

PIONEER, OLDTIMER, NEWCOMER: PLACE AND THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY  
LABELS AMONG NORTHERN  
VANCOUVER ISLAND WOMEN

By

ANNE MILLER, M.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

(c) Copyright by Anne Miller, June 1996

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY

(Anthropology) Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: PIONEER, OLDTIMER, NEWCOMER : PLACE AND THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY LABELS AMONG NORTHERN  
VANCOUVER ISLAND WOMEN

AUTHOR: Anne Miller

B. A. : (Laurentian University)

M. A. : (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor David Counts

NUMBER OF PAGES: v, 372

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY LABELS ON  
NORTHERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor,  
Dr. David Counts and my committee members,  
Dr. Richard Preston and Dr. Dorothy Pawluch for their  
helpful criticism and support.

I thank Dr. Karen Szala-Meneok for her support and  
encouragement throughout the process of completing this  
thesis.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1:	Introduction . . . . .	1
Chapter 2:	Identity and Place: A Review of the Literature . . . . .	43
Chapter 3:	Pioneer Women: Living in the Wilderness . . . . .	87
Chapter 4:	Oldtimer: Domesticating the Wilderness . . . . .	135
Chapter 5:	Newcomer: Preserving the Wilderness . . . . .	207
Chapter 6:	North Island Women: Images of Wilderness and Women Transformed . .	293
Chapter 7:	Conclusion . . . . .	335
	References . . . . .	349
	Map: North Vancouver Island . . . . .	88

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the process by which three generations of women living on Northern Vancouver Island, British Columbia construct the collective identity labels north island woman, pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer. The label north island woman is a composite of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer labels. The meanings which north island women attached to these labels in their life stories reveal core attributes that constitute self and group identity. A sense of place and connection with immigrating groups of women are central elements in the construction of self and group identity by these women. This thesis draws attention to the importance of viewing collective identity labels as a significant cultural element in understanding how women construct self and group identity.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

"We are all the same here. All north island women."

Vancouver Island lies off the mainland of southern British Columbia. The island's coastline, particularly on the west side, is broken up by numerous inlets, notably Barkley, Clayoquot and Nootka in the south and Kyuquot and Quatsino in the north. The mountains in the interior are part of the Coast Ranges and average 2,000 - 3,000 feet in elevation. The island resembles the west coast of mainland British Columbia, with fjords, mountains, tall coniferous forests and extremely mild, wet winters.

Anyone travelling through the communities and along the rugged coastline of the north section of Vancouver island, as I did during 1983, will hear stories about the people of the north island, especially its women. The stories span three generations of in-migrating women. There are stories

about the women who first settled the region prior to World War II when the island was still sparsely populated by a transient population of white males and a stable population of native peoples. These women, referred to as pioneers, epitomize the north island woman and their stories are told with great admiration and respect. Some stories tell about oldtimers who came later and had to adapt to the transformation of the region into a popular tourist area. There are also stories about more recent newcomers to the north island and their experiences of north island life as modernization became a common feature. All these stories constitute a common lore about the north island woman.

In this dissertation, I analyze the life stories of these women. I treat the concept of the north island woman as a collective identity label. My concern is to identify the key elements of this collective identity from the perspective of women, putting particular emphasis on the centrality of place and the connection to in-migrating groups of women, in the way these women construct their identities and on the value they attach to self-reliant behaviour. I am intrigued by the distinctions captured by the labels pioneer, oldtimer

and newcomer. In what ways do these labels reflect the generational changes in women's experiences of north island life? What is their relationship to the dominant label north island woman? What continuities and discontinuities are there in the way these woman see themselves, in the ways they relate to their sociocultural surroundings and in the way they construct their sense of self?

I argue that the label north island woman is a key symbol (Ortner 1973:1340) which summarizes, expresses and represents the common identity attributes of these women. As a key symbol, it not only provides orientations, i.e., cognitive and affective categories, but also suggests strategies for behaviour. For north island women, these strategies are most often expressed in self-reliant behaviour.

Women's everyday experience of self-reliant behaviour is described by them within the context of the transformation of images of the physical wilderness. In the case of pioneer women, this spatial image is seen as a matrix of interconnected footpaths and waterways which link isolated, scattered and often one-family settlements. For oldtimers, the wilderness evokes the image of logging roads connecting

the isolated towns of the north island with the southern parts of the island. For newcomers, this image is transformed, in part, by paved highways and increased mobility between regions. The images of pathways and waterways, the unpaved road and the paved road all serve as important symbols of belonging and identification with the north island.

In their life stories, women reveal a strong attachment to a specific place, the geographic region which extends from Campbell River to Cape Scott. The inclusive identity label north island woman, along with the exclusive identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer, embody a cluster of shared concepts related to the meanings women associate with geographical and cultural places in the region. Women are adamant in claiming that it is this attachment to place which forms the basis for self-identity as a north island woman.

Like Spicer (1971:796), I use collective identity to mean the self-ascribed identity of a group which persists and is based on a common understanding concerning a set of symbols and their subjective meanings which arise out of a unique historical experience. When women say they are all north

island women, they powerfully express the relationship that women have with each other as well as their relationship to place. In this stressing of homogeneity, women create a rhetoric of historical and cultural continuity which counterbalances the substantial change evident in north island social life as well as the diversity present between groups of women, including native women, based on income, education and occupation.

Class structure and membership are not significant criteria by which women identified themselves as north island women. In their life stories, they clearly state that membership in the pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer categories is not based on education, income or occupation but on time of arrival on the north island and self-reliant behaviour. Since class membership is not reported as significant by them, I have not imposed a class analysis perspective as an interpretive framework for understanding how north island women construct their collective identity labels. Instead, I rely on an insider's perspective, that is, I examine the construction of collective identity labels from the perspective of individual women as expressed in their life

stories. In this thesis, I examine the key stories contained in the life stories of north island women as a means of illustrating the meanings women attach to collective identity labels.

By life story, I mean a personal narrative which examines a life or a segment of a life (Bertaux 1982; Denzin 1989). As Titon (1980:276) suggests, a life story is a "person's story of his or her life, or of what he or she thinks is a significant part of that life. It is, therefore, a personal narrative, a story of personal experience." The life story comprises all the individual stories and the relations between them told by an individual during her lifetime that focus directly on the speaker or some event framed as relevant to the speaker.

Life stories are a very important way north island women communicate and negotiate a sense of self with others (Howard 1991; McAdams 1985:150; Rosenwald and Ochberg 1992:9). Women use these stories to claim or negotiate group membership and to demonstrate that they are, in fact, worthy members of these groups, understanding and properly following their moral standards. Coherence is an important element in the narration



of a life story, in that demonstrating high level of coherence indicates an effective cultural presentation of self (Linde 1993:3; Rosenwald and Ochberg 1992:9). A narrator demonstrates coherence, and it is understood by the listener, through continuity in the expression of shared cultural meaning in key phrases and stories within a life story. When coherence is consistent across the life stories of a group of women, and their life stories contain similar connecting themes, a strong group identity is communicated among members of a group.

Coherence is created by speaker and addressee in a social context (Linde 1993:47). This interactive process of creating and negotiating coherence in the life story, throughout the life time of individuals, is a social obligation that must be fulfilled in order for the participants to be recognized as competent members of their culture. Linde (1993:25) notes that life stories touch on the widest of social constructions, since they make presuppositions about what can be expected in a culture, what the norms are, and what common or special belief system can be used to establish coherence. Competent members of a society

are cognizant of these presuppositions and construct and negotiate their life stories through adherence to shared cultural norms.

By considering life stories from the perspective of their linguistic structure, Linde (1993) examines how coherence reflects the relationship that parts of a text bear to each other and to the whole text, as well as to other texts of its type. In this thesis, I examine coherence in the life stories of north island women in terms of the continuity in cultural themes and their meanings rather than follow Linde's analysis of linguistic structure.

I found Victor Turner's work on dominant symbols instructive in my examination of the meanings women attach to collective identity labels (Turner 1967). In exploring the dominant symbol north island woman, I have applied Turner's approach. I ask: 1) what are the indigenous interpretations or exegetical meanings, that is, what do local women say the identity label north island woman means to them; 2) what is the function of the identity label and 3) what is the positional meaning or how is the label related to other items in the culture?

I demonstrate that the label north island woman is an identity symbol, composed of multiple and sometimes conflicting meanings, which allows for a limited interpretation of sociocultural diversity over three generations of women. Normative statements, defining the ideal north island woman, circulate throughout the north island as women tell their life stories. Themes of discontinuity and differentiation, in the life stories of women, point to the diversity present in the label north island woman. Although the label north island woman is used to identify all women living on northern Vancouver Island, women distinguish themselves even further using pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer labels. Just as the label north island woman emphasizes sameness, the labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer represent diversity in identity attributes.

In using the labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer, women identify key cultural differences between various categories of women living on northern Vancouver island. Each label embodies a cluster of shared meanings which are used to differentiate in-migrating groups of women. These differences are perceived and explained by women as embedded in a temporal

framework which contrasts the lives of pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers and signals transformations in collective identity over time.

In this thesis, I focus directly on the subjective meanings (Turner 1967) north island women attach to collective identity labels. In agreement with Spicer (1980, 1971), I argue that persistence in the collective identity of a group is based on a common understanding concerning a set of symbols and their subjective meanings which arise out of unique historical experiences. The construction and maintenance of collective identity over time is a dynamic process. North island women perceive collective identity as a negotiable and flexible construct which is grounded in everyday life and in the cultural construction of place and historical time.

In their life stories, women describe themselves as belonging to a particular historical period and stress connections to women who precede and follow them. Ethnologists have recently become interested in local interpretations of past events as an important element in the self-definition of a community as a distinct cultural unit (Freidman 1992; Poyer 1988). The collective identity label

north island women differentiates women as belonging to three periods of in-migration associated with the arrival of pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers. In interpreting these historical periods, significance is placed on the role of women in three eras: settlement, the building of towns and regionalization. For women, local interpretations of historical events, such as specific migration periods, powerfully articulate with concepts of local place. This is clearly seen in their life stories where a temporal framework, associated with in-migrating groups of women, is interconnected with images of place. Thus, local history and local identity are structured congruently. For example, historical referents, such as the era of the building of towns in the wilderness, are associated with the label oldtimer. The meanings attached to collective identity labels firmly situate women in a particular geographical locale, identify their relationship with a specific place and associate them with a specific historical period.

Another component in the meanings women attach to collective identity labels is a recognition of the close relationship between collective identity labels and the

presence locally of variations in women's gender imagery. For instance, the labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer serve as markers which identify different and sometimes contrasting images of feminine gender. The construction of these different images document how women negotiate attributes of their identity by manipulating the range of roles and tasks available to them as north island women. Recent research on the social construction of women's gender identity has stressed the need for examination of a flexible, multidimensional concept of gender identity construction which takes into account variations in a particular sociocultural setting (Lorber and Farrello 1991; Morton 1991). Definitions of womanhood are continually being constituted, reproduced, changed and contested (Laslett and Brenner 1989; Scott 1986). This dissertation provides a closer look at an important element in the process by which women's gender identity is constructed: the impact of multiple feminine gender images present in a particular sociocultural setting.

Women living today on northern Vancouver Island consider the availability of a variety of gender imagery as a valuable resource in identity construction. They use the

gender imagery of other groups of women as a framework for comparing and contrasting the attributes they consider essential in defining their own identity. The use of the contrasting and sometimes contradictory attributes, as well as the similarities in another group's gender imagery, in support of constructing their own identity, points to an understanding by north island women of the dynamic and negotiable nature of identity construction on northern Vancouver Island.

Women recognize other local women who use the same collective identity label. They see themselves sharing common values with these women related to a definition of the ideal woman. In contrasting and comparing attributes of various collective identity labels, women simultaneously clarify and manipulate values attached to behaviours and roles which they promote as normative.

#### METHODOLOGY

While living on Vancouver Island, I collected data through participant observation, case studies, formal and informal interviews, life histories and archival research. The recording of life stories was central.

As a participant observer, I was involved in local women's activities. As well as home visits, I regularly attended two major Christian churches, public meetings and some executive meetings of the three major women's associations. I visited one of the local elementary schools and the Senior Citizen Drop-In Centre weekly. I conducted formal and informal interviews with seventy women. These interviews were supplemented by extensive life history documentation for twenty seven women. I administered questionnaires combined with an informal interview to an additional eighty women over a six month period. Questionnaires were modified to accommodate age differences. For example, alternative questions, more appropriate to some age groups, such as the elderly, were formulated. Through the use of questionnaires and interviews, I collected information on the following areas: education, family composition, formal employment, domestic management, subsistence, leisure and community health services and migration. The collection of archival materials took two forms. At the British Columbia Provincial Archives, I examined personal historical accounts of life on north Vancouver Island, records of vital statistics



and histories of the region. In addition, I collected several local amateur historical accounts and newspaper articles which recorded the life histories of pioneers and oldtimers in the region.

I selected fifteen key informants who identified themselves as pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers. These key informants served as a basis for a comprehensive case study of sixty north island women. The women interviewed were between the ages of twenty-two and ninety-two. The majority were grandmothers ranging in age from forty to seventy. Most were married or widowed. In order to select women who belonged to a specific category, I asked women to identify other women, who shared similar values within categories that they designated as pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer. Thus, the women who I approached for interviews were recommended or introduced by family or friends, who also identified themselves as belonging to the same category of women. These women were most often described as close friends or women who worked with informants as volunteers in various associations.

The oldtimers were the first group of women that I met in this way. They were perceived by north island women as

representing the core values upon which local communities were built. Next, I was introduced to pioneer women by oldtimers. Initially, oldtimers were reluctant to introduce me to pioneer women. This reluctance was based on the view that pioneer women were reticent about talking to strangers. Because of their shared values, oldtimers and pioneer women interacted on an infrequent but regular basis. Gradually, I was introduced to pioneer women by kinswomen and oldtimers in the region.

The third group of women that I met were newcomers. Interaction between oldtimers and newcomers was minimal and focused on shared civic community activities rather than social networks. I made contact with newcomers by contacting teachers, attending local conferences or workshops in the region related to women's issues and through recreational activities.

#### DEVELOPING THE LIFE HISTORY METHOD

The approach I developed in this research gives expression to the voice of individual north island women. I agree with Cruikshank's (1984:9) observation that any theory used to explain a woman's life "must begin from her own viewpoint, within her own framework." In keeping within this

perspective, I examine the meanings women attach to collective identity labels as revealed in their life stories through the extensive use of life history material. By life story, I mean the key stories in a life history which reveal, from the perspective of the narrator, the important components of her life. These key stories reveal attributes of self-identity which are constructed by the narrator from the events of her life.

In this thesis, I use the terms life story and life history interchangeably (Bertaux 1982; Cole 1991; Cruikshank 1990, 1988, 1983; Pinder 1994; Shostak 1989). The term life story allows for and acknowledges the dimension of storytelling in the process of recounting shared cultural aspects of a life history. It also highlights the selectivity of women's accounts of their lives. Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992:265) point out the importance of examining the content of life stories from the perspective of these two dynamic features. They maintain that the construction and narration of life stories plays a significant role in the formation of identity of the self. In telling their life stories,

narrators carefully construct a portrait of self and group identity.

North island women do not make a distinction between the terms life story and life history. They consistently used the terms interchangeably in describing my role to other women in informal conversation. Women clearly perceived the recording of their life histories as an elaborated and detailed personalized recounting of their life stories.

The importance of documenting the lives of contemporary north island women required little explanation on my part. I was consistently informed that it was a common occurrence for north island women to be asked to tell their life stories. Seven women out of the fifteen of my core informants had considered writing their own life histories prior to my arrival. Oldtimers and newcomers consistently mentioned the importance of recording and documenting the lives of pioneer women. An oldtimer commented:

To learn about being a north island woman you need to talk to women about their experience living here. To get their life story. Their experience from the beginning when there were no white women until now. They know all about it.

As in the case of the Portuguese women (Cole 1991:40-41) and the Yukon elders (Cruikshank 1990, 1988, 1983), north island women did not question my interest in their lives or the collection of their life stories. Exhibiting a strong sense of self, they felt their life stories were worthwhile and expressed an urgency to have them recorded. Similar to the Portuguese women of Praia, north island women have a sense of history and a sense of biography which make them good subjects for life histories (Brettell 1982). The conversations of women with one another and with me relating everyday events would often take the form of telling stories about the lives of other north island women. Key stories of contemporary pioneers and oldtimers were already circulating among north island women prior to my arrival. Women openly defined my role as a collaborator in the recording of their life histories. They also limited my role by stressing the value of self-direction. This was evident in the account of an oldtimer who was a key informant. In our first recording session, she stated:

I've been waiting for someone to record the story of my life. I started to do it once myself but got distracted. I think I needed

someone to tell it to from the beginning to the end. Someone to keep me at it. A good listening post. All the oldtimers here lived remarkable lives. It isn't just me. I know lots of other women who lived remarkable lives. You should get their stories too.

The telling of life stories served several important explanatory and instructional functions in maintaining self and group identity. For north island women, the history of the region was embedded in their individual life stories. They consistently told me that, if I wanted to understand the history of the region and the place of women in that history, I needed to ask women about the experience of living their lives. Women talk about their lives and construct their life stories using a shared body of social knowledge about the significance and impact of historical events on their individual and collective lives. They perceive themselves not as observers but rather as active participants in shaping the history of the region. This role was particularly true of pioneers and oldtimers who gave first hand accounts of the development of north island life after the arrival of non-native women in the region.

The telling of life stories provided an instructional framework for outlining the process of becoming a north island woman. During the early months of data collection, I frequently asked, in informal conversation, "What is a north island woman?" Rather than provide a list of criteria which would identify a north island woman, I was told stories about the lives of contemporary women in the region. With time, I came to realize that the instructional quality of these life stories was not only for the benefit of defining for newcomers what a north island woman was but, in addition, these stories illustrated strategies by which women come to behave as north island women.

These stories also provided women a vehicle for recognizing and affirming each other as north island women. For example, when an oldtimer told stories about the hardships and challenges of building a town in the wilderness, she characterized herself as self-reliant and thus identified herself to the listener as possessing a key attribute for identity as a north island woman. Similarly, when a pioneer told stories about living in the wilderness, isolated from other white women and assuming male work roles, she also

identified herself to the listener as a north island woman. This identity was affirmed when the listener recounted similar key stories from her own experience or repeated a similar story about other women living in the region. An oldtimer commented:

We all have similar stories, us oldtimers. We all went the same way and had the same experiences. Our stories all run together. You hear one and you hear them all.

Cruikshank (1990) and Szala-Meneok (1993) outline in detail the instructional and explanatory functions of the telling of life stories as one means of maintaining group identity. Szala-Meneok (1993:121-123) noted that to respond appropriately to contingency in seasonal adjustment is an important attribute for identity as a Labradorian. Life stories serve the heuristic purpose of teaching others, particularly younger, less experienced Labradorians, how to cope with seasonal contingencies such as break-up, i.e., the melting of sea-ice. Listeners implicitly learn about situational readjustments that have been and can still be, employed to modulate the effects of contingency. Labradorians frequently use humour in telling life stories. Szala-Meneok



points out that humour in the life stories of Labradorians is a type of adjustive response to contingency. While the reality of a situation may not be changed, at least, one's attitude to it can be. Cruikshank (1990), in collecting personal narratives from Yukon native elders, found that the use of traditional narratives in life stories is a customary framework for discussing a culturally constituted past. Elders also use traditional narratives as a means of explaining personal experience in their life stories and instructing younger women in the traditional ways of her people. Yukon women, in drawing a contrast between normative expectations and actual life events in the life story, use traditional narratives to explore these contradictions.

In examining the contrast between the life stories of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomers, women explore the contradictions between the normative expectations of being an ideal north island woman, i.e., a pioneer, and the actual events in their own life stories. In this way, north island women also use life stories as a means of explaining how their individual behaviour differs from normative cultural expectations. A newcomer commented:

I suppose that most newcomers see themselves as basically different from pioneers and oldtimers here. I mean, many of us would probably want to be like pioneer women. We have some of their qualities, otherwise, we wouldn't fit up here. But we are modern women. You realize how different you are because it's really easy to pick up a clear picture about how pioneer women are. Everyone knows a true story about a local pioneer woman. It just strikes you how, even though you have some pioneer qualities, that you are basically really different from them.

In addition to focusing on the collection of life stories, I employed a grounded theory approach (Corbin and Strauss 1990; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). Grounded theory provides an inductive approach to data collection and analysis with the construction of theory from the data itself. With this approach, interpretation of the meanings and explanations women attach to collective identity can emerge (Bryman and Burgess 1994; Maguire 1987). This was the principle goal of my research. I relied on a thematic comparison of the words and constructs of the life stories of north island women and examined patterns, inconsistencies and contradictions to describe the process of collective identity transformation through three generations (Charmaz 1983; Luborsky 1993). Discovering patterns of continuity and

discontinuity in the meanings women associate with aspects of identity was facilitated when self-reliance emerged as a central attribute of their collective identity. The significance of self-reliance was affirmed by a young woman as she responded to my question: what do north island women have in common?

I suppose we all like to think we are really independent, self-reliant women, relying on ourselves like pioneers. Even if we really don't believe that, we admire the notion and hope it will rub off on us.

Literature on women's autobiographical and life history documentation proposes a close connection between the everyday lives of women and identity. North island women agreed with this assessment and perceived a close connection between self-identity and everyday experience. In the early months of my fieldwork, women consistently told me that, in order to know about north island women, I should talk to pioneers and oldtimers about their everyday experience of living on the north island. The importance placed on the recording of everyday experience was reflected in the ease with which women agreed to the collection of life history material. Because of the interest shown by north island women

in recording life stories, and their sense that women had a significant role and first hand knowledge about the development of the region, the collection of life histories provided rich data. I examined emerging patterns across multiple life stories which focused attention on the sociocultural processes by which collective identity is transformed over generations. North island women recognized these patterns as cultural themes of continuity and differentiation associated with identity attributes through generations of in-migrating women.

My primary aim, in collecting women's life histories as subjective documents, was to learn from north island women how their lives appeared to them and to gain a sense of the sociocultural context that provided structure and direction to their lives. I began recording life histories after I had been on the north island for three months. By this time, many of the women, who had been identified by other women as ideal informants, were no longer strangers. The life histories I gathered were narrated by women in a series of interview sessions which took place in their homes. Twenty-seven life histories were collected from women ranging in age from

twenty-four to eighty-seven years of age. Five of the narratives were brief (five hours of taping) and recorded over a few weeks. The other narratives were more extensive (15-20 hours of taping) and collected over several months.

Current research suggests that the collection of personal narratives is a process of interaction (Berger-Gluck and Patai 1991; Watson & Watson-Franke 1985). This interactive process is a mutual construction involving both the narrator and the ethnologist (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Crapanzano 1984; Becker & McCall 1990; Patai 1988). While recognizing that the recording of a life history is a collaborative effort which incorporates the consciousness of the investigator as well as the informant, I tried to conduct interviews in a way that gave attention to the voice of individual women rather than mine. Anderson and Jack (1991:12) suggest the following:

Oral history interview demands a shift in methodology from information gathering, where the focus is on the right questions, to interaction, where the focus is on process, on the dynamic unfolding of the subject's viewpoint.

