

Present: Sara, Jackie, Fran, Wendy, Marion, Maggie Z, Francis,
Maureen, Linda, Sherry, Jeanne
(later) Maggie T, Dara, Helen, May-lynn

The meeting began late at 6:30. However there were so few of us that we were not sure whether to proceed with our original agenda which was to do a round on our political histories and then pair up with someone to do interviews of each other for an eventual written collection.

We began instead with a discussion of the problems that such a collection might make for security. Maureen suggested that we use pseudonyms, Jackie suggested that we be particularly careful with the information that we put into the interviews about family and sexuality.

In general the discussion centred around the importance of having such a written resource versus the possibilities of its misuse. Marion expressed the view that we have to learn to practice security even though there is a difficulty maintaining it given that any one of us could be with the cops.

We need to have a prepared discussion at some later date on security. Jackie proposed that the book that we made from all our interviews could be kept by one person who would be responsible for lending it' out. That person would also keep a list of the pseudonyms. Sherry. This would help only if there is a bust not if there is an agent.

Sara and Jackie felt that the purpose of the project was more to establish our collective herstory. That being the case we dont need a list of the pseudonyms.

Maggie Z. The project is also so that we can get to know each other as individuals. It matters to me who the women are,

Linda. I move around a lot and usually when you come to a group there is a need to know who people are. Often this is established and newcomers don't have access to that information. It is also important that we don't make assumptions about each other.

Francis. Part of the motivation for this project was that we demystify skills by understanding how women got them. I support one ownn having the book and the list but beyond that we need at some point to decide who belongs to Bread and Roses and therefore who has access to the book.

Maggie Z. I thought that the purpose of this was to facilitate the process. To work together it helps to know how people got here..

Jeanne. After the stories are collected it would be good to have a collective reading of the stories. It would consolidate the group. I think that access to the book should be collective and should be done in an organized way. At some point maybe some extracts from the stories should be part of a book,

Francis. Half of one of the days of our proposed weekend should go to the reading of the stories.

The chair asked for direction at this point since the discussion seemed to be taking a long time and not resolving in any conclusions. Sherry. I think that there should not be a book we should just do the stories collectively

Francis. We made a decision to have a book and we can't overturn that decision now. We should go ahead and do it. Those who are not here can be organized into pairs via the phone tree.

It was agreed that the meeting should go ahead with the round, that the women present organize pairs for interviewing at a later date and that we go ahead with a discussion about process.

Proposed agenda for the next two meetings

Aug. 23/4 Basis of Unity 1½ hours

Committee Reports 45 minutes

Aug. 30 Discussion about the Aboriginal Women's Support group

CHAIR PROPOSALS FOR SECURITY SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO STANDING CMT.

PROCESS DISCUSSION

- Francis 1. It is important that the notes that we take at the meetings are accounts of the meetings not just records of proposals. This will help us figure out what has gone wrong if things are going wrong in our process
2. Weekends are important so that we can pay attention to our emotional life. They are also important for the teaching of political theory and the transfer of information in a respectful way.

3. There is always the problem of women who are reluctant to speak
Sometimes this is because one doesn't have anything to say,
sometimes it is because women are intimidated.
- Linda. Speaking is a skill that can be learned. Those who are good
at it can help by holding back especially when someone has already
said it. They have to allow other women the space.
- Maggie T. I hold back in speaking because I am often intimidated
don't feel confident. It is a complex problem because if you
have a theoretical framework a person can respond quickly
with suggestions. It is not so simple as holding back because some-
times you need that direction.
We need a workshop on public speaking and we need feedback and
encouragement.
- Maureen Working in a smaller group nearly always helps one to
gain the confidence to speak out. We can use our sub-cmts. that
way.
- Jackie We have a diversity of talents and experience in B & R
We have to come to terms with the group what is it, what is
our commitment to it, what are the norms. I feel we have to
have more leadership in the form of the steering cmt. right
now it is basically 2 women. Main problem is that the group
process is slow - we are slow in making decisions. Trade
union women can't stand it.
We want to pull together the best of Leninism and feminism
Leninist criticism is devastating but often clear. Feminist
criticism is more supportive but often not clear.
- Jeanne When we are 30 in the group we need to break down into
at least two groups
- Sherry Time factor commitment looks high here it's hard for
women who have full time work to come to a mtg. every week.
Point of information. Our meetings are only once a week until
we have the basis of unity agreed upon.
- Maggie Z. We are talking about two things here. 1. Process which
includes how to give criticism and what is the power in the
group 2. structure which includes the power of the sub-cmts.
% for a vote to carry, procedures on reversal of decisions
- Linda Would like to see us have a party rather than a pot-luck
as it gives one more flexibility to move around and meet women
We need to break out of the old friendship patterns.
- Sherry let's ratify this weekend for process proposal.
O.K'd by group
- Sara The steering cmt. should come up with a proposal for rules
of order which would be brought up for consideration at the
weekend. We need to separate our proposals in the minutes
We also have to decide on whether B&R is a current or a group.
- Dara We also have to let women come to these meetings almost
entirely for political reasons. Some may not want or need the
social connections that we are talking about here.
- Jeanne From my own experience in coming to my first meeting, I
think that we should have a round at the beginning of the
meeting to make sure that everyone knows each other and
also the state emotions they are in if it might affect the
meeting.
I found that there are contradictory rules in women's meetings
especially.
- Sarah I am concerned that we get a balance between general direc-
tion we work out theoretically and the specific actions we take
also we have to look at the degree of decentralization of sub-
committees that we want to have. As they operate now I find
it exciting but what happens to the women who are not in them.
we need to learn to do criticism and self criticism
it is important that we have a social life, their hiking and
pot-luck have been strengthening
we need a buddy system for new women.
- Maggie The sub-group structures can do the emotional stuff
We need to make a distinction between leadership and power
even in groups that have no formal leadership there is usually
a power line-up
we want to disseminate power without denying expertise
to do that we need to have a direct discussion about power
- Marion I have a question. Can women participate in the sub-groups
and not in the larger group? How autonomous should the sub-groups
be? The CUPW meeting raised a lot of issues and questions.
I used to be someone who didn't speak not because I was unskilled
but because I was scared of people. That fear is reduced when
the social distance is reduced by being integrated into the group
I think we should go ahead with the written project, one woman

should keep the written interviews and the pseudonym list, it should all be subject to the editing of the person who is interviewed and we should review it all on the weekend.

Chair. Proposals re security should be submitted to the standing commt.

Jackie Why are there so few women here? Did people forget or don't they want to be a part of this project?

I think we should choose the person we want to interview and set up the time to do it and then we should go ahead with the

MAGGIE Z.'S PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWS

5 typewritten pages at the most

Write it up in the first person

Suggested question areas

Childhood

1. parents, nationality, religion class politics
2. sibs and significance of relationships with them
3. where you grew up
4. Values and behaviours of family
5. emotional reality of the family

Adolescence

1. sexuality
2. relationship with peers and parents
3. any violence

Education

Work waged and non waged

Money and relationship to it

Politicization

Political ideas and how reached

People and books that were significant to political development

major relationships

sexuality

children

non-political interests

adult relationship to natal family

work that you do now

groups that you are involved in

living arrangements

future directions