideas, statements, and theories’ in an innovative manner that in itself challenges the widely accepted way to present a critique (Schuurman and...
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Pratt 2002, 291). And, instead of recklessly invoking any experience as political, I suggest that this account be read as a way to make the claim ‘the personal is political’ more nuanced, nuanced in the sense of specific, personal account of trying to work through conflict and of moving with contradictions in the day to day activities of engaging praxis.

WHG praxis was organized around the designing and running of programs that assist women in finding safe housing, setting up households, securing income from a variety of sources, and working toward an empowered life free from violence. For every suggestion brought forward and every decision made, each member brought with her her own analysis of violence, the state, human rights, bureaucracy, activism, identity, oppression, and empowerment informed by a variety of feminist theories, plucked from either books or lived through experience. I, like other members of WHG, have come to understand that dealing with power relations within, for example, local government agencies is crucial in gaining financial support for women in transition. Our negotiations of the ‘politics of local politics’ ensures that the women in the programs can cover costs for rent, transportation, security, counseling, childcare, job training, telephone installation, and house repairs so that they can focus on what they need to do in order to make it through their own transition.

Being able to identify and work through these tensions is a modest contribution to the discussion about how to be an activist and an academic, or an activist academic. Rather than appraising change by looking only at end products, as for example, a six-unit second stage housing complex with support for women leaving abusive intimate relationships or a cost-effective supportive housing program that places women with chronic mental illness in permanent housing, I think it benefits us to look at the process through which we actually effect change. I chose to demonstrate this point by discussing a set of three tensions underlying conflict within a housing group. I have tried to show that these tensions prompted a specific set of decisions the group made. And, although I don’t think that it is enough to ‘trust the process’ in order to make sound decisions, I was partially bound by the process in order to effect change, sometimes with results that I didn’t like and were antithetical to the feminist ethics I strive to live by. Nonetheless the strategy to identify the tension giving rise to conflict within an activist group can be useful in figuring out how local politics work, in that power relations outside the group are taken into account alongside the power relations within the group and among the women involved in the program. The strategy is also effective in revealing where praxis actually takes place, as for example, on-site with the women in the program, in hospital with social workers, nurses, and doctors, and even within the group.

For years, awareness-raising groups, protests, sit-ins, and boycotts have been strategies for radical change. More recently, reflexivity has emerged as a strategy that facilitates an engagement of praxis. What I am suggesting is that, at a very micro-scale of interactions within small non-profits, negotiating local power relations as part of a ‘politics of local politics’ might prove useful in understanding how praxis effects change in places that matter. This is the here and the now that must be traversed before enacting the liberatory capacity of a feminist (or critical) politics. I am not suggesting that this strategy supplant any of the others, including the ones not named; I merely offer to open up a discussion about its potential along with other strategies for praxis. I found being an activist more effective once I came to realize that knowing about theory and praxis was different than being caught up in the day to day activities that contribute to the liberation
and emancipation of everyday life. It is doing the little day to day politics locally that matters in being an activist and an academic while using a feminist politics to effect change.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank Duncan and Rob for inviting me to contribute to this collection. I also thank the women who have been part of the WHG over the years. Their political commitment and labor have really made a difference locally. I value everything I’ve learned from interacting with every one of them. A special thanks to Ann Zurbrigg for reading the manuscript and making several useful suggestions and to Carmela Vezza for assisting me in sorting through some awkward issues. This interpretation remains my own.

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