Being conscious of the importance of not imposing a formal structure on the narratives by initiating probing questions for a chronology of life events, I encouraged women to structure their narratives according to their own direction. Without exception, women imposed a strict chronology. Life stories were structured using an historical framework that situated women within key historical eras, that is, the pioneer, oldtimer or newcomer era. Key historical events, such as World War One, were sometimes mentioned but not elaborated upon. North island women sequentially documented and gave a prominent position to major life events such as marriage and the birth of children. In the few instances when it was necessary to probe in order to initiate conversations, I asked chronological questions which were open ended and related to periods in the lifecycle: Where were you born? Do you remember hearing any stories connected with your birth? What were your earliest memories? It was my hope that a loosely structured framework of questions would encourage women to elaborate on topics of interest and structure their narratives around issues and events of significance to them as individuals. North island women were self-directed in the

recording of their life stories and few needed assistance from me.

Another important issue in the collection of life histories is the recognition of pre-understandings which the narrator and investigator bring to the collaborative process. One of my pre-understandings, regarding the collection of life histories among north island women, was the assumption of the lineal sequencing of historical and personal chronology in a life account. Initially, it was not surprising that chronological sequencing of events by narrators spontaneously occurred without prompting on my part. Women began their narratives by recording events surrounding their birth, and continued in a sequence describing significant life events associated with age, such as marriage and the birth of children. They often began the recording of life history sessions by wondering out loud, " Let's see, what happens next? How old was I when we finished talking last time?"

The role of chronology in narration became an increasingly important feature for me as I came to understand the significance north island women placed on a temporal framework which emphasized chronological order. Women

situated their life stories in an historical era, which simultaneously corresponded with their time of arrival in the area, and self-identification as a pioneer, oldtimer or newcomer. Each generation of women was connected with the chronology of the other two generations, while simultaneously affirming the significance of the particular historical era associated with their generation. For north island women, a strict adherence to personal chronology and group chronology is a significant component in the structuring of a life history. This concern with chronology was also present in the telling of key stories about other women in informal conversation. As the narrator began a key story, she would situate herself as historically present or absent as a resident on the north island when actual events in the life story occurred.

Initially, I thought that this insistence on framing narratives within a specific historical period would result in detailed recounting of social history. However, the recording of life histories did not result in a richly documented oral history of the region. Although women responded patiently and concisely to my requests for clarification with regard to



historical events, they quickly moved to discussions of the psychosocial impact of historical events on their lives as women. For example, the Depression of the 1930's had a profound economic and social effect on the development of the north island. While the term "Depression" was only used in one narrative by pioneer women, the duration, intensity and regional effects of the Depression permeated the life stories of all pioneers. In the narration of life stories, the Depression of the 1930's was assumed as a given and the impact of the Depression was recounted by pioneer women in three key phrases of social commentary: "times were hard," "money was scarce" and "we all made do." Similarly, the demographic shift from a native population to the influx of single, non-native males was recounted in the key phrase "women were scarce." Pioneer women clearly explained the psychosocial implications of living in an era where they were "making do" and "women were scarce" as having a profound impact on self and group identity. In their life stories, they consistently shifted the emphasis away from simply recounting events toward describing the impact of these events on their lives as women.

North island women use the telling of their life stories as a way of identifying and describing meanings associated with attributes of self-identity. They construct their life stories in a way that highlights the comparisons and contrasts with in-migrating groups of north island women. The life stories of north island women examine the connections between these diverse groups of in-migrating women. This recurring theme, along with a sense of place, characterizes their life stories. Through the frequent use of comparison and contrast in structuring their life histories, women explain why they value attributes associated with their own self-identity. As I examined the life history narratives of pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers, contrasting profiles of attributes of collective identity clearly emerged.

Cruikshank (1990) distinguishes native women's life stories from the life stories of non-native women and native men. For native women, the recurring theme is one of connection to other people and to landscape (Bataille and Sands 1984). Connections with people are explored through ties of kinship; connections with land emphasize a sense of place. Most importantly, Cruikshank (1990, 1988, 1983)

explores how kinship and landscape provide more than just a setting for an account, they actually frame and shape the story. I found Cruikshank's analysis helpful in examining the dominant cultural themes that frame and shape the life stories of north island women. A theme of connection is also an important element in understanding how north island women structure their life stories. Unlike Yukon elders, who explore connections with people through ties of kinship, north island women frame and shape their life stories by situating their contexts in relation to generations of in-migrating women. As in the case of Yukon elders, the life stories of north island women explore connections with the land through an emphasis on a sense of place.

Striking differences appeared in the narrative styles and topical areas of interest in the life stories of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomers. These differences centre on the degree of reticence in self-disclosure regarding behaviour, personality development, motivations for behaviour and the amount of elaborative detail used to describe the sociocultural context.

Attention to narrative style and elaborative detail is significant in that the more concise and non-elaborative the style, the more culturally normative, rather than individualized, is the narrative and subsequent portrait of an individual woman. Thus, the life stories of pioneer women were largely culturally normative accounts with little elaborative detail. Pioneer women were adamant in declaring that self and group identity were similar. The most often repeated phrase in their narrative was, "We are all the same here." They were reticent about making self-disclosing statements about their behaviour, personalities or intentions as well as making inferences about other pioneer women. As already noted, they provided few details describing historical and sociocultural context. Pioneer women explained why explanatory statements or descriptions of context were not needed. They assumed that their experiences and behavior were similar to those of other pioneer women and, therefore, felt that detailed explanation was not necessary to establish context. A pioneer woman commented:

You don't need to get my life story. You could go talk to Mary. We have the same story. Women are the same here. Us pioneers. We

lived the same kind of life. Not much difference between us.

Pioneers frequently shift from the personal, "I did this," to the impersonal, "all teens were the same." Normative statements related to cultural identity are frequently juxtapositioned with descriptions of personal events. The narratives of pioneers have an instructional quality which provides a cultural profile of the ideal pioneer woman rather than providing us with detailed pictures of themselves as women. There appeared to be very little ambiguity between a pioneer woman's view of herself and the cultural model presented. Pioneer women were very reticent about appearing to behave different than the norm in the telling of their life stories. While they were hesitant about differentiating among themselves, pioneer women differentiated between themselves and native women. This was apparent in the life histories of oldtimers and newcomers as well.

Women construct the identity label north island woman by emphasizing the similarities between diverse groups of in-migrating women. This rhetoric of historical and cultural continuity masks the diversity present between groups of

women, including native women. When constructing a profile of the ideal north island woman from a common list of normative criteria, north island women consistently edit out detailed reference to native women. Mention of native women was notably absent from 18 of the 27 life histories that I collected. When mentioned, native women were described as background figures by pioneers and oldtimers. A pioneer commented:

My mother was all alone, living in the bush. There were only native women around. She had no one to talk to. No adult women. She was all alone.

In the accounts of pioneers and oldtimers, native women were acknowledged as living in the area but their lives were viewed as separate and distinct from the lives of white women. When I asked probing questions about their interaction with native women, the most common response was to characterize relationships between white and native women as that of either absence or social isolation. This isolation from native women during the pioneer and oldtimer era was significant for identity as a north island woman. Pioneer women, and to a lesser extent oldtimers, identified isolation

from other women as an essential component in their description of the north island experience. This isolation was significant in their worldview in that it reinforced the image of north island women as self-reliant. The heroic accounts of pioneer women carving a social universe out of the wilderness was a pervasive theme in life history narratives.

Not all women who lived in isolation perceived native women as background figures. For example, one oldtimer had a considerable amount of contact with native women when she lived in a logging camp with her husband near a reservation. Like other oldtimers, her account of interaction with native women in the wilderness was described as friendly but infrequent. In the few other comments regarding native women in the narration of other pioneers and oldtimers, interaction was connected with the schooling of children or in committee involvement in creating social services within the town.

Newcomers acknowledged the presence of native women and differentiated between native women living in town and those native women who live on reservations. For newcomers, women living on reservations were always described as native and different from non-native women. Some native women who

lived in town were assimilated to the point where they were no longer described as native. In the accounts of newcomers, native women who integrated into town life were not usually differentiated from non-native women. Native women living on reservations were perceived as different from women living in town in that they were described as more traditionally native and, therefore, distinct from non-native women. When I probed for clarity regarding the role of contemporary native women, a newcomer concisely summarized the attitude of north island women regarding native women:

Well, I guess you have to look at native women as individuals. Some women are so integrated into town life that they seem the same as we are. They are our friends and sometimes we do the same work. You never think of them as native. Other native women live on reservations or are in sympathy with native women who live there. They see themselves as very different from us and keep themselves separate from us.

Newcomers and oldtimers, in contrast to pioneers, were much less hesitant in discussing personal information and providing historical and sociocultural details. The ambiguity, between normative values for the ideal north island woman and personal values for an individual woman, was a theme



for self-reflection in the narratives of oldtimers and newcomers.

Oldtimers were particularly interested in providing contextualized detail regarding historical and sociocultural change spanning the pioneer period to the present. In describing their own development as women, oldtimers were more comfortable in individualizing the process than were pioneers.

Newcomers were the least reticent about disclosing motivations, intentions and making evaluative statements about themselves. They maximized a self-disclosing style, by structuring their narratives around significant interpersonal relationships and, consequently, comparing and contrasting their own self-development with that of other women. For them, the differences between generations of women were interpreted within the framework of their own unique experience. In contrast, pioneer women assumed similarity of experience with other pioneer women and did not interpret their own narratives in a way that highlighted contrasts between pioneer women.

In summary, in this dissertation, I will examine the key elements of the inclusive collective identity label north

island women and the exclusive collective identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer from the perspective of women presently living on north Vancouver Island. Through the examination of their life stories, I will explore themes of continuity and discontinuity in the way these women see themselves, in the ways they relate to their sociocultural surroundings and in the way they construct collective identity labels. In particular, I will emphasize the importance of a sense of place and the connection to in-migrating groups of women as two key themes in the construction of collective identity labels. Finally, I examine the value which north island women attach to self-reliance as a key strategy for adapting to life on the north island and identity as a north island woman.

#### ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

In chapter two, I present an overview of the literature on identity and focus specifically on the relationship between collective identity and place. In chapters three, four and five, I identify and describe the attributes which north island women associate with the collective identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer. In

chapter six, I examine the meanings that north island women attach to collective identity labels as I trace the process by which these labels are transformed over time.



## CHAPTER TWO

### IDENTITY AND PLACE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The theme of individual and group identity formation and maintenance has been a recurrent one in the social sciences since World War II. In its current use, the term identity has gradually come to acquire the status of a folk category. As a consequence, it takes on a common sense meaning and frequently receives little explicit explanation when used in a scholarly context. In this chapter, I will be presenting an overview of the manner in which identity has been used as a research concept with the purpose of focusing on an underdeveloped aspect of anthropological research on identity, that of the relationship between collective identity and place. Since the focus of this thesis is an examination of the meanings women attach to collective identity labels and place, this chapter examines a body of literature from anthropology and other allied disciplines which inform our understanding of these concepts.

Earlier formulations of the concept of identity were initially developed in the domains of sociology, anthropology and psychology under the key concepts of self, character and personality (Weigert 1986:5). Although these earlier studies focus on the individual in a sociocultural context, the notion of group identity has always been an underlying research theme. In current research on identity, the merging of psychological and sociocultural issues regarding identity remains a fundamental research premise (Breakwell 1992). The approach taken in this thesis makes an important contribution to the understanding of identity by considering not only behavioral and cognitive elements but also by recognizing the spatial venues in which identities are created and operate. North island women do not situate the construction of collective identity labels purely within a social relational framework. They also assign importance both to spatial and temporal aspects.

In this chapter, I present an overview of the contributions of sociological psychology and ethnic studies to the development of the concept of collective identity. Then, I explore the contribution of anthropology to the study of

collective identity and place. Finally, I show how my analysis relates to discussions of place identity in cultural geography . I will be using an anthropological approach as a central framework for examining my data. However, I will also incorporate certain interdisciplinary concepts, such as the significance of place identity for collective identity in the work of cultural geographers and the influence of sociological psychology on the social construction of identity. My research makes a contribution to the study of identity by placing renewed emphasis on cross disciplinary links which examine the relationship between collective identity and place.

#### SOCIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

The link between psychological reality and sociohistorical events continues to be a central concern of sociological psychology. More specifically, research in the area related to identity formation focuses on the attributes of the self in interactional settings. The concept of identity in sociological psychology arose out of the early research of Erik Erikson (1968, 1959). George Herbert Mead (1934) and Herbert Blumer (1969) developed the concept further

by merging identity with the core concept of self and later with that of role. Weigert (1986) notes that while Erickson's interest was in identity, the term identity eventually merged with that of the self in sociological psychology studies. He (1986:11) points to the need for a clear theoretical distinction between the use of the terms self and identity.

There are numerous components of the notion of self in its relationship to role and identity that have received systematic attention (Breakwell 1992). As a consequence, the approach of sociological psychology, in particular, symbolic interactionism, has been helpful in identity research in pointing out various relationships between social structure and the interacting self as agent. My research focuses directly on identity as a core concept for analysis rather than on that of the self. Within this framework, the concept of identity is conceived of as multidimensional and dynamic in its own right.

A second stream of research, represented by social constructionist theory, is particularly relevant to my analysis (Stigliano 1993). Within this framework, identity is constructed through a process of negotiation in specific



sociocultural contexts (Cole 1991; Greider and Garkovich 1994). Thus, I focus directly on the collective identity of women living on North Vancouver Island as a socially constructed reality that is negotiated in a particular sociocultural and spatial setting and viewed through the perspective of women.

For north island women, one of the essential components in collective identity labels is the attention given to the simultaneous construction of gender imagery. Gender identity attributes are embedded in collective identity labels in the form of values outlining ideal behaviours for women. Competing ideal images of femaleness are debated by pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers. Recent research identifies the construction of gender identity as an historical process which gives cultural meanings to sex differences through the interpretation, negotiation and selective manipulations of cultural meanings attached to female and male behaviours (Boddy 1982; Dominy 1986; Herzfeld 1986; Laslett and Brenner 1989; Lorber and Farrello 1991; MacCormack and Strathern 1980; Morton 1991). In this thesis, I focus attention on the construction of gender imagery as a symbolic construct (Ortner

and Whitehead 1981) in which at least three ideal images of femaleness are contrasted: pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer.

In the next section, I outline the contributions of ethnic identity studies as they relate specifically to the examination of collective identity.

#### ETHNICITY

While there is little agreement among social scientists on the meaning of the term ethnicity (McCready 1983; Edwards and Doucette 1987), the identification and description of the ethnic group receives widespread attention. The most common approach used in establishing the basis for ethnicity is an isolation of the differences between groups with regard to their unique social structures, cultures and identity. Ethnic groups are most often defined on the basis of language, religion or national origin (Da Costa 1994; Lanca et al 1994; Reminik 1983; Schwartz 1984). A second stream of research uses self-identification by the ethnic group as a means of establishing ethnicity (Becker 1990; Hein 1994; Nagata 1974; Okamura 1981; Plaiice 1989). A third approach examines the process of boundary maintenance whereby the ethnicity of the group is clearly demarcated from that of

surrounding peoples (Ang 1993; Cohen 1978; Jenkins 1994; Lian 1988).

The term collective identity is used synonymously with ethnic group identity and, like the broader term identity, is rarely defined. The isolation of specific attributes connected with ethnic and collective identity is most often used as a means of understanding changing ethnicity. There is a concern with determining fairly precise ways of measuring and describing cultural knowledge and ethnic identification. The description of the ethnic population and its internal variation is linked with an attempt to accurately plot sociocultural changes over time, especially from generation to generation. Changes in ethnicity illustrate the nature of sociocultural change within a particular community, that is, within the self-identified ethnic group.

In order to examine changing ethnicity, current research (Banton 1994; Driedger 1987; Epstein 1979; Nagel 1994) examines the way in which ethnicity is constructed among individuals. This process is described most often through the use of an acculturation model in which identity is viewed as one variable in the complex relationship between ethnicity,

acculturation and assimilation (Bash 1979; Lanca et al 1994; Sayegh and Larsey 1993). Ethnic identity can remain unchanged or can be strengthened despite attempts at complete acculturation. However, confusion surrounding the distinctiveness of the processes of culture change, acculturation and identity persists.

Ethnic studies make a valuable contribution to the concept of collective identity by examining the construction and maintenance of symbols of ethnic identity through generations. An examination of ethnicity is concerned with how a group perceives and defines itself over time. In order to ascribe to an ethnic identity, an individual has to accept the collective symbols that identify and constrain the group. The process of ethnic identity formation is marked by the increased use of shared cultural attributes. Eminov (1986) suggests, for example, that Turkish speakers in Bulgaria continue to identify themselves and are identified by others in terms of a set of unique cultural symbols that define them as members of a distinct ethnic community. Likewise, Schwartz (1984), in studying the persistence of ethnic identity over several generations of American Jews, concluded that

flexibility in the use of a distinct set of inclusive cultural symbols provides an important mechanism for continuing ethnic identity. Identity formation is generally viewed as processual, that is, the process of formation is dynamic and negotiable over time and involves ongoing transformations. For example, Staiano (1980) outlines the attempts of Afro-Americans to identify and develop certain cultural themes symbolized by the term "soul." As a concept symbolizing identity, the term soul is a major element in the process which Staiano terms ethnogenesis or ethnotransformation.

My research shares an affinity with those ethnic studies which focus on the process by which ethnic identity attributes change over time. Of particular interest is the examination of the ways in which the persistence of identity symbols contribute to identity maintenance over time.

Anthropologists currently examining collective identity focus on two themes which are relevant to my research: 1) the conceptual dimension of groupness, and 2) the local interpretation of past events shaping self and community identity. In the next section, wI discuss these two themes in greater detail.

## THE CONCEPTUAL DIMENSION OF GROUPNESS

Anthropologists most often use collective identity as an organizing framework to examine concepts of collectivity such as grouphood (Cornell 1990, 1988); peoples (Spicer 1980, 1971; Scott 1990); nationhood (Kroeber 1955) and the labels which represent these concepts. There is considerable overlap in the meaning and use of these terms.

Stephen Cornell (1990, 1988), in examining North American aboriginal groups, considers collective identity as evolving along two related but distinct dimensions: the conceptual (the dimension of group self-concept) and the political (the dimension of group organization). For Cornell (1988:29-30), the Indian population is divided into sets. Groups of individuals are bound together by, among other things, their collective participation in common beliefs, cultural practice, social networks and interactions which established and sustained their common identity and subsequently distinguished them from the rest of the world. Although the particular set of relationships, symbols, and interactions involved in such collective identity systems might vary widely from group to group, the product of the

particular structure of the identity system is a self-conscious group.

Cornell uses the terms group, people and nation as interchangeable terms to describe the organizational and conceptual bases of group life (1988:30-31). He notes that, for some native groups, the conceptual dimension of grouphood is typically comprehensive and inclusive of diverse political units (Lowie 1963:94).

Other recent works on ethnicity substantiate the persistence of tribal collective identity (Blu 1980; Brody 1987, 1982; Fowler 1987; Jorgensen 1990). This body of literature suggests that, despite changes in outward manifestations of culture, indigenous self-concepts and worldviews have remained distinctive. Researchers maintain that what is most important to the survival of collective identity is cultural and social continuities, patterns of kinship relations, modes of thought and action, systems of meaning and interpretation.

Researchers interested in identifying the cultural definition of groupness have examined transformations in the sociocultural, organizational and conceptual dimensions of

grouphood, paying particular attention to fundamental discontinuities in these domains over time. For example, Cornell's research (1988) examines the creation of formal political units in place of multiple, autonomous units. The transformation in collective identity is a recurring theme. Breton (1988) argues that Quebec nationalism has recently begun a transformation in its collective identity from ethnic to civic nationalism. Similarly, Xavier Totti (1987) examines how Latinos in New York, using a combination of common cultural values and symbols, created a new collective identity. Ronald R. Atkinson (1989) traces the evolution of an Acholi ethnic identity in Uganda. He argues that this evolution began in the late 17th century with the establishment of a new sociopolitical order. This was followed by a language shift and then, during the 19th century, was influenced by the introduction by Arabic-speaking traders from the north and was eventually transformed in the present term Acholi.

Spicer, in an ongoing examination of the persistence of groups, separates the notion of people from the notion of ethnic. He (1971:796) calls peoples "determinable set(s) of



human individuals who believe in a given set of identity symbols." He suggests that the defining characteristic of a persistent people is a continuity of common identity based on "common understandings concerning the meaning of a set of symbols" (1980:347). This common identity consists in the growth and development of a picture of themselves which arises out of their unique historical experience. This image or picture of a people's collective identity is made up of the "symbols which a people develop, together with their meanings, concerning their experience as a people." Thus, the persistence of a people rests "on a set of meanings about actual events of history, as uniquely experienced by the people and stored as it were in a stock of symbols" (Spicer 1980:347). Although symbols may change over time, continuity exists in the consistency of successive interpretations of the symbols throughout generations. Thus, successive interpretations make up a single interrelated set of meanings over the course of many generations (Spicer 1980). This core of continuity and reconstruction of symbols is demonstrated in the research by Jorgensen (1990) and Brody (1987, 1982) on native peoples of Alaska and northern Canada and their

relationship with the natural environment and the tenacity of traditional values. Thus, even as these people adopted snowmobiles, rifles, frame houses and Christian beliefs over the past hundred years, they continue to define themselves as subsistence hunters.

Frykman and Lofgren (1987) examine the use of key symbols of identity and techniques of symbolic inversion in the identity building of the Oscanian bourgeoisie in Sweden over the period 1880-1910. This process involved the contrasting of middle-class culture with that of the declining peasantry and the emerging working class. The bourgeoisie saw themselves as representing higher forms of cultural refinement and sophistication than other social classes. Therefore, the devaluation of manual labour and the aversion to certain dietary customs are all part of the moral superiority of the bourgeoisie and, at the same time, a definition of the inferiority of the working class. These negative qualities were a symbolic inversion of the positive qualities by which the bourgeoisie defined itself initially. Self-control and self-discipline were emphasized as two other attributes of

identity (Frykman and Lofgren 1987:270). Culture building involved a constant elaboration of these themes.

Anthropologists also use collective identity as an organizing theme to examine labels which represent concepts of collectivity. In an important work, Jack Glazier (1987) examines the use of nicknames among Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews in Indianapolis and concludes that nicknames now serve as mnemonics of community and as a trigger for nostalgic recollections about the radical transformations in the way of life experienced by those over fifty years of age. As mnemonics, nicknames represent social inscriptions of personal and collective identity in a changing sociocultural context. He examines how nickname usage, in surviving the social context which initially generated it, has effectively come to represent a mnemonic of community, a symbol that readily defines a group with complex, diffuse social bonds. Nicknames evoke generational memories of neighbourhood life.

Glazier noted that an important function of nicknames is their evocative and expressive capacity to call up nostalgic images of the urban community in which these names were conferred and disseminated, and to reiterate the

generational bonds among those who are socially enclosed by this knowledge. This usage constitutes a kind of social anchor that secures identity amid the personal and community dislocations of rapid social change. As a mnemonic of the original settlement, nicknames bring the past into the present. Nicknames locate persons in a particular time and place shared by those who are part of this community of nicknames. They engender collective identities among people generally, but most especially among members of the same generation.

Plaice (1989) examines perceptions of ethnic identity in the use of labels among settlers in NorthWest River, Labrador. She maintains that changing social environments cause a fragmentation of social identity in which ethnicity becomes a resource to be manipulated in the creation and communication of social identities. She examines the use of contrasting social characters embedded in the labels settler, trapper, oldtimer, newcomer and outsider and maintains that these social identities form part of a continuum of the more inclusive term Labradorian. The social situation determines, in large part, the use of these interrelated terms by specific

individuals. Thus, Labradorians can be settlers and settlers can be oldtimers etc. On northern Vancouver Island, the continued use of the labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer remind and reify the fact that place and time of settlement are important elements in what makes up a person's identity.

Lee J. Cuba (1987) examines the label Alaskan as it relates to the meaning of place in the identification of Anchorage, Alaska. The process of becoming Alaskan involves a residential identification that borrows from the imagery of the early days of the Alaskan frontier (1987:xvi). Cuba maintains that the concept of a sense of place is critical in understanding both frontier and core (i.e., mainland USA) and in emphasizing the marginal nature of the frontier. The frontier becomes a "repository of valued cultural symbols" (1987:155). He states that an integral part of who Alaskans are is derived from where they live (1987:160). Cuba sees places as "repositories of images that shape expressions and guide behaviours" (1987:168). These images are critical elements and therefore more than simple products of individual actions.

Researchers use the terms pioneer, oldtimer, traditional woman and feminist interchangeably when outlining and comparing the experience of early generations of women who settled in the Canadian wilderness. The literature in which these terms are embedded includes 1) records and personal accounts of Canadian pioneer women, and 2) community case studies which provide a description of women who settle in one resource communities such as mining and logging settlements. More current literature uses the terms traditional woman and feminist to describe contemporary Canadian women within the context of generational studies of the domestic and wage-earning labour of housewives and single women.

The shared values of north island women who identify themselves as pioneers and oldtimers are similar to that of other Euro-Canadian women who settled in the wilderness as pioneer women, established family based settlements and built towns in largely uninhabited regions in Canada. Women's diaries, journals and letters, as well as stories and sketches of professional women writers, provide important historical documentation of the earliest pioneer era in Upper Canada between 1840-1900 from the perspective of women pioneers

(Traill 1929; Ballstad 1988; Conrad et al 1988; Peterman 1983).

These vivid and detailed descriptions of first hand accounts of women living in the bush portray pioneer women as competent women (McMullen 1990) who adjusted to a formidable and untamed landscape. For example, Langton's journal (1950) records details of the domestic lives of three women, a daughter, a mother and an aunt, who were pioneers in the Ontonabee area of Ontario in the early nineteenth century. The three women are portrayed as coping with the challenges of backwoods living with initiative and imagination. They also participated and played significant roles in the development of the local community. Like the journals and diaries of other pioneer women, Langton's account reveals the centrality of family, community relationships and networks of women.

Early women writers (Herring 1914, 1913; Schlissel et al 1988, Schlissel 1983), who pioneered western Canada, describe the later settlement of western Canada and the importance women pioneers placed on similar values to those of earlier pioneers who settled in central and eastern Canada. Current research on western Canada demonstrates the unique

contribution made by women to a resource frontier (Brown 1980; Jackel 1982; Silverman 1984; Sundberg 1986; Sunberg and Fairbanks 1983; Van Kirk 1992, 1980).

Historical accounts of Euro-North American women's experiences on the frontier in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century seem to be in agreement: once women arrived and engaged in settlement, they were culture carriers, community organizers and civilizers (Jeffrey 1979; Schlissel et al 1988). In civilizing the west, women created institutions such as schools, churches and charity associations. They also secured a social order in which domestic virtues and family life could flourish (Harris 1984; West 1987). In achieving these goals, the impact of women on frontier life was far-reaching. As Julie Jeffrey (1979:186) notes, women looked at the wilderness and built churches, men looked and built saloons.

Before the coming of women, the wilderness and frontier were perceived as influenced exclusively by single males and their values. Women were perceived as community organizers who protected the morality of the family unit by the building of churches, schools and hospitals (Griswold



1988; Jameson 1984). Pioneer women are described as heroines who endured hardship and were self-sacrificing (Fairbanks 1986:96). The world view of taming the wilderness and homesteading on the frontier promoted a sense of freedom and adventure for both women and men (Bledsoe 1984; Gresko 1992; Perkins 1922; Schlissel 1982, 1981).

Like earlier pioneers and oldtimers who settled in other regions of Canada, north island women view themselves as frontier women who are culture carriers, community organizers and civilizers. Likewise, north island women perceived their presence on the north island as shifting the ethos of the frontier wilderness from that of single males to families. Like earlier pioneers and oldtimers, north island women were committed to establishing the centrality of family life in the wilderness.

The labels pioneer woman, and to a lesser extent, oldtimer, are widely used in fictional and non-fictional literature to describe the experience of Canadian women. Thompson (1991) and Fairbanks (1986) argue that the pioneer woman has become a recurrent and uniquely Canadian character type in fiction. The fictional Canadian pioneer woman is

characterized by self-confidence and the ability to adapt to adverse circumstances cheerfully. This profile is documented, but not analyzed, in the personal accounts of Canadian pioneer women. These non-fictional accounts of pioneer life describe periods in the lifetime of pioneer women who lived in the Canadian wilderness (Fairbanks 1986; Godsell 1959; Pinkerton 1939; Thompson 1967) or participated in the establishment of towns or provided social services in a region (Colley 1970; Copeland 1960; Taylor 1955). These anecdotal records are descriptive accounts of the effects of landscape on the character and lifestyle of women. However, these accounts do not focus primarily on the landscape nor do they provide an interpretation of the construction of identity attributes from the perspective of pioneer women.

Fairbank's (1986) description of the experience of women pioneers on the prairie is particularly significant for my research in that she focuses on the lives of generations of in-migrating women. She traces the portrait of prairie women in fiction and non-fictional accounts and characterizes them as belonging to three waves of women who settled on the prairies. These waves of women are similar to north island

women in that the first wave were pioneers, the second wave, like oldtimers, built towns and the third wave were involved in regionalization. These three waves of women participated in the three major stages of frontier life on the Canadian prairie, making the transition from isolated life on a homestead to participation in small-town life and finally to active social and political life throughout the prairie provinces.

While Fairbanks provides rich descriptive data which identify these women as belonging to three distinct immigrating groups, she does not analyze the relationship between these groups of women. Moreover, she does not focus on the impact these groups of women had on each other. In my dissertation, I argue for a more analytical perspective which focuses directly on the social construction of identity from the perspective of women. The interconnectedness of generations of women and their impact on each other is no longer embedded in the description of women's lives but becomes the focus of analysis.

In describing the lives of women, Fairbank's work includes mention of the landscape of the prairie itself -

soil, crops, flowers, trees, animals, birds, wind, rain and temperature - as well as the distance of the horizon, the flatness or rolling qualities of the landscape and the intensity of the sky. Fairbanks concludes that the new topography of the frontier demanded new attitudes, values and techniques. This was particularly true in the case of women, as they adjusted to the change from the city to the wilderness. While many women were unable to adapt to the prairie landscape, others adjusted and grew in a sense of belonging. Fairbanks does not explore in detail the meanings women associated with this sense of belonging. Moreover, she does not relate a sense of place to a changing self and group identity.

While Fairbank's research makes a significant contribution to understanding the lives of pioneer women by incorporating spatial elements that form an integral part of the pioneer experience, her work is largely descriptive. References to landscape and the impact of women on the changing cultural configuration of place are embedded in her descriptions of the lives of prairie women. In my dissertation, I integrate spatial elements and the changing

cultural configuration of place as constitutive elements for self and group identity.

As I noted earlier in this section, current literature uses the terms traditional woman and feminist to describe contemporary Canadian women within the context of an examination of domestic and wage earning labour. There is a rich body of current literature which examines women and work (Grossman and Chester 1990). The role of women is examined in non-traditional workplaces (Allison et al 1989; Davis & Nadel-Klein 1992; Lewis 1988); in the changing employment patterns of single industry, primary resource communities (Parr 1990) and in the transformation of domestic labour (Luxton 1989; Sinclair 1992). While this literature is rich in a description of the daily work activities of women and changing gender relationships within the domestic sphere, an examination of the construction of self and group identity is absent or secondary to that of changing gender roles and work. Moreover, these studies do not examine the significance of a sense of place from the perspective of women and the construction of group identity. For example, Luxton (1990, 1980) provides a detailed examination of the transformation of

domestic labour over three generations of women living in a single industry, primary resource community in Manitoba from the perspective of individual women in each generation. Her description of the daily activities of Flin Flon women resembles that of north island women in that her first generation of women identify themselves as pioneers and her second generation women built towns.

In focusing on the various forces that shape and change domestic labour, Luxton situates the identity of women within the framework of domestic work. Her analysis of women's description of relationships within the family, roles and gender imagery is viewed through a consideration of the impact of capitalist production on the lives of women who live in a single industry, primary resource community. Flin Flon women describe the transformation of domestic place and labour from a cluster of tents and cabins during the first generation to a modern city characteristic of the third generation. While Luxton acknowledges that women saw housework as different in Flin Flon, in part, because of the location, she does not explore the significance of a sense of place and its impact on identity construction from the perspective of women.

My dissertation contrasts with Luxton's work by explicitly exploring the construction of self-identity in its relationship to an evolving sense of place.

There is current research on women and work within the domestic sphere in which women express values similar to those espoused by contemporary north island women. This research traces the role and the image of an idealized north American woman in the private and public sphere as these experiences relate to definitions of wife and mother. For most of the twentieth century, an idealized model of mother and wife, derived from the context of a white, North American, middle class has been dominant. Oldtimers on the north island espouse many of the values associated with this idealized model. For them, responsibility for motherhood and household management rests exclusively with the biological mother (Rothman 1989; Ruddick 1980). The lives of women centre on the primacy of the private domestic sphere rather than the public sphere (Lewis et al 1987) and mothering is emphasized as providing emotional, nurturing care for all family members within the home (Abel and Nelson 1990; Chodorow and Contratto 1982; Chodorow 1978; Finch and Groves 1983; Trebilcot 1984;

Wearing 1984). Being a mother is the central role of women (Glenn, Chang and Forcey 1994). This model of motherhood and the role of women within the home is clearly reflected in the values by which some north island women, particularly oldtimers, identify themselves. Oldtimer's adherence to this dominant model of mothering extends to the value that they place on wage labour as an extension of the domestic sphere (Gerson 1985; Hochschild and Machung 1989). Ideally, women work in the home (Boris 1993, 1985). Wage earning outside the home is part time and justified as a supplement to the family income (Gerstel and Gross 1987; Wearing 1984).

This dissertation provides a case study which examines the impact of this dominant model on emerging constructions of group and self identity. Newcomers, who are feminists or traditional women, contrast their self-image with that of this idealized image of wife and mother as it is expressed in the identity attributes of north island women, particularly oldtimers. They do not discard this dominant image of wife and mother. Rather, they dismantle elements in the image and appropriate aspects of the idealized image for their own use as identity attributes. Newcomers, who are in the process of



becoming north island women, consider the presence of competing models of wife and mother as a resource for their own identity construction.

North island women share values similar to other Canadian women. Like them, they also selectively interpret the meanings attached to descriptive labels, such as pioneer, oldtimer, traditional woman and feminist, as a means of distinguishing themselves from other women. However, it is in reflecting on their daily experience that north island women most clearly distinguish themselves from women who live outside of the boundaries of the region. North island women identify themselves by the fact that they live in the wilderness and are connected to in-migrating groups of women who share their own sense of place.

#### THE SHAPING OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITY THROUGH LOCAL INTERPRETATIONS OF PAST EVENTS

Recent research outlines the significance of an account of the history of a community as an important element in the construction of its current identity. Poyer (1988) describes the local understanding of a key historical event in the history of the Sapwuahfik in Micronesia as an important

element in the current identity of the community, that is, as part of its self-definition as a distinct cultural unit. In examining the centrality of history in the symbolic construction of Sapwuahfik identity, Poyer states "that historical representations articulate powerfully with concepts of local identity, such that past events are conceived as creating contemporary ethnic categories. The source of the conceptual overlap is that both sorts of knowledge, about history and about identity, draw on the same set of cultural symbols centering on religious beliefs" (1988:226).

The use of history in support of collective identity is significant for north island women. The inclusive labels of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer rely on the local understanding of three historical events: initial settlement, the building of towns and regionalization. These past events are recalled in life stories as first hand accounts by women who carry the labels associated with a specific era. Commonly held historical knowledge about these eras is credited as a significant component in the construction of collective identity.

Not only is the recognition of the significance of past events important in understanding the process by which collective identity is shaped but also important is the recognition that identity formation is not unidimensional in nature. Identity formation represents a dynamic system of interrelated components. Collective identity acquires meaning when situated in dynamic systems of social relations and consequently can be regarded as a changing, negotiable entity (Talal 1988). In the examination of my data, it is apparent that the notion of the transformation of collective identity over time is a key concept in understanding the meanings north island women attach to collective identity labels.

#### CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

While north island women acknowledge the centrality of history in the symbolic construction of their collective identity, they also stress the significance of place. In examining place as a core concept in the formation and maintenance of collective identity, my approach in this dissertation finds affinity with the humanistic approach in cultural geography (Ellen 1988; Jackson 1986; Johnston 1983; Pred 1984; Rowntree 1987, 1986; Rowntree & Conkey 1980; Tuan

1992, 1978, 1977; Wong 1992) and the phenomenological approach in environmental psychology and architecture (Korosec-Serfaty 1985; Norberg-Schulz 1986; Seamon 1991, 1979; Wyatt 1986). In the section which follows, I briefly outline the important approaches from these two areas as they relate to my work.

Cultural geographers have made a substantial contribution to the study of place. As a consequence of their attention to examining the issue of what constitutes a place and what contributes to forming a concrete place identity, significant questions can be raised regarding the connections of place identity with that of individual and group identity. In examining these connections, geographers emphasize the core significance of culture, meaning and experience. The advance of the cultural in geography signals a shift within the discipline towards the recovery of an idea of human geography which is historical and contextual in explanation and focuses on the diverse motivations of human agency. Peet and Thrift (1989:ix) note that "perhaps most fundamental to the reformulation of the place of geography within the social sciences has been the thoughtful and productive debate concerning the relation between the social and the spatial,

and whether it is, in any case, an impossible dichotomy which should be dissolved."

Current sociocultural contextualists approach the study of place within a humanistic and/or symbolic analysis. There continues to be innovative research focused on the imaginative use of art and literature as a primary source material for geographers in evoking the "sense" or "soul" of place (Eyles 1985:4; Ley 1985:415; Relph 1976). While these represent two interesting directions in which cultural geography has moved, two streams of research remain more pertinent to this dissertation: 1) a focus on the subjective meaning of space, i.e., the transformation of space into place, and 2) the symbolic components of the identity attributes of particular place identity. I will look at both of these in turn.

Research examining the subjective meaning attached to place identity focuses on the social construction of place, that is, the transformation of space into place through human agency (Carter et al 1993; Cloke et al 1994). The values attached to place and the experience of place are two central themes which permeate the literature regarding the forming of

place identity. In attempting to describe the experience of place, the meaning attached to space often merges with that of place. Relph (1976:16-17) suggests that

Geographical space is a reflection of a basic awareness of the world, the experiences and intentional links to the environment. It is the significant space of the particular culture that is humanized by the naming of places. Geographical space is not objective and indifferent but full of significance for people. It always has meaning in terms of some human task or lived experience.

What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place through experience and the assignment of value. Place is the concretion of values (Norberg-Schulz 1986). According to Relph (1976:20-22), places can be understood as centres of meaning or focuses of attention and purpose. Places constitute significant centres of experience within the context of the lived space of the everyday social world. He goes on to say (1976:34) that "places are public - they are created and known through common experiences and involvement in common symbols and meanings." Space is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning. A good example is the transformation of strange space into a neighbourhood (Tuan 1977). For Cosgrove (1984), personal experience and

subjective meaning become key mediational components in transforming space into place and establishing its interconnections with identity.

Anthony P. Cohen (1978, 1985, 1987) looks at the indigenous perception of locality in order to examine the strategies of identity management. In his ethnology of locality, he looks at the complex social differentiation within a specific locality and argues for the detailed, intensive and comparative study of segments of local particularity. For Cohen, an ethnology of locality is an account of how people experience and express their differences from others and how their sense of difference becomes incorporated into and informs the nature of their social organization and process. People become aware of their culture (i.e., locality), when they stand at its boundaries and acknowledge differences. Collective identity is a simplified and ideological representation of the community to the outsider. The collective identity labels of north island women also function to maintain social boundaries. The labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer function to maintain social boundaries between women living in a region. The label north

island woman functions to maintain social boundaries between women living in the north and south parts of the island and those living on the mainland.

Cohen (1987, 1985, 1978) describes the meaning of close social association (i.e., kinship, neighbourhood and fishing crew). He stresses that social structures are being transformed from real frameworks for social organization and action into idioms for legitimating association and for creating a rhetoric of historical and cultural continuity. This apparent continuity masks the substantial change evident in Whalsay social life. The ongoing reconciliation of the two themes of continuity and change is the essential feature of the management of social identity in Whalsay. This is also the case in northern Vancouver Island.

The issue of what constitutes a place and what contributes to forming a concrete place identity has provoked considerable discussion. Among human geographers, Yi-Fu Tuan (1977, 1978, 1992), for instance, notes that locales evolve into places when they are structured and have significance for a person or groups of persons. Anssi Paasi (1986) concludes that the essence of place identity is derived from the routine



of everyday life and the meanings that individuals associate with their physical, cultural and social environments. Edward Relph (1976) suggests that places and place identity are a product of an awareness of their deep symbolic significance and an appreciation for their individual character. Attributes distinctive to places are invested with specific social values. Human places become vividly real through dramatization. Identity of place is achieved by dramatizing the aspirations, needs, and functional rhythms of personal and group life. According to John Short, " All social actions take place in space and our lived experience is not of grand sociological categories but of small-scale places" (1984:2).

A second stream of research looks at the labelling attributes associated with a particular place identity. This approach is characterized by attention to the subjective ties between humans and their surroundings, i.e., the landscape. In examining the symbols of place identity in urban landscapes, Gary Peterson (1988:451) states that place identity, or a sense of place, embodies a notion of a symbiotic relationship between person and place. This relationship involves perceptions of the qualities that imbue

place with a distinctive character, as well as an individual's tie or association with place. People perceive places differently and differentiate between them by drawing on key physical features, cultural attributes, historical associations, experiential ties, and so forth.

Perceptions of place identity routinely become symbolized in landscapes, and these expressions serve to reinforce local identity and an individual's tie to place. Harry Garnham (1985) examined the spirit of place attributes drawn from a city's natural setting, cultural diversity, topographical conditions and general quality of life. This process of recognition of place attributes reaffirms an individual's tie to a region and provides a means for distinguishing between regions (Paasi 1986; Scargill 1985; Soja 1989, 1985, 1980). Donal Meinig (1979:456) notes that various symbolic landscapes such as Pierce Rock in the Maritimes reinforce a collective national identity and provide members with a sense of belonging. Places assume special characters or personalities associated with dominant symbols. These symbols consist of a composite set of images which are the product of people interacting with place over a period of

time, an essence that evolves from years of place making. The process of structuring and creating places is very much an historical process, the result of a long-term appreciation of the meaning of, and ties to, place (1979:457). Appreciation and meaning are embodied in systems of symbols and images through historical time. Peterson examines the importance of images, such as the frontier, which are represented in the names used over the past century for Tuscon, Arizona (1988:459). Situating the notion of place in a broad context, Konrad sees nationalistic metaphors in the landscapes of Canada and the United States as a way emotional linkages are developed between people and places, and notes "that on this map, symbolic landscapes of nationalism may be differentiated in the greater cosmology that realizes, as well as records, social identity and reality for a people" (1986:167).

While cultural geographers continue to make a significant contribution to place identity, examination of identity related phenomena - such as group and individual identification with a specific place - is still largely descriptive. Multiple use of the term "place" in the literature contribute to definitional confusion surrounding

the concept. For example, Robert Sack (1986) uses the terms specific region, place or area interchangeably, even though he acknowledges that these terms sometimes connote different geographical scales.

The attempts of cultural geography to more closely define the concept of place is receiving current attention from anthropology. Recently, Rodman (1992:640) acknowledged that the concept of place is a problem in contemporary anthropological theory. She contends that place is often viewed as merely location and argues for a more theoretically rigorous understanding of the concept of place. Current literature in anthropology and geography focus attention on the need to examine more closely diverse perceptions of the relationship of built environment to natural environment from the perspective of individuals or groups with competing views regarding the social construction of place (Agnew and Duncan 1989; Lawrence and Low 1990; Munn 1990; Rodman 1992). Agnew and Duncan (1989:2) identify one of the challenges presented by this enterprise as overcoming a theoretical fragmentation in the meaning of place which narrowly conceptualizes place as either location, locale or a sense of place. They argue for

treating these three aspects as complementary dimensions of place.

In addressing this issue from the perspective of contemporary anthropological theory, Rodman (1992) agrees with the necessity of a theoretical shift towards viewing place in its multidimensional aspects. She calls for a rethinking of the concept of place which would draw attention to the multilocal and multivocal features of socially constructed places and argues that "empowering place" conceptually requires attention to its "politized, culturally relative, historically specific, local and multiple constructions" (Rodman 1992:641).

#### CONCLUSION

Ethnicity and sociocultural studies share several common understandings regarding the construction of collective identity and the process of identity maintenance over time. Both acknowledge that collective identity is socially constructed and use a framework which gives primacy to the process of self-identification by the group. Identity attributes are isolated and examined for internal variation in meaning and use. These understandings, along with the

transformation of collective identity attributes over time, are important themes in the construction of identity labels by north island women.

Cohen's (1987, 1985) research on local perceptions of locality is an important work. He observes that indigenous perceptions of locality in the Shetland Islands create a rhetoric of historical and cultural continuity which masks substantial sociocultural change over time. Perceptions of locality are viewed as integral to the collective identity of Shetland Islanders.

My dissertation fits most comfortably within anthropological approaches which examine the conceptual dimension of identity formation as the transformation of key identity attributes over time. The approaches of Spicer (1971, 1980), Glazier (1987), Plaice (1989), and Cuba (1983, 1987) are particularly relevant to my research. The research of these four authors draw attention to the importance of identity labels as collectively constructed and enduring images of a group's identity over time. Rodman's (1992) assertion that the concept of place should be viewed as a culturally relative, multiple, historically specific, and

local construction is an important contribution to the anthropological examination of place and is directly related to my research.

Finally, cultural geographers' examinations of what contributes to forming a concrete place identity underscores the connections of place identity with that of collective identity. In focusing explicitly on place identity, researchers emphasize the core significance of culture, meaning and experience.

In the three chapters which follow, I examine the collective identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer.





## CHAPTER THREE

### PIONEER WOMEN: LIVING IN THE WILDERNESS<sup>1</sup>

#### A PIONEER WOMAN'S STORY

Maxime was born on March 8, 1912 in Oakland, Washington. She migrated to the north island when she was three years old with her parents and her two older sisters. Maxime's earliest memories of the north island contain themes characteristic of the early recollections of other pioneer women who migrated to the north island as young children. Migration to the north island was cited as a response to the employment needs of fathers and a sense of adventure. Residential mobility as well as incidents of family tragedy were common occurrences.

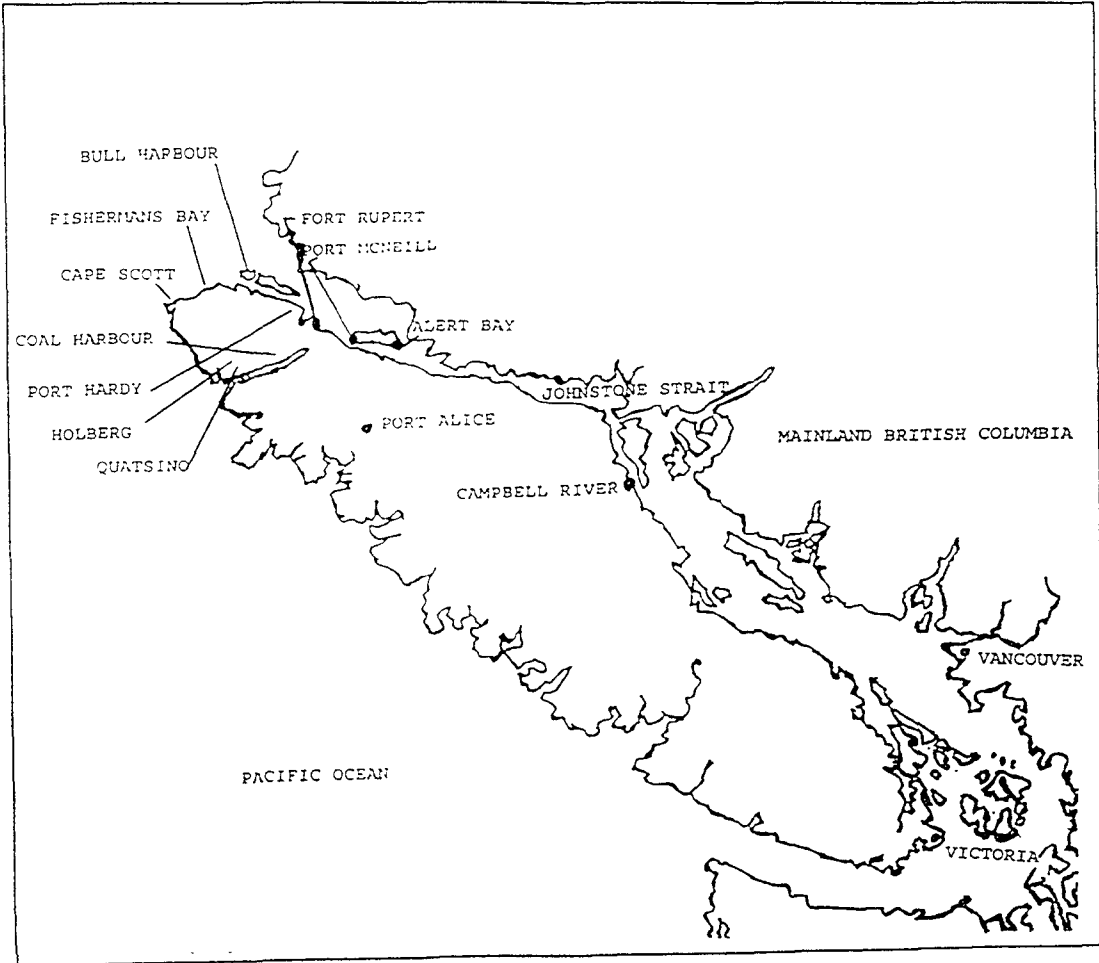
I remember coming to Canada on the train. I can remember the trees running past the windows on the train. I got all excited about that - the

---

<sup>1</sup> Due to the reticence of pioneer women in providing detailed description in their narratives, I have elaborated contextual detail at greater length in Maxime's narrative than that of the narratives of oldtimers and newcomers.

Map 1

NORTH VANCOUVER ISLAND



trees running. I guess I didn't realize the train was moving. I was three in March and we went to Canada in August. After we did get up to Canada, I can remember that the place we stayed at in Vancouver was Dad's sister. We stayed there for a few days. Then, we went up to Thornby Island. Dad had one sister living in Vancouver and another sister living on Thornby Island. That was the reason we came to Thornby Island. Dad's sister on Thornby died when, I think, I was six years old. She had a miscarriage and it hadn't come all away. We didn't stay long after she died. We came ahead onto Shushartie. I don't remember hearing why my Dad wanted to come to the north island. Maybe he read somewhere that there was good land up here or work. I don't know. I guess he was an adventurer. I guess he saw promise up here. That's the way he was. He would settle down. Then, he'd get the urge to move on. We'd move then. In those days, you could travel light.

There was popular interest in settlement on the north island at this time. This was evident in two failed settlement attempts in the Cape Scott area. In 1897 and again in 1910, Danish pioneers arrived at Hansen Lagoon to settle, raise crops and to fish. After several years of hardship, they were forced to leave the area by a combination of weather conditions, distance from markets and lack of suitable access routes to the south island. Port Hardy also felt the effects of failed settlement attempts. In 1913 and 1914, misleading

advertisements in England, the United States and southern British Columbia, by real estate swindlers, told of crown land in the midst of the prosperous town of Port Hardy. This promotion of the north island increased the population of Port Hardy from one family in 1913 to twenty-two families in 1918.

Prior to 1913, adequate transportation links to supply centres in the south were a significant feature inhibiting northern growth. By 1898, there was only one steamer a month to Coal Harbour. Port Hardy was to be the hub of the future transportation network in the area. Hardy Bay was the largest Bay on the northeast coast and only a quarter mile off the Alaskan shipping routes. Links to the northwest coast could be effectively met by constructing a road along a ten mile route to Coal Harbour. By 1904, a government wharf was built at Port Hardy. In the years 1911-1912, the federal government constructed a telephone telegraph line from Campbell River through Rock Bay, Sayward, Alert Bay and Port Hardy to Quatsino on the west coast.

In 1889, Alec Lyon arrived from Scotland and settled at Fort Rupert near present day Port Hardy. He married Sarah Hunt, the daughter of Robert Hunt, a Hudson Bay employee at

Fort Rupert. In 1904, the couple crossed Hardy Bay to found Port Hardy and open a trading store. Goods were landed at Hardy Bay for delivery to camps and settlements in Quatsino Sound on the west coast. Delivery was made by a walking trail cut through to Coal Harbour.

In 1918, Maxime and her family left Thornby Island and moved to Shushartie in Fishermans Bay. Maxime spent her middle childhood and teenage years in the Cape Scott area. En route to Shushartie, Maxime and her family stopped for two weeks in a floathouse at Beaver Cove. Maxime recounted an incident where her nine-year-old sister saved her life. In common with the life stories of other pioneers, Maxime highlighted two themes characteristic of the experience of childhood in the pioneer era: taking responsibility for a sibling's welfare was expected. Children, as well as adults, had to overcome hardships.

We came up as far as Beaver Cove on this Packer (boat). We stopped in a floathouse there for a week or so. It was a floathouse that was there and it was empty and, you know, you arrive some place and where were you going to stay? Somebody says, well, there's an empty floathouse. I was six. That's when I got the 1918 flu. It was a terrible flu. I think that I would have died from it. I just didn't want

to do anything but die. I remember my sister wasn't going to let me die. I wouldn't eat anything, so she got a can of milk and a teaspoon and she was pouring this into my mouth. There was nothing I wanted more than to have her stop doing that so that I could die. I wanted to die because I thought then I wouldn't feel sick. I would feel better then. I suppose that I might have heard them talking about the fact that I might die. That's why Gloria was insisting that I have this milk. It's possible that might have saved my life because I heard later that a lot of people died of dehydration with that flu.

Fishing, logging and trapping were carried out on a small scale locally on the north island. The region was populated largely by single male prospectors and loggers. For example, the Lyon General Store in Port Hardy served over one hundred prospectors who travelled from the nearby Nahwitti Valley. Port Hardy continued to function primarily as a supply station for prospectors and west coast dwellers in the area. The Bayview Hotel in Port Hardy serviced north island travellers. Residential mobility was not restricted to single male prospectors and loggers. As Maxime suggested in the following account, families readily moved throughout the coastal region.

People use to do that. They'd just take off and go somewhere. In those days, usually

somebody would have room. My Dad didn't know what he wanted to do. We'd just decide we wanted to move onto somewhere else and away we'd go. I don't remember just how many months we stayed there in Shushartie. Dad decided that he would like to build a house somewhere for his family. So, we went over to what was called Cascade Harbour on one of the islands not far from Shushartie, six miles or something like that. We only lived there for a couple of years. It was too hard with a rowboat and it was on the outside coast and the stormy weather. We had one neighbour. Our neighbour had a sawmill and he used to cut lumber.

In common with the life stories of other pioneer women, Maxime described how mobility throughout the region was possible because of a simple lifestyle and the self-sufficiency of family units. A key feature of pioneer life was the isolation of women from each other. Women of child bearing age were often isolated from other adult women. Maxime cited this isolation as one of the reasons why her mother remained in Shushartie near her young married daughter.

It was pioneering, that's what it was. I know other people who would go out to some island and build a house and grow gardens and feed chickens. You'd just make an odd dollar here and there to buy the staples. In pioneer days, you were used to being isolated. You didn't think you were isolated. You might have to go for miles to find a neighbour to talk to but that's the way it was. Dad wanted to see the whole country. Mother didn't like it too much,

particularly when he decided they had to walk somewhere. In that way, I think she liked the isolation of Canada because there was just no place to get out and walk to. I don't suppose we would have stayed up there so long if my sister hadn't gotten married there. After she got married, mother didn't feel that we should go and leave her with so few people around. Her having babies and such. We'd never be able to get back and forth and visit her or anything like that. If you went somewhere once a year, that was a big trip.

Then, when I was ten, we moved to Fishermans Bay. My sister Gloria was married to Jep and he had a place up at Fishermans Bay. He had a big log house that had been built there. That was quite a comfortable place too. That's where we moved to. There was also a store building too. He had a store there. In the meantime, the people that he had had up there looking after things, they had left and gone to England. They were English people and had wanted to go back to England. And so, the place was empty for awhile. We were suppose to go up and look after the store. When we got up there, the store had been looted pretty well of everything. I guess they figured that no one was coming back. He didn't build it up again. There wasn't that many people. They ordered it (i.e., supplies) up themselves after that. We stayed there a couple of years. There were more people there than in Shushartie. There were enough to have a school. That's why we went up there. They wanted more families up there, so this school wouldn't close. That's one of the reasons for going. There was my brother Don and I and my sister Gloria. That was three more kids, which was half of what was needed for a school in those days. They just required six children, in those days, for a



school in out of the way places. With a school up there and a house to move into, it looked pretty good. It wasn't all that far away because there was a trail up there and you could walk down if you had to. You could walk from Shushartie to Fishermans Bay.

Because of the small number of families in the region, children were often isolated from other children. For Maxime, living close to other children was a positive feature of life on Fishermans Bay.

By 1922, a network of walking trails extended from Cape Scott to Holberg to Coal Harbour and Port Hardy. The life stories of pioneer women recounted that the presence of overland transportation routes, via walking trails, was considered an important asset for family based settlements. These trails provided a means for social linkages and minimized the effect of isolation. Maxime recalled the impact of walking trails and pathways on her sense of place as a ten year old. For Maxime, the north island was a place where pathways connected isolated family dwellings.

And there was a road up from Fishermans Bay to the schoolhouse and to Holberg, about twenty miles from Shushartie to Fishermans Bay. I never did go over the trail but my mother and father did. They use to do it once in awhile. We were the only family right in Fishermans Bay

but up the road about half a mile, there was a man and his wife. They didn't have any children. A couple of miles further on at the crossroads, the school teacher lived. He was a bachelor. The road went down to the school on the lagoon the other way. A little past where the school teacher lived, there was an old man. He lived alone. There was a family, Donaldsons, who had two children going to school. There was some people up the other way on another road but there was no school children there. Mr. and Mrs. Vick. He and the boys use to go to work. So, there was just Mrs. Vick and her daughter there most of the time. They'd go out and make money enough for groceries, I guess. Down by the school, there was a family that had four children going to school, when we were there. Then, at the Cape, right out at the sand neck, there was a family that had four children going to school. So, there was quite a few of us there. That was considered quite large for us, having come from an isolated island. Nine children. We didn't know what to make of all those children at first. So many children to talk to all of a sudden.

Few teenagers lived in the Cape Scott area when Maxime was an adolescent. However, the teenagers who lived in the region of Port Hardy/Coal Harbour/Cape Scott took advantage of good weather conditions to visit other teenagers. They used walking trails and small boats. In common with the life stories of other pioneer women, Maxime described how her family travelled to other settlements for recreation. Older

teenagers, travelling with peers, often took along their younger brothers and sisters. These excursions afforded opportunities for Maxime to become acquainted with other teenagers. It was under these circumstances that Maxime first met her future husband in 1926.

I was back living in Shushartie, when I met my husband. A bunch of them had got in a little boat and come up from Port Hardy to Shushartie and we had a dance. I can remember that he could dance some in those days. Of course, he was thirteen and I was fourteen and he hadn't started to grow then. But could he dance. The young people from Port Hardy would get into a gas boat and come up to visit us, a new family, in Cascade Harbour. We had an old phonograph that wound up by hand and everyone would dance. Of course, we would go down too. My father rowing in his old skiff. In those days, the kids went to the dance too. The entire family would go. Someone had a big room in a big house. I remember that when we got tired, we would go to bed. It was quite an experience. It would be quite an outing, rowing down all that way, staying a day or two and then, of course, rowing back again. There was the lighthouse on Pine Island. I can remember them rowing in from there and visiting. It was quite a chore to visit in those days.

There weren't all that many teenagers in the area. I didn't have many teenage girl friends. I was a shy person, you know. When I lived in Fishermans Bay, there seemed to be three girls who seemed to like me. They'd come and talk to me and all that. As far as putting myself forward, I wouldn't, you know. They seemed to

like me alright but my conversation was yes or no. When you are taught to speak when your spoken to, that's the size of it. My sister Gloria was quite a little chatterbox. I think she was one of those people that you couldn't keep quiet. Of course, she might have gone to school in the United States when she was very young. She was a few years older than me. So, she had a lot more people. A lot more people to talk to when she was real young. Where we lived, there weren't kids right close where I could visit back and forth. When teenagers got together, we would sit and talk very properly, as I remember. Go for a boat ride and go visit somewhere. Of course, mother or my older sister would have to go along to chaperone. It was always very proper.

Each family member made a contribution to the self-sufficiency of the family unit. Maxime outlined the difficulties and opportunities present for teenage girls to contribute to family wage earning.

When I was a teenager, there was a cannery in Shushartie and when the fish buyers came around, that was quite the thing. Dad managed to get me a little skiff of some sort and I would go and fish myself because I was big enough. My sister and I, we each had a boat. Gloria's seemed like quite a long one to me. I was glad I didn't have that one. I had a smaller skiff and that was quite a lot easier to handle. We didn't catch a lot of fish but I remember getting spring salmon that was 23 pounds. That wasn't big in those days. We only fished salmon for to sell. You more or less worked the tides. You'd fish for a few hours when the tide was slack and when it got running

too fast, you'd go in and rest and maybe go back out again when the tide changed. You wouldn't get many fish. I remember getting two or three at the most, Gloria and I. Dad, of course, would get more. He got some very big spring salmon. I remember a couple when we were living in Cascade. They were huge. I figured they weighed around a hundred pounds. I didn't mind fishing. I didn't think too much about it. I liked being outside. We would wear ordinary clothes, nothing special. One summer, we used to make bread and sell it to fishermen. There wasn't too many ways to make money then. And so, it was quite the thing to find a way to make a little money then. We made two pound loaves. My sister Gloria and I and Dad, all fished together in the same area in this Pass. Ordinarily, Gloria and I stayed together in the same area. We were the only teenage girls in the area and so I don't know if other teenage girls fished. I never heard how they would make a little extra money. I know down at Thornby Island, that when my older sister was doing some trolling, before Gloria and I were old enough, there were other girls doing it down there. So it wasn't all that unusual then. Like I say, there wasn't all that many ways for a girl to make money, for anyone to make money actually. Luckily, it didn't cost very much to live in those days. Not up here. If you had enough money to buy a little sugar and canned milk and tea and coffee and flour and grow your own vegetables and catch your own fish and dig for clams and get a deer. Very simple way of living in those days compared to now. In our garden, potatoes was the main vegetable and there was carrots and turnips and beets and cabbage and peas and strawberries. You had to have enough to last the winter. You had to have a root cellar to

keep the vegetables over the winter. To keep them cool and not freeze.

My sister Gloria got married before me. I don't remember a lot about my sister and the courting. I know after they got engaged, they would sometimes go for a walk after supper. I remember her wedding day. The Columbia Coast Mission had a minister on board. In fact, it was Reverend Antle.<sup>2</sup> He was the one who started the Columbia Coast Mission, the hospital in Alert Bay. He married them. There was a watchman at the cannery and he had a wife and a little boy. This lady came over and showed us how to make decorations, like big bells. She must have been quite talented. She used crepe paper to make big white wedding bells. Streamers to decorate the place. My older sister made the wedding cake. I was sixteen when she got married. She was nineteen and got married in April 5, 1927. Times were starting to get tough then. She married Murray Morset. He's from back east. I know he used to talk about the Red River Valley. I don't know if that's where he came from or what. They met at Shushartie. He was a fisherman and he came and met her. My goodness, he spent the first winter there and come the spring, they got married. That was it. Quite a romance. It made quite an impression. I was the bridesmaid. The best man was this old fellow, a bachelor who lived up there. We knew him ever since we moved up to Shushartie when we

---

<sup>2</sup> Rev. John Antle, an Anglican minister, founded the Columbia Coast Mission boat service which started running up and down the northern coast of Vancouver Island in 1905. The Columbia serviced the north island on a regular basis. The boat had a small hospital and a chapel and brought patients to St. George Hospital in Alert Bay.

were little kids. She was married in the house there and I was married in the same house eight years later.

Gloria stayed around for maybe a year and a half after her marriage. They had their own place. My older sister and her husband lived in Shushartie. We all did then. They had the old house. There was a string of houses that they built for people to stop over in when they were passing through. And then, there was the store at the other end. And then, they built a new house on the end at the back. Well, Gloria and her new husband moved into the old house, after they were married. Their oldest daughter was born before they left. She must have been maybe five months. He decided that he wanted to go and try logging. There was a friend down there hand logging and he asked him to come and so he went along. They never did come back to live up there in Shushartie.

Maxime married in 1936, and she and her husband moved to Port Hardy shortly afterwards.

My husband used to fish with his brother when he was younger and then, of course, he got his own boat. Fish buyers moved into Bow Harbour which was about six miles from Shushartie. They would deliver their fish there and they would come over to visit. When he got real serious, he come to anchor his boat there all winter in the Harbour. It was quite breezy there and so there was pretty good anchorage. When he got real serious, we were married that February 26, 1936 and we stayed on all winter. I saw him every day then. I was twenty-four when I was married.

Maxime was a young wife and mother living in Port Hardy during the transitional period between the pioneer to the oldtimer era. As the pioneer period drew to a close, the need for a more effective transportation system called for the expansion of the Coal Harbour-Port Hardy trail into a full sized road. To facilitate this development and take advantage of a more sheltered Harbour, Port Hardy was moved to the west bank of Hardy Bay near the Coal Harbour terminus. A new government wharf was constructed in 1925. By 1927, a dirt road to Coal Harbour was completed. With the construction of an east-west land corridor and new port facilities on the east coast, the region experienced slow, steady development which resulted in a community building phase in Coal Harbour and Port Hardy.

Marriage marked the beginning of residential stability for Maxime. Throughout her married life, she has lived in the same house which her husband's father brought over from the east coast of Hardy Bay to the west side of the Bay, when present day Port Hardy was established. In 1983, Maxime and her husband celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary.



## PIONEER WOMEN

We are all the same on the north island - us pioneers. We grew up the same. With the same experiences and the same hardships.

By using the collective identity label pioneer, women recognized each other as sharing a set of common north island experiences. These common experiences were described by pioneer women in their life stories in cultural themes associated with age, time of arrival in the region and on settlement patterns. The pioneer period extended from 1849 to 1940. This period was associated initially with the arrival of single males and later with the establishment of small family based settlements scattered along the east and west coast of the north island. In this chapter, I am particularly interested in examining the period of settlement associated with the arrival of contemporary women pioneers, specifically, the period from 1900 to 1940. It was during this later period in the pioneer era that the population of the north island changed from a focus on single white men to family based settlements. After 1900, white women arrived on the north island in small but increasing numbers.

While white women settled on the island near the end of the pioneer period, native women of the Kwakiutl nation have lived in the northern region of Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland for over 5000 years<sup>3</sup>.

Significantly, for future white settlement, the Kwakiutl nation developed a main east-west corridor for native trade on northern Vancouver Island. The route extended as a footpath from Beaver Harbour on the east coast to Quatsino Sound on the west coast. It was this same geographic advantage which later played a critical role in the founding of Port Hardy and Coal Harbour as permanent sites for coastal communities. Initially, the first paths for the exploration of Vancouver Island centred on the south and west coasts. As a consequence, the northern region of the Island was one of the last coastal areas to become known to Europeans. Permanent coastal residences did not occur until 1843 on

---

<sup>3</sup> When I asked my informants about their relationship with native women, they responded that they did not have extensive interaction with them. There was some limited contact between north island women and native women. These interactions were friendly but not well developed. Unless specifically asked, references to native women did not surface in my contacts with non-native women on the north island.

Vancouver Island, with the establishment of Fort Victoria as the administrative and supply centre for the Pacific operations of the Hudson Bay Company. As American pressure on British territory increased, Britain, to ensure her territorial integrity north of the forty-ninth parallel, granted the Hudson Bay Company proprietary rights to Vancouver Island in 1849. These rights included a mandate to ensure permanent settlement on the island.

Pioneer women settled in the area as children or as young brides around or prior to World War One. As Maxime's life history testified, at this time on northern Vancouver Island, white women and family based settlements were scarce. In common with the life stories of other pioneer women, Maxime highlighted two key themes: in childhood and later in child-bearing years, isolation and mobility were common features of family settlement patterns.

Pioneers took up residence in the region at a time when only footpaths and waterways connected isolated settlements and homesteads. In their life stories, pioneer women described the pioneer era as a time of interconnected footpaths and waterways. This image integrated several key

themes in the life stories of pioneer women: isolation, residential mobility, the building of family based settlements and self-reliance. The image of interconnected footpaths and waterways conveyed a sense of belonging and identification with place which characterized pioneer women.

The connection between groups of women was one of the key elements used by pioneer women to structure their life stories. Pioneer women used the label pioneer to distinguish themselves from successive groups of in-migrating women, that is, from oldtimers and newcomers. In their life stories, pioneers used a temporal framework, based on a distinction between successive eras, to compare and contrast a period of time when, (1) few white women were present on the island with that of an influx of white women during the oldtimer and newcomer eras, (2) homesteads were isolated with that of the building of towns, and (3) residential mobility with that of permanent residence.

Pioneer women also used the label pioneer to establish connections between themselves and subsequent in-migrating groups of women. All pioneer women characterized themselves in their life stories as being the first group of in-migrating

white women to settle in the region. They were perceived by other north island women as elders. Age was an important feature which identified pioneer women. Chronological age was significant for them primarily because it related to social age, that is, the number of years a woman has lived on the north island. Due to this social longevity, these older women were admired by north island women as reservoirs of knowledge about the natural environment and the early history of the island. This knowledge was thought to be based on a cumulative and continuous experience with north island life as it evolved over the past 90 years of Euro-Canadian settlement.

As well as distinguishing themselves from women who settled in the area at a later date, pioneer women also saw themselves as the first in a successive and interconnected line of white women who settled in the area. In the following account, a pioneer woman was characteristically adamant about identifying herself as one of the first white women in the area. She was born on a Bay near Port Alice in 1902 and moved to Quatsino when she was nine. The eldest of six children, she married a fisherman when she was nineteen and moved to

Coal Harbour when her eldest child started school. Recently widowed, she lived alone in Port Hardy near a married son.

My family pioneered this area. We were part of the first group of homesteaders. One of the first families here. I came here when I was nine. There weren't a lot of white families up here then. We settled the area. I guess you could call me a pioneer. I was here early on. One of the first women in the area.

In conversation with pioneer women, I consistently asked them to express more clearly why it was important that they be considered among the first white women to settle on the island. In typical reticent fashion, women didn't elaborate on their own personal significance but described the impact of the group of pioneer women who remained on the north island. In common with the life stories of other pioneer women, a pioneer commented on the impact of the presence of pioneer women: the arrival of pioneer women had a significant impact on the development of the north island and this impact was felt at the present time.

I guess you could say we were responsible for what happens now. We started things. If it weren't for us women coming and staying, the north island wouldn't be the way it is today.

In their life stories, pioneer women described early settlement patterns as characterized by isolation, residential mobility and a scarcity of white women in the region. These three themes were consistently used to contextualize the experience of being a pioneer woman living in the wilderness.

As recounted by Maxime, many families or young married couples at the turn of the century were originally attracted to the north island by land development advertisements placed in newspapers in Europe and the United States. In their life stories, pioneer women gave two reasons for coming to the north island: employment for husbands and fathers and a sense of adventure associated with living in the wilderness. A young newcomer reiterated these two themes as she narrated a commonly circulated story about the arrival of a well known pioneer family in the region.

Dinah's parents came over from England. He had a good job with the government there but he wanted adventure. They had read about good agricultural land in the British newspapers and sold everything they owned to come and settle here. To settle in the wilderness. They sailed around the Horn and settled in Varney Bay. Imagine giving all that up to come to the wilderness.

Dinah was one of nine children of Ethel and Henry Varney who settled in 1897 at the mouth of the Marble River at Varney Bay. She was born in 1907. When women discovered why I had come to the north island, they frequently expressed regret that I had arrived too late to meet Dinah. She was considered to be the ideal pioneer woman. Stories about her life and recent death circulated throughout the community. Her death was frequently described as fitting for the ideal self-reliant pioneer in that she died alone in the wilderness. She was tending her garden just a short distance from the spot where she had been born 75 years earlier. Although she had been living in Coal Harbour for a few years, she would still boat out to Varney Bay several times a week to attend to her garden. Dinah was admired by other women for her ability to maintain an extensive garden in the wilderness.

While many pioneer women came to the north island as young children, other pioneers came as wives. In the following account, a pioneer woman recalled her first impression of the north island. Like other pioneer women who moved to the north island as a young adult, her earliest



recollections of the north island were of the hardships of living in, and adapting to, the wilderness.

I met my husband in England after the first World War. He had come over to England to serve in the British Navy. He was living in Port Hardy then. I was a young widow with one child and I left everything behind to come with him and my son to this wilderness. I came over as his bride, a month after we were married. He wanted to live here and I was his bride, so I came with him to this wilderness. At first, we lived in a shack. There were trees all around. It was quite a shock being in the wilderness, after being in London. It took me awhile to get use to that.

Pioneer women credited each other with changing the north island from a territory of single, white male adventurers to family based settlements. In their life stories, they described the time before the arrival of white women as a period when the ethos of the north island was dominated exclusively by the lifestyles and values of single, male adventurers. Prior to World War One, single men seeking adventure and employment were attracted to the north island in large numbers. During this period, the population consisted primarily of single white men who were prospectors, fishermen, loggers or adventurers. Each pioneer settlement had a number of both transient and permanent bachelors living in the

community. As a consequence, many pioneer women grew up hearing adventure stories of the north island from bachelors who visited their homes.

In the following account, a pioneer woman described the impact of bachelors on the socialization of children. She was born in Vancouver in 1910 and moved to an isolated Bay near Fort Rupert when she was eight years old. Along with three brothers, she lived in floathouses and moved to successively more isolated Bays in the area until she was fifteen years old. Then, with her parents and a younger brother, she settled in Port Hardy. In common with the life stories of other pioneer women, she viewed the opportunity to meet bachelors and hear their tales of adventure about life on the north island as an advantage of living in the wilderness. For young girls, bachelors and the stories of their frontier adventures served as models of self-reliance.

My Dad liked to travel from place to place. He would get the urge to travel on and the family would pack up and we would go. There wasn't a great deal to pack in those days. Once, we stayed in this Bay where there was only one other family and two bachelors. These bachelors had gone through a lot and could tell you adventure stories about their lives on north Vancouver Island. You could hardly

believe what had happened to them in their travels. Everyone liked to hear their stories. Bachelors were welcomed by everyone. We would all sit around and listen to their stories.

As I stated above, a transient population of single men, such as prospectors, loggers and fishermen, dominated the white population prior to World War Two. Settlements of white families were isolated and small. In the following accounts, two pioneers reflected on the impact of the scarcity of women in the area. One pioneer described her first residence on the north island when she lived in a temporary logging camp on the northwest coast near present day Port Hardy. A second pioneer described living in an isolated Bay near Coal Harbour.

I was eight when we moved from Vancouver to the beach area. My Dad was logging then and we lived with the crew. There was four kids in the family and the only other family living nearby was one family. I was lucky because the other family had two daughters who were younger than me and I got to play with them. And my mother had another woman to talk to.

There weren't that many adult women around. We were at one end of the Bay and there was another family at the other end. We were only ourselves.

The scarcity of white women and girls and isolation were two key themes in the life stories of pioneer women.

These two themes were consistently used to identify a need for independence and self-reliance. This was reflected in the following explanation given by a pioneer woman:

There were few women here and so you had to learn to depend on yourself. Often there weren't other women around to be dependent upon. Even if other women were around, they didn't interfere. They encouraged you to be independent.

In their life stories, pioneer women maintained that the scarcity of white women and the non-interference of neighbouring women encouraged the development of self-sufficient family units in which women developed qualities of independent, self-reliant behaviour. Socialization for independent behaviour was reinforced in young girls by modelling behaviour on that of their mothers and older sisters. Two pioneer women recalled their childhood and reflected on the response of pioneer women to the scarcity of other white adult women and isolation. Both commented on how their mothers rarely complained about isolation. Adaptation without complaint was the normative response of pioneer women.

My mother was alone most days after we went to school. Alone with the baby. If my mother was

lonely for other women, she didn't say anything. That's just the way it was.

I lived in an isolated Bay near Port Alice for a few years. There was only one family there and an old bachelor who lived in a cabin about two miles away. My mother was very lonely for women friends but there was nothing to do about that. And so, she just made the best of it. She kept busy and didn't complain. That's just the way it was then. Lots of women were off by themselves for weeks at a time.

For pioneer women, self-reliance was expressed in behaviour which stressed the values of self-sufficiency and stoic endurance. The value placed on independence was evident in pioneer women's perception of the role of wife and mother. Maxime reflected on the necessity for self-reliant behaviour as a wife and mother:

Pioneer women had to be strong women. There was often no other women around to help. And, often, men were away working. It was up to the mother to provide for the family and keep them safe. Times were sometimes hard. You expected that. If you didn't make do for your family, then who did?

Pioneer women described the ideal woman as an independent, self-sufficient person who was able to care for the family in the absence of a husband. Marriage was held in high regard and was the normative adult status for women.

Ideally, a married woman viewed herself as a partner with her husband. She provided a high quality of material and emotional well being for members of her family. It was by alternating styles of complementarity and non-complementarity in her daily interpretation of the roles of wife and mother that the pioneer woman assured the maintenance of this quality of family life.

The concepts of self-sufficiency and stoic endurance were connecting themes across the life stories of pioneer women. This was evident in the hardship stories which were contained in their life stories and also circulated widely in the community. The ideal pioneer woman was described as one who endured in the face of hardships and did whatever needed to be done, even in the face of adversity. A pioneer woman recalled her childhood as a time when her mother endured hardships:

Times were hard then. It was the Depression, I guess. I was just a kid. I remember us kids working each day in the gardens. Mom and Dad did the hard, heavy work. And Mom must have been pregnant a lot of the time but she worked right along side of us. In the house too. The only woman there with just my father. She had to help clear land, to do whatever needed to be

done. The lot of women in those days was hard work.

In their life stories, women frequently asserted that their individual experiences and behaviours were similar to those of all pioneer women. This solidarity with other pioneer women in the area was most often expressed in the key phrase: "It was the same for all women." For example, pioneer women described each other as adapting to hard times in a non-complaining manner. A pioneer summarized her feelings and that of other pioneer women by stating:

Life on the north island was hard for women.  
But I'm not complaining. It was the same for  
all women. That's just the way it was.  
Everyone was the same.

Self-reliant behaviour was most clearly expressed in self-sufficiency. The ideal pioneer woman was competent in performing all the tasks associated with the roles of wife and mother without the assistance of other women. Competency implied individual self-sufficiency on the part of pioneer women and non-interference on the part of other women. Therefore, women intruded on another woman's presentation of competency as wife or mother only in circumstances associated with lack of experience or physical disability. For example,

at certain points in the adult life cycle, older women intruded on the performance of younger women. In the following accounts, two pioneer women described incidents connected with child care and the assistance of neighbouring women. In the first instance, the woman was a new mother and had no experience caring for infants. In the second instance, the pioneer woman was temporarily disabled due to an injury.

I came home from the hospital in Port Alice. Me and my baby. We were alone because my husband was fishing all day. I had never taken care of a baby before. I don't know what I would have done but a neighbour woman came in every day. She just came and I watched her and I knew how to do it. Then one day, she stopped coming. I guess she figured that I knew enough to be on my own.

Here I was all laid up with a bad foot and three youngsters. Two women nearby took turns helping out. They didn't have to be asked. Back in those days, that's the way it went. Women knew when to help and when not to help. Everyone's house was the same. The work was the same. And so, a neighbouring woman could take over if she had to without any fuss. You knew the work would be the same as if you did it yourself.

In a third example, a pioneer recalled an incident which took place in the hospital and was associated with the premature birth of her first child. She outlined an important



feature of adult learning for self-sufficient behaviour, that is, the learning of new skills was largely experiential and based on observation and initiative.

I didn't know anything about caring for babies when I had him. He was little when he was born. I was in the hospital in Port Alice. They took me there and I didn't know how to care for the baby. And I didn't know how to ask the nurse. But, this nurse came in every day and took care of the baby and I watched. The hot water bottle. She would put in the bottle with him. She never told me why but I thought maybe he needed it to be warm. And him so little. So, when I came home, I kept putting the bottle in with him all the time. I don't know if it was right or no. No one told me. I just did it then because I thought this nurse wanted to teach me but didn't have the words to say what it was.

The child rearing practices of these women nurtured an attitude of self-sufficiency. Children were socialized to be self-reliant by an emphasis on independent behaviour which stressed personal preference and autonomy. Individual choice was valued throughout the life cycle. By encouraging individual preference as the normative motivation for behaviour, north island women emphasized self-sufficiency and independence. Maxime recalled that the nurturing of individual preference was important when raising her three

children. The value placed on socializing children toward autonomy was most evident in discussions with pioneers about rules imposed by parents on child behaviour. For example, in reflecting on the after school activities of her two boys, Maxime was adamant about the lack of rules for conformity associated with their daily routines:

I never tried to raise them alike. Each child was different and grew up different from each other. You just did your best and they grew up which ever way seemed best for them. They had different personalities and they wanted to do things different from each other. We encouraged that.

This pattern of parents placing value on individual autonomy was consistent with Maxime's recollection of her own childhood. Maxime outlined how she developed a growing sense of her own autonomy through the exercise of individual preference:

I didn't like to play sports at school or to be outdoors in cold weather. I liked my books and to watch what others were doing. My sister was different. She was a tomboy. Either way is alright. No one tried to make it different. Nobody in the family wanted it different. We each went our own way.

Pioneer women maintained a strong sense of independence as adults. The value that was placed on

independence had an affect on the nature and form of networking with oldtimers and newcomers. For example, there was a general consensus among oldtimers and newcomers that pioneer women sought the assistance of other women in the community with reluctance and only in the case of exceptional need. In the following accounts, a newcomer, living in the area for ten years, recalled two incidents which occurred in 1980 when she was living in Quatsino. Both incidents illustrated the value placed on independence by two older pioneer women who were her neighbours. In both examples, she described the need of pioneer women to view competency within the household as bound up with self-sufficiency. When assistance was requested outside the household, it was important to first approach kin rather than neighbours. Competency was maintained within a kin relationship, if possible, rather than between non-kin households.

It was very important for these pioneer women, my two neighbours, to be self-sufficient at the subsistence level. They would go into Coal Harbour by boat to get their groceries every few months. People were very careful that they never ran out of staples. You could always borrow from a neighbour if you ran out but this was considered poor planning on your part by the pioneers. They never said anything, but

you could tell they didn't have much respect for a woman who did that. A competent woman never ran out of staples, even though she only got in to get groceries every few months.

Granny lived alone and is very independent. She broke her leg last year wading out in high tide to snare a log for firewood. Her nephew couldn't come to help her for a few days. So she did it herself rather than ask her neighbours for help.

Households attempted to be self-sufficient units at the subsistence level. In the pioneer era, children were expected to contribute to household self-sufficiency by their labour in the household, the garden and by fishing. Girls were competent in household tasks by their early teens. Individual preferences, as well as personal initiative, were encouraged. In the following accounts, two pioneer women illustrated the scope of this self-sufficiency. In the first instance, a pioneer woman recalled an experience in early childhood when she was encouraged to experiment with cooking. In the second instance, a pioneer woman commented on the necessity to contribute to the household. She suggested that teenagers contributed to the self-sufficiency of the household by maximizing both their skills as well as their individual interests.

I remember the first apple pie that I baked. I must have been eight or nine. I told my mother that I wanted to bake a pie. I asked my mother what to do and she told me what to put in it. Then, she left me to do it. She said pure spice but I put in red pepper. No one said a word but the next day, my brother-in-law said no thank you, he didn't want a piece that day. I never made that mistake again, about spice in the pie.

We were all the same then. Us teenagers. Money was hard to come by. Families often lived far apart. You might not meet other teenagers that often. Everyone was expected to carry their load. You never thought about it. That's just the way it was then.

As stated earlier, pioneer women expressed self-reliance most clearly in their notion of self-sufficiency. This notion had a behavioral component that was displayed in reticence. In their life stories, pioneer women defined reticence by focusing on notions of privacy and neighbourliness. Good neighbours respected one another's privacy. A good neighbour helped to maintain privacy between households and thus encouraged self-sufficiency. A friendly attitude toward close neighbours was expressed as non-interference in the household of individual women. This non-interference did not imply coldness or inattentiveness to the needs of neighbouring women but was rather more aptly

described by an oldtimer as "watchfully waiting" for women to indicate a readiness to interact. In the following accounts, Maxime spoke of this reticence as she described her relationship with her fifty year old neighbour. Then, her neighbour, an oldtimer, reflected on their relationship.

We have been neighbours for over 30 years. We talk to each other over the fence and occasionally she will drop in and bring me some preserves or say hello. Once in awhile, she asks if I want to go with her and pick berries down the road. She's a good neighbour and I know that I can count on her in an emergency. But I don't go over there for tea. She has her life and I have mine. I don't interfere.

I've been neighbours with Maxime ever since I moved up here. She's getting old now and can't do as much. Her husband can't help because he's sick now himself. She worries about him, I'm sure, and I worry about her. I try to keep my eye on both of them. But I don't interfere. No, for sure, not. They wouldn't like that and would think I was quite unfriendly.

Non-interference assured that pioneer women maintained a recognized degree of independence in carrying out their daily routines. They accepted help when necessary but this was done with great reluctance. In the following account, a pioneer commented on being driven to town weekly for groceries by a oldtimer in the village. In conversation with me, this

pioneer woman frequently expressed her reluctance to become dependent on other women to complete her daily tasks. In order to maintain her independence, she was considering leaving her home of forty years and moving to Port Hardy where she would not have to rely on neighbours.

I would like to move to Port Hardy in the next few years, even though I like it here and have been living here for over forty years. Coal Harbour doesn't have a grocery store now and I have to rely on oldtimers to drive me into town every week. If I lived in Port Hardy, then, I could walk everywhere. I could get my own groceries. It would be better. Everything would be there for me. I wouldn't have to rely on anyone.

Non-interference was also manifested in notions of privacy, particularly, in reticence in self-disclosure. In their life stories and in conversation, pioneer women were reluctant to disclose information about themselves as individuals or their relationship with family members. Oldtimers, in introducing me to pioneer women, frequently cautioned me about asking questions regarding feelings or personal reasons for behaviours. While all pioneer women expressed some reluctance to disclose personal information, one pioneer woman was particularly outspoken about her

reluctance to disclose information about herself or her family. For example, she refused to disclose her age, stating that the government, via health and social services, try to take away your independence as you get older. Her attitude was that the less interaction with municipal authorities or with outsiders, the better the situation for individuals and their households. Reticence in disclosing personal information was expressed most clearly in her response to my questions regarding her feelings and attitudes about relationships in her family. She summarized the feelings of other pioneer women when she stated:

I don't talk to my own daughters about my relationship with my husband. And so, I certainly wouldn't talk to strangers about it. What happens in the home is kept within the home. It shouldn't be of interest to you, an outsider. I don't understand young women. They talk so much about themselves. Now, what good is that? You should just get on with it and do what has to be done.

The majority of pioneer women were more willing to talk about aspects of their personal lives after we had already completed several interview sessions. But for all pioneer women, the maintenance of privacy, both personal and in relation to the household, was an important value. In their



life stories, an emphasis on maintaining privacy and neighbourliness were two key components for the expression of self-reliance by pioneer women.

A third key concept for understanding self-reliance was that of complementarity in the roles of wife and mother. In their life stories, pioneer women described a complementary and a non-complementary interpretation of their roles as wife and mother. These two themes were consistently used to highlight the fact that the ideal pioneer woman was competent in both male and female work related roles in the home and in the wilderness.

Dinah was considered to be such a woman. Stories circulated widely in the region about this ideal pioneer woman and her competency in both traditionally recognized male and female work domains. At the age of fifty-seven, she was operating a twelve mile trap line through the wilderness and had nineteen cougars to her credit. She was an excellent seamstress. When she went to Coal Harbour for her weekly supply of groceries, she was meticulous about her dress, carefully carrying fine clothes in her small boat and changing out of her boating clothes at a friend's house. An oldtimer

and a newcomer described the competency of Dinah in performing male and female work tasks.

In certain respects talking to Dinah was like talking to a man. She could do the work of a man both in the bush and on the boats. Men respected her knowledge and ability. In fact, she was even better than most men in some things. She could do all women's chores well too. Her gardens were known throughout the district.

She was a true north island woman. The kind who could survive perfectly well in the wilderness by herself. Without help. She had all the skills. She had all the skills and determination of men and women pioneers. Women didn't specialize in women's work in those days. Pioneers couldn't rely on anyone other than themselves.

The interchange of male and female work related roles was circumscribed by age and context. Pioneer women took on male work roles only in the absence or incapacity of males to do the task. When men were available to do tasks, pioneer women modelled their behaviour on that of complementarity in relationship to husbands and fathers. This overall competency in the performance of male and female roles developed throughout the life cycle of pioneer women. Competency in fulfilling male tasks was evident early into adolescence by which time most girls were competent at subsistence tasks

related to fishing, hunting and woodwork. The performance of these tasks by young adolescent girls was related to family need as well as personal preference. In the following accounts, two pioneer women recalled their adolescent years.

I use to go out salmon fishing with my brother. Both of us in our own small skiff. Dad would be fishing nearby. Anything to make a little money. There wasn't too many ways to make money in those days if you were a teenager. Money was scarce. It was the same for everybody on the coast. All us teenagers were in the same way.

I remember once coming back with my Dad in the boat and my shooting of a deer for the meat. You had to be careful not to ruin the meat when you did that. So, you had to know what you were doing. I was only a young teenager then.

The ideal pioneer woman was competent both in the domestic sphere as well as in subsistence tasks related to the outdoors. As such, she projected an image of self-reliance. Key stories, which circulated in the community about the lives of several pioneer women, formed the basis for an ongoing discussion by women about qualities associated with an image of the ideal pioneer woman.

Dinah was one of the pioneer women in the community who epitomized the concept of the ideal pioneer woman.

Because she never married, her competency in both male and female work tasks was even more evident to the community throughout her seventy-five years. A newcomer recalled the range of Dinah's competency:

Dinah was an excellent seamstress. She could make clothes from magazine pictures without looking at a pattern. She was very fashionable. When she came to Coal Harbour for her groceries, she would look like she just stepped out of a Vogue magazine. She had a magnificent garden out at Varney Bay. People still go out there to look at it even though Dinah's been gone a number of years. Not only was she competent in doing traditional women's work but she could survive quite well by herself in the bush.

Pioneer women, as wives and daughters, performed male tasks when male kin were absent or not available. In the following account, a newcomer commented on this pattern of situational complementarity as she reflected on the behaviour of a daughter of a pioneer woman. Then, Maxime commented on the need for complementarity in maintaining self-sufficient households.

I don't understand her. She can use a chain saw and fish as well as her husband. She used to fish by herself before she got married. I know she liked that. When she lived with her Dad, she did the work of a man, of a son. She still uses the chain saw when her husband isn't

around. But now, when her husband is around, she lets him do all those tasks, even though she could probably do them better herself. She just stands back and lets him take over. It doesn't seem to bother her one bit.

I use to go out fishing with my husband until the babies came. I worked along side him and did the same work that he did. Then I stayed home. Someone had to care for the little ones. I never missed the fishing. Some women liked fishing and couldn't wait to get back to the boat but not me. I didn't like the boats even though I could do the work. By the time the youngest was old enough for me to go out, my husband was into lumbering. So, I never did get out fishing again like my younger days.

The pattern of situational complementarity was a common thread in the life stories of pioneer women. In taking on male tasks or helping out with a husband's employment, women sometimes suspended personal preference. The ability to do a task independently and well, even if it wasn't a preferred task, was an important component of competent adult behaviour.

Pioneer women created peer based networks with other women. These networks were voluntary and included oldtimers and newcomers. Not surprisingly, the participation of pioneer women in this network of women was egalitarian. Pioneer women consistently refused to be placed in leadership positions. As

well, their participation was task related. Pioneer women were reluctant to join volunteer associations other than those associations supported by oldtimers. A pioneer commented:

I belonged to the WA (Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital) since it started. One of the women, an oldtimer, asked me to join. I help out by knitting for the gift shop but I never go to the meetings. They do important work and I like to help out but I'd never want to be in charge.

In summary, pioneer women described four features in their life stories to identify themselves as pioneer women. First, pioneer women were over sixty years of age. Thus, they represented an ageing cohort of women. Second, the majority settled in the area as children or as young brides at a time when white women and family based settlements were scarce in the region. Third, in their childhood and child bearing years, isolation and mobility were common features of the settlement pattern. Fourth, women in this cohort identified themselves by the label pioneer women. They accepted the categorization as both meaningful to them and as a marker which differentiated them from other women on northern Vancouver Island, in particular, oldtimers and newcomers.

These four features were associated with values which were critical to the meanings women associated with the label pioneer. These values included: 1) the acquisition of social age with its implication for the accumulation of experiences of the north island, 2) being present in the first cohort of a successive line of in-migrating women and thereby establishing family based settlements, 3) accommodation of the employment needs of husbands and fathers through patterns of residential mobility, 4) responding to a sense of adventure and the lure of the frontier, and 5) developing strategies for self-reliant behaviour by emphasizing the components of independence, reticence and competence.

In the chapter which follows, I examine the label oldtimer. Arriving at the end of the pioneer period, oldtimers represent the second group of in-migrating north island women.





## CHAPTER FOUR

### OLDTIMER: DOMESTICATING THE WILDERNESS

#### AN OLDTIMER'S STORY

Margaret was born in Everett, Washington in 1920. She lived with her parents and her younger sister in a lower middle class Scandinavian neighbourhood until her marriage to John in 1940. She described her childhood and adolescence as a period in her life when she "put her roots down in a sheltered environment that was almost totally family and church orientated." As a teenager, Margaret was part of a circle of ten friends who participated in group activities such as rollerskating parties and hiking.

After high school, the girls I went around with usually went right to work. That would usually be secretarial or clerking. There were a few that I can remember, who got married right after high school, at the time of graduation, but that was quite unusual really.

Margaret became interested in skiing along with mountaineering. It was while joining a group of young people who were forming a Ski Club that Margaret met her husband

John. He was operating a ski store in the winter and skiing competitively. In the summer, he worked at his father's lumber yard. Margaret and John became part of a small group of friends who skied regularly in the winter and John became part of a group of Margaret's friends who went rollerskating. They were the first couple among their group of friends in the Ski Club to get married.

We were married in June 1940 and Janet was born the following September. Then, Johnny, my son, was seventeen months after that and Joel was three years. Janet was the first grandchild. At that time, she did have a great grandmother. My sister has never had children. So, on my side of the family, my children were the only ones and Johnny was the only one in his family. My children got spoiled good. They had two grandmothers fighting over them and who was going to take care of them. I never had to worry about baby-sitters. My mother and dad never interfered in anything when I was pregnant. I was skiing right up to the last minute. I've got pictures of me. I'm as big as a house. If it worried my parents, they didn't say anything. I don't recall doing too much rollerskating but we skied. I felt so good that I didn't worry about it. I guess some people might have worried but I didn't. The doctor thought it was a good idea. I had such an easy time. The doctor told me that that was one of the reasons why. I was in such good physical shape. Johnny was born and I think that it was two weeks later that I climbed Grouse Mountain. That's before they had the ski-lift up that mountain. We walked

all the way up there. I was always good at walking, hiking and climbing. I never had any trouble getting up the mountain. There was no difference in how I felt before or during my pregnancy. I wouldn't know what it was to have a hard birth.

When Janet was three and Johnny was two, Margaret and her husband moved to an army base in California for a year until John was discharged from the army. This was the first time that Margaret lived at a distance from her family and friends.

I didn't look forward to going down there to California. It was like camping out. We didn't take very much stuff with us. We were just living in a little trailer. But, I enjoyed it when we were down there. We lived in a trailer court that was all army personnel. They had USO stations and craft classes and things to do. There was plenty of things to do. Everyone was in the same situation.

Before our children started school, I think we let our kids take more of a chance than my parents ever let me take. They got to do a lot more things. They were pretty much on their own. We didn't try to fight their battles for them. That's the main thing. That's something I can remember my mother trying to do. The kids have to work out their problems themselves. They definitely had to be back at a certain time and stayed within bounds even when they were little. They always played in their own yard. The kids came and played with them. But we always did have neighbourhood

kids in our yard or in our house. We were always very close to woods when the youngsters were growing up. They use to take picnic lunches and go out in the woods. One time, I remember that Janet came up walking from the woods carrying this animal by the tail. It was the most horrible looking thing you ever saw. She said, " Mommy, look, this is dead. What is it?" It was a possum. I said, "Janet, put that down." I was never that concerned about animals so I wasn't that taken with it. She was never afraid of any animals or anything. So, she takes and puts it down and is going to show it to her Dad when he comes home. Of course, when her Dad got home, the possum was gone. He wasn't dead. He was just playing possum. He was very much alive. Another time, when we moved up into Varney Bay here on Vancouver Island, the crew just about had a fit. We all lived in a cabin over at Varney Bay and the men had wives there then. So, there were two or three women besides myself. One of them was the cook then. And our kids were here during the summertime. Janet comes storming into the cabin one day saying "Mommy, Mommy, look what I found. What is this?" And she was holding a great big huge water snake. And those women just about climbed the walls. They had a hard time forgiving her for that. She was just being curious. She's always done this. I never tried to stop her from being curious. She's like her Dad. I would never ever be doing anything like that.

After 1947, Johnny quit all competitive skiing. He skied with the boy scouts and the camp fire girls. Then, we skied only for fun. We skied as a family more. Then, we came to Canada and after that, we didn't go skiing.

Margaret came to the north island for the first time in the summer of 1952. Her earliest memories of the north island contained themes characteristic of the life stories of other oldtimers who arrived as young married women. The themes of hardship and personal challenge were woven through her description of the circumstances surrounding her decision to come, her arrival on the north island and her first experiences of adjusting to the wilderness. In common with the life stories of other oldtimers, Margaret described her reason for coming to the north island as a response to the employment needs of her husband. The decision to migrate was influenced, in part, by a spirit of adventure. Like other oldtimers, Margaret's initial response to the decision to settle on the north island was reluctance and dismay. However, she went with her husband and adapted positively to the north island. Margaret's first impression was consistent with that of other oldtimers. She perceived herself as being isolated in the wilderness.

Johnny was operating a sawmill down in the States and he ran out of lumber. One of his workers had a brother or some relative who was in the Real Estate business in Seattle. He said, "Well, Johnny, there is all kinds of

timber for sale up in Canada." So, Johnny said, "Come on, let's go and look at it." So, they got hold of the fellow in Seattle and it was suppose to be in a place called Varney Bay and, of course, they didn't know where in the world that was really. They knew it was up on the north end of Vancouver Island some place and they went into Vancouver and no planes were coming up this way then. I guess there were planes that were going in but they missed the flight or something. So, they hired a charter flight and flew up. Well, they had maps and so they knew where they were going. The pilot gets over the Bay and he says, "Well, I think that's the place down there," and he points down to Dinah's house. It's in this little Bay. They had quite a time deciding whether he should land or not. Finally, he decided to land and he did. That was way out from the shore and away from the house. Here comes this woman in a canoe rowing out to them. She was quite irate that they were landing there and wondering what they were doing. In the meantime, I'm ahead of my story. She had advertised this land for sale. So, they had sent a telegram up there to Dinah saying that they were arriving but they didn't realize the country. Of course, the telegram sat in the Post Office in Coal Harbour. She only came over once in every ten days to pick up her mail. So, she didn't have a clue that anyone was coming in. She was a lot like those other people up here at that time. She didn't want anyone coming in and infringing on her property. They spent a good half hour or so explaining to her who they were and why they were coming up before she ever let them come out of the plane. She finally consented to take them in and they came in and looked at the property. They must have sent the plane back.

I think they stayed overnight eventually. They were so fascinated by all this monkey business up here. Johnny came home telling his family about this woman who was living in this house way up in the wilderness and off the water and she had a gun at every door. The kids were absolutely fascinated by this. The country was wild. There was nobody, only the earliest settlers living here at the time. Me, I was just standing there gritting my teeth because I didn't want to leave. Like Johnny told you, when I get settled in one place, that's where I want to stay. I had a real nice home down there, really nice. Just taking and packing up and going up! Well, anyway, we talked all this over and finally, we settled on a deal. Johnny had a partner at that time, and they bought the land. He moved all of the stuff they needed to operate the Cat on a barge and came up here. He took our oldest son Johnny with him and they were establishing camp. He brought his own crew out.

When they were all established, well then, we came up and spent the summer here. That was in 1952. Janet and I came up on the plane. There was a plane that did come up and land at Port Hardy at the Airport. When we first came up here, when you would take a plane from Vancouver to come up here, you knew immediately who was going to be on the plane. They were the scruffiest looking people that you saw hanging around the airport. They were the ones who were boarding the plane you were boarding on. Never any women. It was all men. They were all loggers coming up here. They were tough and rough looking. The first time we came up here, we didn't know what we were getting into. We landed in this great big field and there was this great big empty hangar

there. No restroom, no coffee shop, nothing. There was suppose to be a charter flight there for Varney Bay. They didn't know anything about it. We finally waited around and couldn't get any information. Pretty soon somebody came and said, " Well, I think I'm suppose to take you over to Varney Bay." So, we got in this small plane and we landed over in Varney Bay, Janet and I. In the meantime, Joey and his Grandpa Jack - we called him Papa Jack - were coming up on the old freighter that use to come up here. As we landed in Varney Bay, they said, "Well, the freighter is coming into Coal Harbour. We just passed it." So, we hurried and got into our boat and dashed into Coal Harbour to meet them. I had never been much in boats and all this monkey business, airplanes, and then, boats and coming over here. This big old freighter pulls into the dock down here and the crew starts getting off of it. They are the most scruffy, most disreputable looking men you ever saw in your life. Just like you'd see in the movies on these pirate ships. At that time, everybody had short hair and their hair was long with beards. There was one guy there that had a patch over his eye. I thought, my lord, what's my child been into? He wasn't in the first grade yet and he was on the boat with his Dad. He had had the time of his life! They'd given him the run of the boat. He'd been up with the captain and helped steer the ship. It was really something. Then, we all got united.

By 1952, travel to the north island was by air or water. At the time, logging roads were not connected to each other throughout the region. With the onset of World War Two and the subsequent fear of Japanese invasion, a string of air



bases were constructed north of Campbell River in Holberg and in Coal Harbour on the west coast and Port Hardy on the east coast. An airport near Fort Rupert started operating in 1943. Subsequently, a road was built to connect the airport to the wharf of Fort Rupert. As a consequence of the presence of the base, Port Hardy received a temporary movie house and a medical clinic until the departure of the air force in 1946. The airport continued to function as a civilian airport. New families were attracted to the area. By 1949, the population of Port Hardy was 772. Like Margaret's husband, most of the population in the region found employment in the ever expanding logging industry.

In common with the life stories of other oldtimers, Margaret described pioneers as living in the wilderness and displaying reticence in interacting with newcomers. Margaret also outlined the main characteristic by which oldtimers identified pioneers. For oldtimers, pioneer women displayed self-reliant behaviour by being equally competent with male and female tasks both in the bush and in the household. Pioneer women were perceived as being self-sufficient in the

wilderness. One of the first women Margaret met, and associated with, was a pioneer, Dinah.

We spent our first summer up here in an old shack along with all the rest of the logging crew. We were all in one building. Then, there was just a short distance away from Dinah's house. We were the first neighbours that Dinah had ever had. That was an experience in itself, believe me. We had met her previous to this because in negotiating for the land she had to make a trip down to Seattle. She stopped at the house and we got acquainted with her before we actually came up. After all of these stories that Johnny came back telling me about this woman, with her gun and trapping and fishing, I expected something like an Annie Oakley type person. When she came walking in that day, why, she looked like she stepped out of Vogue magazine. She always looked very nice. When she was dressed up, why, she was really nice.

There were women up here at the time who could do the work of a man. I think that they were all genuinely pioneer people. People like Dinah and Anna. Either one of them could probably put a lot of men to shame. Good hunters, good trappers, good gardeners and hard, hard workers. Dinah was a craftsman. She could take on just about any job that you could imagine. She probably would have been very efficient at flower arrangements, decorating. She could sew. She could make her own pocket books, purses, remodel clothes. She had other talents too. Photography.

Actually it was just the oldtimers, the pioneers<sup>4</sup>, that were living here then and anybody that came in was an outsider. We were the damn yankees that came up here. It was awhile before we really were able to get in touch with the group. It was the case with anyone who came up here at that time and since. Anyone who was not a homesteader, who lived here all their lives, was an outsider. You could be their friends but they still would not accept you as one of them, as an oldtimer here. In fact, right now John and I are oldtimers here and it probably goes against the grain for some of them to say, well, they are oldtimers because by their standards they were here forty years before we ever got here. They are pioneers and they view us as newcomers even though we are oldtimers. We're newcomers no matter how you look at it as far as they are concerned and their families are concerned, even though other people call us oldtimers.

We sure had some crazy experiences over there in Varney Bay. The kids loved it. We spent three summers up here. Johnny would work in the summer and then I went back with the kids and they went to school in Stanwood. The kids were down there on three month vacations. Joey was only in the first grade when we first came up there. Janet was in about the fifth, sixth grade. Johnny would stamp logs for his Dad. He got, I think, five cents a log for each one he stamped. He was mostly conscientious and

---

<sup>4</sup> Margaret used the word pioneer to refer to the earliest white settlers in the area. She also sometimes used the term oldtimers to refer to pioneers. However, these two terms were not interchangeable for her in all instances. While pioneers were sometimes referred to as oldtimers, the oldtimers of Margaret's era were not referred to as pioneers.

so, he worked like a trooper. Of course, Joey, being so little, use to get into trouble more than anything else. Later on, why, he had his chores too. Janet use to help me wipe the dishes but not too much else really. The kids just had a ball. They had experiences they would have never had any other place and met people that they would have never met.

Johnny came up here in 1952 and we didn't move up here permanently until 1957. So, the time before that was only spent in the summertime for us here. Johnny would work maybe until November, depending on the weather. Then, he wouldn't be down there until spring again. It meant that I was the sole keeper of the house down home in Stanwood and taking care of the kids. I had full responsibility for the family then. It didn't seem to be a burden. I seemed to make out alright. I was dragging the kids all over the country. Going to basketball games and football games. Because by that time, my son Johnny was into sports. Of course, when his Dad was down there, he was interested too. We were involved with the kids, with their activities. I had a camp fire group. I'd have as many as ten or twelve kids in the car. We had a station wagon and it was always loaded down. The camp fire group were all kids from Janet's class. There were twenty of them. I did that until I moved up here. I always enjoyed the teenagers. That's the one thing we missed when we moved up here. When we came up here, Joey was little and there were only two older boys in the whole town and that was Dougie and Harry, who was quite a bit older than Dougie, and Charlie. Then, the Autman girls came shortly after but not when we were first here. When they came, they couldn't speak English at all. They spoke French but they were down at the house a lot. There

wasn't the influx of teenagers that I was use to.

We came up in 1957 like we were going on vacation. Even when we moved up here, we were suppose to be here five years, so, we just took what we absolutely needed. I left my sewing machine, of all things, down there in Stanwood and took an old fashioned one. We had a treble machine and I brought that. We took hardly any furniture at all. Everything was still down in Stanwood. Lots of it is still down there. Over a period of years, we've gradually brought up most of it. When we came up, what we brought up was just in the car. We lived in a floathouse. The floathouse came from Holberg. Johnny could tell you more about that because he went up and got two floathouses and hauled them clear to Varney Bay and they sat over there. Then, later, they brought them in here to Coal Harbour. There wasn't any furniture in it. It had a kitchen and two bedrooms, a living room and a bathroom. When we brought it over here to Coal Harbour, we were able to connect up to electricity. It was put right at the bottom of the street where the Holes live. There was a dock that extended out from there that used to be the Government Dock and that's where the house was moored up. And then, they just strung up the lines for the electricity and we got our water from here. For someone that doesn't like water, that doesn't swim, it was something. I didn't really mind it, as long as I had the family together. That was the main thing. Although I have to admit, I did use to get tired of cooking.

Like many oldtimers, Margaret accommodated her husband's employment by assisting him. As she indicated in

the following account, adjustment to her husband's employment required adaptation to contingency and residential mobility.

I was the cook for the crew. I worked seven days a week, every week of the month. This was the whole problem. It never let up. In Varney Bay, we always had lots and lots of company, people that flew in, planes. People with boats that would pass by and stop. I was busy cooking. The cook doesn't take time off when visitors come because she has to feed everybody else. I'd be cooking and then you'd wash all those dishes and then you'd go to bed. To start with, at Varney Bay, Johnny's crew were six. Over the years we never knew if we were going to have six or thirteen for supper. Later, when he was at Nahwitti, there was just about eight. I worked all day and I never especially liked to cook to start with. It was something to keep me occupied but I can't say that I really ever enjoyed it. I use to get up at six usually. Like in Nahwitti, why, sometimes I got up and didn't have any water. That would be a real problem. Johnny would have to go out and look at the water line and lots of times, it was a bear or something that had cut the water line and they'd have to fix it. I don't remember if they went to work by eight o'clock or not. I suppose. Then, as soon as you got through with breakfast and got the dishes done, you started lunch. Over here at Varney Bay, they came in for lunch. While at Nahwitti, lots of times, you'd make lunch and they didn't come back until supper. If you were baking, well then, you'd have to start baking right away. You never quit. When we lived over at Varney Bay, the store was running here in Coal Harbour and we use to come maybe once a week for supplies. Of course, inevitably, we came at noontime because we had

to get out of Varney Bay on tide. You couldn't get in or out except at certain times and we'd get over here so much of the time right at noon and they'd be closed. They closed at noon. You'd stand there and wait because there wasn't any place to go. Our supplies we picked up here and then we would take and send orders down to Vancouver and they would come up on the freighter.

Johnny logged over here in Quatsino and that was at Varney Bay and, then, we moved up to Nahwitti and that was up by Cape Scott. It was right at the mouth of the Nahwitti River. We were right in the open ocean. That was really isolated and even the fishermen were scared to go in there. So, we didn't get too many visitors up there. Then, we logged half way up to Holberg. We had a camp up there but I never was up there. The guys stayed down here in Coal Harbour in the second floathouse. It was more dangerous to be at Nahwitti than at Varney Bay. The trip up there took about two hours or more from Hardy in the boat. We had a big boat then.

When we were over there at Varney Bay the first few years, the only other women for outside company would be the Indians. At that time, the people that were on the Quatsino Indian village here near Coal Harbour were living on the other side of the Narrows near Varney Bay. It wasn't that far from where we were. Moses Johnny, he had a daughter that was the same age as our daughter. Elizabeth would come over and visited with Janet. Some of the Indians worked for Johnny too. Not that first year but later on. They were real good workers.

It was only my son Joey that came up here. The other two, Janet and Johnny, stayed down in

Stanwood because there was no high school here. They only had a grade school over here and our kids were in High School already. So, Janet and Johnny stayed with their grandmother and continued school where they had started. So, it was only Joey that was disrupted out of school. I missed teenagers and I missed my two older kids. Not to have any other kids around! That was the hardest part of it and the fact that we just had a junk place to live and men to take care of and not one man but a dozen, and so few women.

In common with the life stories of other oldtimers, Margaret described a key element in a sense of place and belonging for oldtimers. During the oldtimer's era, there was a change in the cultural configuration of the north island from that of a place dominated by the concerns and activities of single men to that of family based neighbourhoods.

This was man's country. There wasn't a man that came up here that didn't fall in love with this country. It wasn't woman's country because there wasn't anything to do. Nothing to do for women. There wasn't anything at all up here then. We had a dirt road from Coal Harbour to Port Hardy and there wasn't a dirt road to any other place. You came in by plane or boat. That was the only way you could get out of here. Port Hardy consisted of one gas station and one General store and hotels. The people, their idea of a night out was to go to the beer parlour. Of course, that's never been Johnny's or my category. Well, after that, we began to help the Community Club here. We started Community activities.



Margaret and John moved to Coal Harbour in 1957. After the war, the Air Force hangers were purchased by BC Packers who operated a Whaling Station there. The Whaling Station in Coal Harbour operated from 1948-1959 and 1961-1967. It provided the main source of income for Coal Harbour as well as seasonal work for the area from April until August. Closure of the Whaling operation was forced by a drop in the market for whale meat as human food and a shortage of whales in the immediate area. At one time, the plant employed 95 men for onshore processing and operated six boats with eleven men crews. Margaret recalled the Whaling days in Coal Harbour:

When we arrived in Coal Harbour in 1957, it was still the Whaling days. There was about 200 people living here because of BC Packers and the Whaling. A lot of the 200 people who worked for BC Packers didn't live in Coal Harbour. There were six, seven boats and they'd be out on the water, you know, living on the boats catching whales. There were maybe 25 women living in Coal Harbour and there was only a handful of little children. There were very few single women. There were only two land owners then, BC Packers and Holes. Whaling just went on for six months of the year during the summer. In the winter, only a handful of the BC Packers' people stayed behind and they repaired and replaced machinery and got it ready for the next year. There would always be whaling ships tied up at the dock.

Frank Hole's business had the transportation in Coal Harbour then. He had hookups with the airline and took the loggers in and out of the logging camps. There were water taxis too. Water taxis worked the same whether it was winter or summer.

There was no significant difference in the 50's and mid-60's in Coal Harbour. There was no significant difference until Western Whaling went in 1967. Then, the changes started to take place. Then, Utah Mines came in. John has been working for Utah Mines for over ten years. He started driving Cat and that's what he's still doing. He was on shift work for a long time, until a couple of years now. They changed him to just days about three years ago. Now, he works days and afternoons. I'm cooking all day long when he's on afternoons because Joey is living with us. He's still around. My mother-in-law lives with us now and she eats at noon and, at six o'clock, I fix my husband's meal. He eats around two thirty. There really isn't that much difference in my schedule other than the meals.

From her early days in Coal Harbour, Margaret has been involved extensively in Clubs and Associations concerned with establishing and maintaining health, educational and recreational facilities for families in the Coal Harbour and Port Hardy region. Like most oldtimers, she continued to contribute her efforts and skills to these organizations.

I've always been involved in the Hospital and the Community Club right from the beginning. I'm still involved. On the first Friday of

every month, I have a hospital Board meeting in the evening and, on the third Monday, I have a WA (Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital) Meeting and, in between, there's a Community Club Meeting. Of course, in the summer, none of that happens. The clubs don't meet really. I'm mostly involved in this community and in the hospital. I go shopping maybe twice, three times a week into Hardy. That's a quick trip, usually with a half a dozen stops. That's about it, outside of cooking and keeping house and answering the phone, running errands for everyone.

Margaret filled her days with community activities and personal interests. She has started a small craft shop from her home and has become interested in recording and gathering historical material related to the Coal Harbour region. In common with the life stories of other oldtimers, Margaret identified her family and the local community as the base for her daily activities and sense of belonging.

When I'm not at committee meetings, I work in my workshop, my craft shop. I work in my workshop mostly when Johnny is on afternoons. Everyone else goes to bed and I work here until after midnight. When he used to be on graveyard, I'd work until three or four in the morning, but I can't do that anymore. Now, it depends on what I feel like if I come in here and work. I've been doing mostly sewing lately in the craft shop. I've sold quite a few dolls. I've been making quite a few lately so that I'll have them here for Christmas and whatever. I've been getting too many dolls

around here. I don't even have room for my ceramics. I need a place three times as big as this. The new sign outside advertising the workshop has been good. I have people stopping here all the time. They are interrupting me continually. They are interested in what I make in my workshop but they also are interested in the history of Coal Harbour. They want to know about the Whaling days and the Air Force days. So, I drag out my scrapbooks and they are looking at that. I've had people from all over the country. I've had quite a few people that were in the Air Force, who were stationed here, who have stopped. I'm definitely taking their names and addresses so that we can hold a reunion party next year.

This is our home now. We hope to stay here even after Johnny retires.

#### OLDTIMERS

Margaret was readily identified by women in the community as an oldtimer. Her life history exemplified the life experiences of oldtimers in the region. In the following section, I briefly examine the attributes which identify women who are oldtimers and the cluster of values associated with these attributes.

The majority of oldtimers settled in the area during or soon after World War Two. Like pioneer women who came to the north island as adults, the primary reason for oldtimers residing on the north island was to accommodate the employment

needs of their husbands. Women insisted that the decision to accommodate their husband's employment pattern was characteristic of all oldtimers. While women expressed concern about moving to the north island initially as brides or young married women, no woman who called herself an oldtimer refused to come. Oldtimers took it for granted that a woman would agree to accompany her husband to new work opportunities.

The decision to accompany their husbands was a clear marker which distinguished oldtimers and pioneers from other women. In contrast to their decision to accompany their husbands, oldtimers cited instances where other women chose not to accompany their husbands or upon arrival refused to remain in residence on the north island. The decision to accommodate their husbands was consistent with the high value placed on the family unit by oldtimers.

Women viewed their decision as a contribution to the maintenance of the family unit, that is, they saw their role, and specifically, their decision, as holding the family unit together. In the following account, an oldtimer expressed sentiments common to other oldtimers regarding the decision to accommodate their husband's employment pattern. She was born

in Ontario in 1918. After receiving her teaching certificate, she married in 1940 and moved to Victoria. Since moving to the north island in 1950, her family has lived in five different locations.

I came to the north island because my husband got work in the area. I could have stayed behind with my children in Ontario. But what was the use of that? I married my husband to have a family life and if that meant that we had to go to the north island, well, that's what we did. Women came to the north island for the same reason, to keep the family together. If a woman is not willing to follow her husband when he came, then, why marry him? He has to work.

In their life stories, oldtimers often recalled their initial feelings of dismay at the notion of uprooting the family and moving to the north island. It was a commonly expressed opinion in the life stories of oldtimers that women were happily settled in their place of residence prior to moving to the north island. While oldtimers admitted to feelings of dismay, women willingly agreed to accompany their husbands to the north island. An oldtimer recalled the circumstances surrounding her decision to move to the north island.

First of all, my brother died in December. It was very upsetting to me. This would have been December of 1958. I was pregnant with my daughter, just beginning to realize I was pregnant. My brother died in Everett, Washington and I didn't get back in time to see him when he was alive, since I was a teenager. He had a car accident. I came back home after the funeral and that pregnancy didn't go very well because I got a very severe cold on the bus. The planes were all grounded and I had to go by bus and it was a sixteen hour trip, I guess. By January, I had this severe cold which just seemed to hang on all winter. In the Spring, I remember my husband's mother came over one day and I had had all the kids sick and my daughter had had pneumonia and I had to nurse her at home because the hospital was full of whooping cough. Everybody was finally feeling better. I said to my sister-in-law, "Oh, I could just go into the hospital and rest for the day." So, she phoned the hospital and said, "She's not feeling very well." I got kind of cross with her because the doctor said, "If she can't breathe very well, probably she better get up here." So, I went up to the hospital just to please her and ended up in an oxygen tent because I ended up with some form of a walking pneumonia. The left lung was not functioning properly and they had to blow it up. I was in for twelve days or something. My husband wasn't too happy at work at the time and I guess it upset him that I was in the hospital. He was talking to his older brother who was living up here in Port Hardy and he decided that this might be a better area up here for us to move to. So, his brother lined him up work and we came up. In fact, I wasn't well enough to do the packing. The twins, my husband's sisters, came over and did the packing for us. We got movers in to move the

furniture and we shipped it up to Coal Harbour. It was a quick decision. I went along with it because I don't think I was really well enough to realize what we were doing. If I was well, I possibly might have protested because I was happy where I was. I liked the location and the neighbours and we were right close to the school. I just went right along with it. That first day he mentioned it, I was still in oxygen. I told him why not just go ahead with it and, before I knew it, we were up here.

The life stories of oldtimers documented that to be an oldtimer required at least permanent residence in the community prior to the completion of the highway down island from Port Hardy to Campbell River. The description of the oldtimer's era as a time "when the road down island was completed" was a image which integrated several interrelated themes connected with a sense of place: (1) the end of isolation, (2) increased mobility overland, (3) the building of municipalities and, (4) self-reliance. Women also used the label oldtimer to distinguish themselves from other groups of in-migrating women, that is, from pioneers and newcomers. Using a temporal framework, based on a distinction between successive eras, oldtimers described their time of arrival as near the end of the pioneer's era and overlapping the time of the newcomers. Because of this overlap in residence with both



pioneers and newcomers, oldtimers described themselves as transitional figures.

In their life stories, oldtimers agreed that the completion of the road down island in 1971 was a critical marker which designated the end of the oldtimer's era. In the view of oldtimers, this event ushered in modern times. An oldtimer reflected on the impact of oldtimers residing in the area prior to completion of the road.

Oldtimers in the community knew the area before the road was put in. It was a different time, a pioneer time. Only certain types of men and women survived up here in those pioneer days. It wasn't like modern times. Everything comes so easy nowadays. You need to talk to oldtimers to get a proper sense of what times were like before now.

Oldtimers, as transitional figures, also shared some common experiences with newcomers due to the fact that oldtimers were present at the beginning of the newcomer's era. Because of the unique experience of being present between two eras of in-migrating women, oldtimers perceived themselves as having a special place in the social fabric and history of the north island. This was reflected in their avid interest in local history and, in particular, the role of Euro-Canadian

women settling in the area. While oldtimers recognized the special place of pioneer women in the region, they also identified oldtimers as making a vital and unique contribution to local history. Margaret assessed the impact of oldtimers on the region:

There were not that many white women in the area when I came here. It was hard for many women to stay. But those of us who stayed on, we civilized the north island. We changed it from a wilderness to what it is now.

Not all oldtimers took an active leadership role. Others focused exclusively on the household while lending support and assistance to more active leadership. In their life stories, oldtimers were adamant in assigning importance to the role of all women on the north island. An oldtimer summarized the feelings of oldtimers when she stated:

The north island would not be what it is now in the 1980s without the contribution of women. You don't have to look around far in the community to find women who contributed to the building up of the area. We, the oldtimers, know all their names and we are all part of that.

The importance of the role of women in the development of the north island was a key element in the life stories of oldtimers. Individual women took pride in belonging to this

cohort. They acknowledged a sense of their own historical importance as transitional persons following pioneers and initiating a modern period.

In bridging the pioneer period with a more recent modern phase, oldtimers viewed their role as being a reservoir of knowledge concerning the pace and direction of change in the region. An oldtimer commented:

Newcomers come with new ideas about development in the north island. The ideas usually aren't all that new. Oldtimers often attempted to do much the same thing. The problem with newcomers is that they don't know the history of the north island. They haven't lived its history. If you want to know what works or how to get things done, then, go to an oldtimer. They know how things should be done.

As with pioneers, chronological age was significant for oldtimers primarily because it related to social age, that is, the accumulation of lived experience on the north island. Oldtimers were admired by other north island women as knowledgeable about the transitional period into modern times and the building up of municipalities.

In their life stories, oldtimers consistently identified themselves as grandmothers and wives. One oldtimer, who has four children and five grandchildren,

outlined the common meanings associated with the notion of being a grandmother.

When you look around the community for oldtimers, you see that they are all married and are grandmothers. It was just the natural thing to do. Get married young and have children early on and be a young grandmother.

Being a grandmother was considered a natural but significant event in the life cycle of oldtimers. Most women became grandmothers when they were relatively young. Oldtimers readily dissociated the notion of grandparent from the concept of being elderly. Most oldtimers became grandmothers by forty years of age. The position of grandmother was held in high esteem by oldtimers. The pattern of becoming a grandmother by age forty still persisted among many newcomers. A newcomer stated:

My friend just turned thirty-nine and she is going to be a grandmother. Her oldest daughter is going to have a baby this summer. It's always a surprise, becoming a grandmother for the first time, even though you know it has to happen to you eventually. I could be a grandmother myself if my sons would only settle down and marry. A group of us were saying over coffee yesterday that women are grandmothers very young here. Most of the women my age are grandmothers already and I'm only forty-one.

Having participated in the creation of local municipalities was a key aspect of identity among oldtimers. This theme emerged in many of the life stories. A description of the creation of municipalities was characterized by: (1) de-emphasizing the effects of isolation by focusing on the establishment of family based neighbourhoods, (2) the creation of overland routes with increased mobility down island and, (3) establishing female work and social networks. These three themes were consistently used by oldtimers to describe the experience of living on the north island during the building of towns.

During the oldtimer's era, two patterns of settlement were common to the region. After moving around for several years, some families took up permanent residence in a particular location. Other families, however, remained highly mobile, living in various locations in the region. Post-war European immigration contributed significantly to the population base of the oldtimer's era. An oldtimer, born in England, commented on the reason for her family's move to the north island:

It was after the war and there was nothing left for us in England. No hope for a good future for your children. My husband was the youngest son and didn't own land. So, we decided to immigrate to Canada or to Australia. Finally, we decided to come to Canada. When we got here, they showed us pictures of different parts of Canada. We liked the idea of living near water and mountains. So they sent us to British Columbia. First, we lived in Vancouver. After, we ended up on the north island. We came to Port Hardy in 1958 and haven't moved since.

It was a common experience for families to gradually move up the coast or into the interior by living for a time in a number of different locations on the north island. In the following account, an oldtimer described her early experience of the north island. She described her first five years on the north island as a time of three residential moves in the Port Hardy region.

My dad and my brother came here in January 46 from Montreal. Mom, and myself, and my sister followed in the March of 46. We went by train to Vancouver and my Dad and brother met us there. One of my mother's sisters, who didn't move to Montreal when the family moved, we stayed with her for a few days. Then, we caught the boat to come up here. It was only boats to here in those days. It was a twenty-four hour trip up. My parents, especially my mom, were quite excited because my Mom's other sister, who lived here, had come back to Montreal in the November of 45, when my

Grandpa Murphy died. She was telling them about Port Hardy and how beautiful it was and how they lived on the beach. This was why they had decided, because of Mom and my health, they would give it a try for five years. At first, we lived on the beach. There were only two families with children on the beach, just one family with kids and us. There was a couple of married couples, like my aunt and uncle, but they had no children. They had a bunkhouse. That's where they lived and they worked at Patty Storie's logging company. We moved to Port Hardy when I was 13. I don't remember what grade I was in. I don't know why my father changed jobs. Maybe the logs were all finished on Storie's beach. I don't know. He went to work for a company which is now called MacMillan Bloedel. When we moved to Port Hardy, before he worked for Powell River, they had a hospital there that they were tearing apart to take to Alert Bay. That was the St. George Hospital. They converted the old Ambulance House into a house for us. Before that, we lived in the empty hospital. Mom was cooking for the men. When the hospital was finished and towed away, then, he went to work for Powell River. Mom never complained. I never knew if she was concerned about us living in three different places in such a short time. I remember when we lived in the hospital, I was really nervous, living in a place with so many rooms and it wasn't too clean, blood and stuff. When we moved out of the hospital, we were well out of the town of Port Hardy. We were the only house nearby. We didn't have any neighbours for a while until the company, Powell River, built four homes up there. All of the families in the four homes had children.

As an adaptation to residential mobility, oldtimers were proficient in creating and maintaining recreational and work related networks of women throughout the region. As families continued to move, women reconnected with families they knew while living in previous settlements. Thus, women created friendship networks that were interrupted for periods of time but endured as they continued to meet old friends as they moved throughout the region. In the section below, an oldtimer commented on this particular adaptation to residential mobility.

There is a group of women who move with their husbands from one logging camp to another. Sometimes, they (the women) stay in a nearby town and move along with their husbands. You get to know a group of women that way and they keep showing up as you move on. It's always good to see a friendly face as you move on. Moving around is a common experience for north island women. You soon learn to have long distance friends or you expect your friends to show up again.

This pattern continued with newcomers moving into the area. In regularly travelling by bus from Nanaimo to Port Hardy, I often had conversations with women. A newcomer, who lived in the region for ten years, reported:



I met a friend of mine in the Nanaimo bus terminal. We were surprised to see one another. She's on her way moving to Port Hardy next month and she'll be living in the trailer court nearby. I wasn't really that surprised to see her. Those of us families in lumbering go the same way and so we meet again. It sure will be nice to have her nearby. If the Camp continues, we should be living close by for the next few years.

In their life stories, oldtimers revealed that there was an assumption of ongoing friendship connected with the common experience of women who moved to different locations on the north island. The establishing of regional networks of women was a connecting theme in the recollections of oldtimers.

Settlement patterns were a direct response to the occupational pluralism of men. For some women, this pattern of residential mobility took the form of seasonal residence in an area or a movement up the coast from one logging camp to another. Two oldtimers illustrated the range of variability in these patterns of residence associated with seasonal labour.

In those days, a good wife went with her husband wherever he needed to find work. If there was work in the north island and that was where he wanted to go, then, you and your family went too. Many women moved up the coast and lived in several different logging camps

before finally settling down for good in Port Hardy.

In Coal Harbour in the Whaling Days, the population would triple for the Whaling Season. Often the same families would return year after year. They'd spend the season with us and then move down south again for the winter. You got to know people quite well that way.

In their life stories, oldtimers expressed a strong attachment to the north island. They identified two interrelated aspects of this attachment to place: the participation in the creation and development of towns and a commitment to long term residence in the area. Both of these aspects of attachment to place were connecting themes across the life stories of oldtimers.

Oldtimers cited their participation in the building of local municipalities in the region as motivated, in part, by the attitude that it was necessary to make do, that is, to provide what was necessary but lacking for the good of the family unit. In their life stories, they described how an adaptive response to contingency encouraged self-initiative and responsibility. In common with other oldtimers, Margaret stated her motivation for extensive community involvement as

based on her personal sense of responsibility in meeting her family needs.

It wasn't like you had much choice as an individual woman about it. You were responsible for your family. You did what had to be done to make it a good place for families to live. You just did it. The organization. Even if you never did it before. You learned. It had to be done and if you didn't help out, then who would?

A further consequence of the involvement of oldtimers in building local municipalities was the taking on of leadership roles in local communities. Oldtimers were instrumental in establishing community social services centred on the health, educational and recreational needs of family members. This was done by extensive volunteer labour organized and maintained by women. It was largely through the effort of a core group of oldtimers who provided leadership, and their network of oldtimers and pioneer women, that the settlement profile of the north island shifted from a pattern focused on the lifestyle of single, transient male loggers, miners and fishermen to family based neighbourhoods. Oldtimers interpreted this need for the development of family based neighbourhoods as necessary for the continued well being

of family members as well as for the effectiveness of the parental unit. Three oldtimers recalled this shift in emphasis towards family based neighbourhoods and activities.

When I first came here, there was nothing for families to do. There were no organizations for kids. The only thing for adults, other than the hotel, was the community hall. They had an occasional dance there. There were so many single men in the hotels from surrounding camps who were rowdy that I never went there. There was fighting and drinking there. That's when we decided that we had to organize something that was just for families. Something good for families.

When I first moved here, we noticed that there was little for couples to do other than go to bars or to the community hall for a dance. So, we decided that what we needed was better recreational facilities for families and couples. That's when we started working towards establishing a recreational centre here in the area. You're not going to have a strong family life if you don't do things together.

When we first came here, there was nothing to do. It was okay when the kids were real small because you could just take them to the bush. To play in the bush or to have a picnic. But that didn't work when they got older. That's when we decided that something more organized had to be done.

In the above accounts, all three women emphasized the need for municipal facilities focused on family needs. As well, each woman clearly identified the motivation for

establishing such facilities: it was the responsibility of parents to create family based environments. In the following account, an oldtimer highlighted two themes characteristic of the building of towns: local communities focused on the needs of children and were structured by the work activities of networks of women.

There was real good community atmosphere. They would put on bake sales. Everything was for the children. For Halloween, they'd have a huge wiener roast. They'd take the kids along and skip from house to house afterwards. Christmas time, it was the same thing. The women would work for two or three months ahead of time and each child in the community would get a five or six dollar gift and that was quite a big gift in those days. There was a Committee of women and they'd come to the house and ask you what your child needed and some women went out and bought the gifts and we'd all get together at Ken Holes' house, because they didn't have any small children, and wrap them. Then, they had the Christmas concert at the school and Santa Claus came and each child got a gift. For New Years, they had a big community dance and I remember that the stork donated an orchid to each woman. You'd have a sit-down supper at midnight. The women did a lot of visiting back and forth, and card playing. I've never met women that spent so much time with their children. I've never seen children as undisciplined. This is what really shocked me. They didn't appear to discipline their children. It was hard when we first came up here. For instance, ours never really got candy and, of course, the store was quite the

thing. All the women use to go shopping around ten o'clock and have a cup of coffee there. There used to be a coffee shop there and buy their candy and what not.

Everything was for the kids. It seemed to me that everything revolved around the kids and their enjoyment. Easter, Christmas, Valentines, anything that could involve a big party for the children, it was given. Everywhere you went, you took the kids. You maybe go somewhere to play cards, you took the kids and when they got tired, they just curled up and went to sleep on the bed. There weren't that many teenagers in Coal Harbour then. I think there were about seven.

The shift in emphasis towards the building of municipalities and the significant role of women in the overall process of establishing services gave oldtimers a strong sense of stewardship and pride in regional development. Two oldtimers expressed a common theme in the life stories of oldtimers: women had a significant impact on the development of the region.

The oldtimers came in at the end of the pioneer period. We changed the north island. If it wasn't for women being here in those days, the north island wouldn't be the way it is now. We brought civilization here and made it a good place for families.

Women in the north island can be proud of what they contributed to the development of the

region. Lots of women had a hand in it. Building up the area and creating towns. If you want to know how to get things done, go to an oldtimer.

Oldtimers demonstrated a sense of belonging through a long term commitment to residing in the region. This commitment was most often expressed by an identification with homesteading in the area. One consequence of this residential commitment was seen in the increased clustering of extended families. In recent times, residential clusters of three generations of extended families were appearing with increasing frequency. This was not the initial experience of oldtimers settling in the area. Most oldtimers left established kinship and friendship ties in order to move to the north island.

Most women came to the north island without knowing anyone. In those days, you left everyone, your family and friends, to follow your husband.

When you first came to the north island, you had to learn to make friends quickly. You couldn't afford to be lonely and miss your family and friends because you are alone when you come here. Alone with your family until you make friends.

Oldtimers recognized the commitment of an individual woman to the area by assessing her ability to adapt positively to the area as well as articulate to other women a desire for permanency in residence. Two oldtimers summarized the feelings of oldtimers:

This is my permanent home. When we first came here, we weren't sure if we would stay. Now, I hope to retire here. My two daughters are living nearby with their families. One daughter lives next door and the other lives down the street. I have a son who lives in Vancouver. He talks of retiring here too. The place gets in your blood.

Some women just don't adapt to life in the north island. You can tell by their attitude right off if they are going to make it or not. If they don't get out with other people and they don't get involved, they won't stay. You can't be longing for the south and for city life and really think of Coal Harbour as your home. To belong here, you have to be involved.

Oldtimers explained that a positive adaptation to the north island was an individual choice. In the life stories of oldtimers, self-reliance and social networking were two key features which characterized positive adaptation. An oldtimer traced her process towards a positive adaptation to living on the north island.



I hated it. I absolutely hated it. He came up a week ahead of me because I wasn't well enough to take the plane trip. I had been sick in the hospital. We flew out of Grand Forks. We came up and they had a little house for us. It was right across from where the old Whaling Station used to be. The Whaling Station used to be on the right hand side as you were driving down and it was originally Harry Holes father's house. He had just built that house that Harry lives in now, and my husband worked for Hole and Clarke transportation. The Whaling Station, the odour from it was just terrible. It would get into your clothes. It took me a while to get accustomed to it. It took me about two months. The water use to be just red with blood in the Bay there. They would gut the whale and all the intestines. I thought it was just horrible. When the boats came in loaded with whales, I would just shut the curtains. That wasn't the attitude of most of the other women in Coal Harbour because their men made real good money on the whales. They were people who lived there for quite a few years and you don't just come to a community and knock down what is feeding the community. The smell was atrocious and we lived right across the street from it. After a while, you get use to it. It gets in your hair and your clothing. It was real foul. You washed your clothes and put them on the line and you just watched the smoke descend on it and you knew it was going to smell.

Then, I realized that the house we had lived in before was sold and I wanted to go home. Then, I realized that I couldn't go home. There was nothing that I could do. You just had to start making a life for yourself. Then, I started to meet other women in Coal Harbour and I started to make friends. It was a very small, close

knit community at that time. Everything was for the children. You know, we use to have Halloween parties and fireworks. We lived there for about ten months and then we moved into Port Hardy and we've been there ever since.

As was the case with pioneer women, the theme of self-reliance was a common connecting thread in the life stories of oldtimers. But, unlike pioneer women who situated their self-reliance within the household and the wilderness, oldtimers expressed self-reliance within the household and the local municipality. Oldtimers characterized self-reliant behaviour as self-sufficiency within the household and frequently framed their recollection of life events with three strategies for proper behaviour. These strategies were expressed in the following key phrases in their life stories: Women are expected to carry their own load. Do not interfere in the household of other women. Taking care of your own household comes first before anything else.

Oldtimers recognized other women as oldtimers by evaluating the ability of these women to interpret and to express self-reliance within the household and its extension, the municipality. Because the exercise of self-reliance among

oldtimers was most frequently interpreted as an attitude of complementarity, the result was that the roles of wife and mother were usually described in relational terms. In other words, the roles of wife and mother were identified as complementary to husband and father.

For oldtimers, the domestic sphere, and its extension into the wider municipal community, was the point of reference for self-reliant behaviour. In addition, self-reliant behaviour stressed autonomy and complementarity with regard to other women. The concept of household, as it incorporates the notion of domestic, was central to this interpretation. The term household was not narrowly confined to the living quarters of the family but rather referred, in a more general sense, to the function of the family unit. For oldtimers, the concept of household referred to all family members perceived as living together in a residence. An oldtimer qualified the use of this term:

My household has five members at the present time. Both my sons have recently returned home. I'm responsible for seeing that everything in the house runs smoothly. That's quite a chore when you consider that I have two grown sons who do shift work and a husband who is away most weekends during the fishing

season. Because my sons are into logging and they are still single and my husband fishes seasonally, our household changes its size frequently. I have to be ready for that.

The life stories of oldtimers described a nuclear family structure as the prevalent household configuration prior to the 1970s. Recently, household management has shifted away from a focus on nuclear families toward multigenerational households and extended family clusters. Many households are now multigenerational and include elderly parents. While oldtimers acknowledged that this recent pattern presented challenges for household management, the overall response was very positive. In the following comment, Margaret expressed an opinion that was typical regarding this emerging pattern of care for the elderly and its relationship to managing the household: although adjustment was necessary, oldtimers welcomed elderly parents into the household.

My mother-in-law came from the States to live with us over two years ago. She was too old to live by herself. We were concerned about the fact that she was living alone. Having her live with us is a real adjustment for me. I had to get use to having two women in the kitchen. She fits in pretty well. My younger son really gets along well with her. We were glad to have her come live with us, in spite of the problems that it has caused, because she is

family and we couldn't care for her properly when she lived so far away.

The household was the context out of which oldtimers identified other women as oldtimers. They assumed that other oldtimers placed the same value on the concept of household. Daughters were socialized by early adolescence into a domestic competency that placed emphasis on childcare and house management. In the following account, an oldtimer commented on her own competency as a young teenager and the passing on of these values to her daughter.

When I was a young teenager, my mother and father ran a restaurant at the Seagate Hotel. So, I was in charge of the household because Mom wasn't at home at night to cook. So, I was in charge of cooking. Dad would come home from work to eat. Then, he'd usually go down and help Mom clean up. In 1951, I was fourteen, my sister was eleven and my brother was nineteen. My Mom and Dad went to California for three weeks and left us. Buddy and I were in charge of the house. He was in charge of us but I kept the house and cooked all the meals.

When my daughter was young, maybe twelve, she did the same thing as I did. She prepared one evening meal a week. She didn't like it at the time but it worked out. Now she's a marvellous cook and keeps a spotless house. The night she did the cooking, I did the clearing and the dishes. She's glad now because she sees her friends who get married and don't know how to do anything. She plans on doing the same thing

with her daughter. My daughter was very competent in the household by age twelve. When I went back to have my youngest when she was eleven, she pretty well kept house then. She was very competent. I think that I pushed her to be competent. I think that I made a very good kid out of her. When we talk about it now, we laugh. At the time, she didn't think so. We were very strict, very tough. She wasn't allowed out dating until she was eighteen. She could look after the boys. She could look after the baby as competently as a married woman by then.

Oldtimers viewed the household as providing optimum conditions for the growth and development of members of the family. Managing the household was the primary responsibility of women. The importance of the household in the lives of oldtimers was evident in the following comment made by an oldtimer about a woman who had recently moved to the north island.

She might be excellent at her job but that doesn't count for much among the oldtimers here. Her house is very disorganized and her children are not raised well. It's common knowledge around here. She should look to her own household before doing anything else outside of it. Taking care of her house and her family should come first. If she can handle both, then, that's fine. If she can't handle both, then, she should give up her job and tend to her household first.

Oldtimers described the household as a woman's place. It was from this centre that women moved outward into the community. Margaret commented on a key theme in the life stories of oldtimers: the household and its concerns were a priority in the lives of oldtimers.

I organize my day around the household. I make sure that the household is running smoothly. Then, I organize all my other activities to fit into my household routines. The household is the centre from which all my other activities start. The other women in the community feel this way about their homes too. You don't catch women doing other things if they need to do things at home. You sure wouldn't be welcomed by the oldtimers here if that were the case.

The meanings attached to the concept of household has shifted over time. This redefinition, particularly with regard to the spatial boundaries of the household, accommodated women in performance of their roles of wife and mother. By redefining the boundaries of household, oldtimers extended the expression of familial values outward into the larger municipal community.

Work was valued by oldtimers in as much as it was related to the maintenance of the values of the household. An

oldtimer expressed the interconnected values of work and the household.

A woman does whatever has to be done to help the family. Whatever needs to be done, she does it. Work becomes part of that. You work to help out the family. When you first come to the north island, a woman never knows what kind of work she'll end up doing. Living up here is a real adventure for most women. You usually end up doing things that you'd never think of. A true north island woman has to be good at doing most things.

When oldtimers gathered together to work toward a common good for their families, such as establishing recreational activities, the motivation for action was expressed as that of an individual woman associated with a particular household. Thus, collective action was related to a common community good but also reflected directly on the goals of individual women and their families. While oldtimers worked for the benefit of the community, they were reluctant to assume any responsibility for the specific households of other women other than in extraordinary circumstances. As an oldtimer illustrated in the following account, the birth of a baby or childhood illness were occasions for networks of women



to show support for individual households and a specific woman.

I remember the first time I went to coffee, I said, "Oh boy, I can hardly wait to make some money so that we can move out of here." There was dead silence. They were quite content and couldn't figure out what I was complaining about. That was only at first. I loved it there after two months like the rest of them. It's probably the same reaction I have to newcomers now. You gradually learned to cope with sickness. We did a lot of doctoring among ourselves. I was real green even with my hospital training as a nurses aide. You take someone like Betty who had six kids. Well, she knew how to treat an earache. The children came through it fine. So, I would call her or any of the women who had been there for a long time. I remember a little boy who fell on a stump and cut part of his chest open and you just learned to be there and help and support the woman until you got him to the hospital. But something like that didn't happen too often. You knew that if you got desperately ill, you didn't need to worry. Your kids were just taken off your hands. Women were there to support you in every way. They'd give you money. They'd clean your house. They'd bake for you. They'd take care of your kids. That's what I'd do in return for them. They'd swoop right in there and your wash was done. When I had my daughter, we brought my sister-in-law up but still the women were right there. You never had to ask for help. You'd just have to call a friend and say you'd have to go to the hospital and they'd come in droves. One would take the dog home. You wouldn't have to say, "Would you scrub the floor?" You'd come home and you could eat off the floors. They'd

even reorganize your cupboards - which you didn't like. There was one woman who always seemed to do the baking. They'd even do your shopping for you, if you asked them to.

Oldtimers demonstrated self-reliance by assuming responsibility for meeting the needs of the household both within the household and in the municipality. The following accounts by Margaret and Joan pointed to the fact that community involvement was perceived by oldtimers as a consequence of meeting the needs of the family. This value was coupled with the importance placed on a woman's self-reliance in meeting the needs of the household.

One of the younger mothers in the Community Club came to ask for my help in organizing a Play Group for the kids. I told her that I would talk to her about organizing it but that I wouldn't help. I did a lot of that when my kids were young. Now, it's her turn to do it for her kids. They are her kids and her responsibility, not mine. Mothers in Coal Harbour have been organizing recreational activities as long as I've been in Coal Harbour. When you are a mother with young kids, then, it's your turn. You can't turn that responsibility over to someone else.

When we first moved to Port Hardy, it would never have occurred to us, as young mothers, to expect other mothers to provide things for our kids to do while we sat by and did nothing. Your kids were your own and it was up to you to see that they were keep busy. All the mothers

were in the same boat. So, you got together and found something for the kids to do. Nowadays, young mothers are so different. They expect help in doing things that should be their own responsibility. You are the mother, after all.

Oldtimers, in common with pioneers, supported each other in maintaining the autonomy of women within their households by non-interference except in the case of exceptional need. In the following account, a newcomer, who arrived just near the end of the oldtimer's era, commented on an encounter with a pioneer which taught her one of the meanings associated with non-interference.

It was very hard coming here with no relatives nearby and several small children. I thought that I would die of loneliness. I only had myself to rely on. Finally, I couldn't stand it anymore and I went and knocked on the door of my nearest neighbour. It was a pioneer woman. She wasn't surprised to see me and already knew all about me and the kids. She told me that she had been waiting for me to come and call on her. She didn't want to interfere.

Two oldtimers explained why non-interference in the households of other women was important. Interference, other than in emergencies, indicated a lack of self-reliance on the part of an individual woman who required assistance. In

addition, being self-reliant was a challenging task that required the full attention of an individual women on her own household.

A good wife and a mother is expected to keep her own house in order without help from outside. You don't interfere in the household of other women. It isn't appreciated. Grown women know how to take care of their own household.

Why would I want to interfere in another woman's household? I have enough to do to my own. It takes all my time to make my own run smoothly. Women here mind their own business.

Oldtimers maintained the value of self-reliance in contemporary settings in extended family neighbourhoods. On two occasions, an oldtimer commented on the need for not intruding in the households of her daughters.

My daughters will be coming over for coffee later this morning. I got up at 5:00 to make sure all the housework was done before they came. I don't expect them to help. They know better than to ask. See, I scrubbed the downstairs and did a wash. Every woman is expected to care for her own household. I certainly don't interfere in my daughter's homes. They know better than to ask me to interfere unless they were really sick.

My daughter told me she'd be a little late for lunch because she had a big wash to do. I told her to get at it and come when she can. She only lives five minutes away walking. I

decided that I would not help her out even though she is the youngest. It was hard on me not to interfere because she is my baby. She's a wife now and her marriage and her home is her responsibility. She has to learn not to rely on me anymore.

Oldtimers and their married daughters did share tasks such as preserving or preparing a large extended family meal. When this occurred, tasks were equally shared among adult females. In the following accounts, an oldtimer illustrated this need for equality in the sharing of tasks as a way of maintaining self-reliance.

My daughter and I picked and made over 40 apple pies for freezing for the winter. We do it every year. Were we tired! We didn't stop until we were done. We both shared the work equally and divided the pies up equally between the two of us.

I wanted to show you a picture of our Christmas meal. We had quite a spread. My two daughters and I divided up the cooking. I use to do all the cooking but now that my daughters are married, we share it equally.

The above comments clearly illustrated a common value held by oldtimers and their daughters. Oldtimers welcomed co-operative shared tasks related to household management while carefully maintaining an attitude of non-interference in the household of their daughters.

Like pioneer women, oldtimers viewed complementarity as an important component of self-reliant behaviour. However, unlike pioneer women, oldtimers did not alternate between complementarity and non-complementarity behaviour. In general, male and female work domains remained separate. However, it was important to recognize that this difference was largely one of emphasis, that is, male and female domains overlapped and were interchangeable in certain contexts. Oldtimers preferred to isolate male and female domains except in the case of emergency or exceptional need. In the accounts below, two oldtimers remarked on this preference.

Pioneer women did all the work that men did. I wouldn't want to do that. I prefer women's work in the home. I don't want to do a man's work.

My daughter has the same values that I have about raising a family and being a wife. This summer, she's out fishing with her husband. She never got into a boat before meeting her husband. Now, she fishes with him as part of his crew. She loves it. If that's what she wants to do, then, it's OK. It's helping the family out.

Oldtimers viewed the notion of equality as an essential component of complementarity. In the words of Margaret:

In our marriage, I am the equal to my husband in everything. That's clearly understood. I think that most women in my group feel the same way about their marriages.

Oldtimers described the roles of wife and mother as complementary to the roles of husband and father. Complementarity was defined as an essential component in the creation of the partnership of husband and wife. This partnership was based on co-operation. Margaret expressed a common understanding regarding complementarity among oldtimers:

A wife and a husband are a team. A partnership. They have to work together in order for the family to be together. Neither person is in charge all the time. Both have to do whatever is necessary to make it work out. Because of this, it is important that both the husband and wife be strong and capable. You know the old saying that a chain is only as strong as the weakest link. Husbands and wives learn to rely on each other to make it work out.

Complementarity, as it was expressed in the context of households, highlighted two features about the role

performance of adult women: (1) male and female roles were viewed as ideally, if not always in actual fact, discrete from one another, and (2) these roles usually functioned in separate female and male domains.

Oldtimers considered themselves competent to do a wide range of tasks within the household and in the municipality. This competence was observed by newcomers and reflected in their comments about oldtimers. A recent newcomer to the area noted:

The oldtimers in the region are really competent. They are exceptionally competent housewives. Also, they can organize local groups and deal with the government in a way that really gets things done. They certainly are a force to deal with.

Oldtimers considered the ability of pioneer women to be equally competent in both male and female tasks as admirable but not desirable as a role model for their own behaviour. The constant blurring of role criteria by pioneer women was perceived by oldtimers as rising out of the extraordinary environmental challenges of the pioneer period. In their life stories, oldtimers explained that the behaviour of pioneers was directly related to the fact that they lived



in the wilderness. Now that oldtimers had established towns and the wilderness was retreating, there was no need for contemporary women to display self-reliance in the same way as pioneer women. An observation by Margaret succinctly summarized a commonly held opinion among oldtimers regarding the role of pioneer women.

The pioneer women around here were extraordinary, but then, they lived in extraordinary times. They were pioneers. Can they ever tell tales about that period! Tales of survival and hardship! We came in at the end of that period. I suppose, at the time, we still had a choice about whether we wanted to be like them or not. Times were hard then, too, but not as hard as it was for the pioneer women. I guess that is why we are different from them. Our environment is different. We can rely more on each other for getting things done in the community. They had no one to rely on but themselves.

While oldtimers admired the accomplishments of pioneer women in these extraordinary circumstances, the performance of male work by females was not the ideal for oldtimers. The separation of male and female work tasks was based on a sense of what oldtimers considered was appropriate as an expression of womanliness. Margaret expressed a commonly held view of

oldtimers as she commented on a key story circulating in the community about an ideal pioneer woman.

Dinah was a real pioneer woman. She was comfortable in the bush by herself. She could hunt and fish as well as any man. Better than most men. In fact, she felt more comfortable being with men than with other women. She shot over 50 cougars in her day. I really admire Dinah but I wouldn't want to be like her. I couldn't be like that - acting like a man.

The separation of tasks into male and female domains was a pervasive theme for oldtimers. Male roles are related to the non-domestic sphere. Wage labour occurred outside the home and consisted of logging, fishing, mining and small business concerns in the region. Female tasks were primarily concerned with the household. The significance of the household was symbolically as well as concretely expressed at the time of marriage. Women gave up paid employment when they were married. This was the ideal. An oldtimer expressed a common theme in the life stories of other oldtimers: the household was the centre from which all other activity emerged.

I don't understand some younger women wanting to work all day for a wage. Letting someone else take care of their kids and clean their house. That's not right. Your first

responsibility is to the home. They should realize that.

For oldtimers, the separation of men's and women's work into two separate domains was the ideal. However, the roles of men and women do not remain discrete in all circumstances, for example, in the case of contingencies such as the illness or disability of a spouse. While women recognized this discrepancy, they expressed preference for the ideal pattern of maintaining discrete roles. An oldtimer noted:

Men and women have different roles in the household but that doesn't mean that women can't do a man's work, or vice versa, if the need arises. You need to be flexible because you never know what may occur at any given time. For example, one of you could get sick. Then, it would be important that the other could make do.

Oldtimers maintained work patterns that assured a co-operative and productive partnership with their husbands in maintaining the family unit. They often worked at jobs associated with the wage labour of husbands and sons. For example, women made substantial contributions to the family business. These job opportunities were both diverse and transient in nature. As a result, the work of women resembled

the patterns of diversity present in the job opportunities of husbands and sons. The pattern of job diversity described in the following comments of two women resembled the pattern of diversity present for fathers and husbands.

I stopped teaching when I first got married. We moved west. I never did go back to teaching except for teaching my boys when we lived in that isolated logging camp. I've had many jobs in my day. I clerked in our general store and was post mistress when we had the post office in our store. Now, we are retired and I still do my son's bookkeeping for his business. He brings the books home to me once a month and he phones me when he needs advice about his accounts.

I was a secretary before I got married. So, after I got married, I use to help out in the family business. Sometimes, I would run it if my husband was sick. I did a bit of everything. Selling, typing, keeping the books and supervising the help.

Some oldtimers worked out of their own homes. Women were innovative in accommodating paid work to the constraints of the household. Two oldtimers illustrated this innovative pattern while pointing out a basic value: ideally, women's wage earning activities did not interfere with the management of the household.

I answer my husband's business calls from our house during his secretary's lunch hour and on

weekends. His office phone is connected to our home for that purpose. In that way, I can help out and still manage the house.

I do my hairdressing from my own kitchen. I have a large regular clientele. It works out well. I can earn a wage and still maintain the household.

There was an entrepreneurial quality about the wage related tasks taken on by oldtimers. This was particularly evident in their response to contingency features in work patterns. Response to contingency on the part of oldtimers served as a marker for individual women to assess their ability to be enterprising as well as responsible in meeting family wage earning needs. In their life stories, women most often justified their individual response to contingency by stating a common understanding of oldtimers associated with role performance: Women do whatever has to be done to be helpful to the family unit. This openness to respond presumed a high degree of adaptive behaviour with regard to environmental and social contingencies. Three oldtimers illustrated the proper response of oldtimers to wage labour which assisted the family. In common with newly arrived oldtimers, the first oldtimer recalled the early years of her marriage and the need

for women to adapt by taking responsibility for jobs which assisted their husband's employment. In the second account, an oldtimer approved of the behaviour of her younger daughter who worked co-operatively with her husband in meeting familial needs. In the third account, an oldtimer described the proper response of oldtimers to contingency: women are good at making do.

When we first moved to the beach, I had two young children. My husband had just started logging. So, he needed a camp cook. I got that job. The whole thing was amazing. I could never cook well and here I was cooking for a crew of men. One day, I couldn't cook and, the next day, I was camp cook. I had to learn to cook fast. The men didn't complain about my cooking.

My youngest daughter is going out salmon fishing with her husband this summer on his boat. They can sure make use of two salaries. She'll be doing the cooking as part of the crew. This is her second summer. She never went out in boats before she got married five years ago. Now, she loves it and can hardly wait for the salmon season to start.

When you are a woman and you come up to the north island, you never know what you might end up doing. It's probably a good thing too that you don't know. Women are good at making do.

The ability to accommodate contingency within the household was one of the criteria used by women to measure

another woman's self-reliance. In their life stories, women valued a positive adaptation to contingency in their daily routine. Thus, oldtimers, as wives and mothers, modified their daily activities to meet the needs presented by the scheduled and unscheduled routines of family members. Two oldtimers noted the flexibility required to accommodate a woman's daily schedule while managing the household.

The worst time is when my husband is on afternoon shift. Then, I just seem to be making meals all day. I have separate meals for Grannie and me and one for my son who works very irregular hours and another for my husband. The stove is always on. I have my own schedule for meetings that I have to go to as well. All this needs to be fit into a day, and each day is different.

I have a very busy schedule right now. I'm on the executive of two organizations. I go to the Seniors Centre almost daily. My son just asked me to babysit the two grandchildren for a week. That will take some organizing. All of these things take up a great deal of your time and energy. You never know from one day to the next how you can juggle everything that has to be done.

Some oldtimers performed occasional wage labour to supplement the family income. Ideally, wage earning was a temporary measure arising out of necessity.

As I mentioned earlier in this section, self-reliance was bound up with a sense of place. For oldtimers, a key understanding of place was a sense of belonging and identifying with the household. Oldtimers negotiated a re-definition of household to incorporate the broader municipality. As a result, the boundaries of the household extended outward to the municipal sphere. One critical consequence of this extension was the positive attitude displayed by oldtimers towards volunteering services to build up municipalities. A related consequence was the creation and maintenance of social and task related networks of women. Oldtimers did extensive volunteer work in the community. An oldtimer commented on the participation of other oldtimers in volunteer work.

In the old days, it was not difficult to mobilize the region to do a task that had to be done. Oldtimers would volunteer without much persuasion. They knew the task had to get done and they were the ones to do it.

Extensive volunteer work by oldtimers occurred during the Community Building Phase. In the following accounts, two oldtimers recalled the pervasiveness of this participation.



Both women pointed to the need for, and the widespread support given to, volunteer associations in the community.

When we organized the Medical Society, everyone knew there was a need. We really needed medical facilities in the area. We had a 95% response on the part of families in the area to join the Society.

We used to have painting and roofing sessions for the Community Hall. Everybody was involved back then. No one complained because we all knew it had to be done. We had fun. It was like a town party.

The volunteer organizations which attracted oldtimers in the area were directly involved with the educational, health and recreational needs of the family. These organizations promoted concrete programs to meet the immediate needs of family members and were viewed by oldtimers as an extension of the responsibility of the household. Oldtimers, in promoting these organizations, carried the values of the family over into the wider community. Women cited the promotion of familial values as their rationale for participating in these organizations. They did not view paid and volunteer labour as distinct from or in opposition to the household. Rather, volunteer work was perceived as an extension of familial values and by implication as an

extension of the household. In accounts below, two oldtimers expressed these views. The first oldtimer recalled that her reason for community involvement as a young mother was directly related to her role as mother and care giver. The second oldtimer recalled her involvement in a Drama Club as motivated by meeting the recreational needs of married couples.

I became involved in the Community Club and the School because of my children. They needed schooling as well as activities to keep them busy on weekends and after school. There was little for children to do. If I didn't get busy and help out, then who would?

There was nothing to do here. Nothing for adults. For couples. So, we started this Drama Club. Several couples joined. We did everything ourselves and had a great time at it too.

Oldtimers joined other associations from a wide choice of church, recreational and educational organizations available in the region. This involvement was ongoing but transient. Most women joined for brief periods of time and then became inactive or had secondary or marginal involvement. However, all oldtimers remained loosely associated with the Women's Auxiliary. A small number of women became permanently

involved and assumed executive positions, usually in a rotating fashion.

Women joined organizations for a specific reason associated with familial need and withdraw for a period of time when the organization addressed that specific need or when family obligations outweighed those of the volunteer associations. Women became involved in order to complete a specific task. They displayed initiative in suggesting tasks undertaken by the group. As well, women used these associations as a means for social gatherings.

Several features characterized the involvement of oldtimers who held executive positions in organizations. Women who work at the executive level often rotated positions across organizations. It was understood by oldtimers that women with executive ability took turns in these positions. Most women described executive positions as a burden and time consuming but they assumed executive positions in order to meet some immediate goal of the organization. In the following comment, Margaret stated a commonly held opinion among the oldtimers who rotated executive positions.

I was on the executive of the Women's Auxiliary several times and also on the executive of the Community Club. I got tired of it but the work has to be done and so I'm usually talked into doing it again. Every time that happens, I tell myself never again. Then someone comes to me and tells me this or that has to be done and I get talked into it again.

Oldtimers were recognized locally as having developed sophisticated executive level skills in leadership in organizations. These women served as resources and models for younger women in the region. Two newcomers described how oldtimers were viewed as resources.

Some oldtimers here are very skilled in organization. You just have to look at some of the women on the executive of the Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital. They administer a large budget for the hospital. They are certainly a force to contend with.

When we were beginning to organize a play group, some of us went and talked to some oldtimers. We asked them how to get funds and a place and the equipment we needed. They know everyone and have been through this before. They were very helpful in giving advice and telling us what to be careful about.

Oldtimers, who were not in executive positions, participated in such activities as canvassing and baking. They assumed that other women also have a high level of commitment to the Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital (WA).

Commitment served as a signal that identified oldtimers as bearing ongoing responsibility for nurturing familial needs. Two oldtimers, who were long term executive members of the WA, noted:

Women contribute their time to the Women's Auxiliary in a number of ways. You can always count on women to volunteer a few days in the Thrift Shop at the Hospital or go to work in the Gift Shop if we are stuck. Women know that the work of the WA is important.

When we started to canvas for the WA, we never had any problem getting all the women involved. They knew the work that had to be done and did it. You can always count on the oldtimers. They don't fool around.

Volunteer work was done for a specific purpose that was directly related to the concerns of wives and mothers regarding basic health and educational needs for their families. Two oldtimers commented:

The WA (Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital) was started because we needed a medical clinic in town. We had no medical facilities for our children. When you were sick, you had to go to Port Alice or Alert Bay or wait for the Columbia Mission Boat to come. We had no trouble getting women involved in that.

When we first came to Port Hardy, there was nothing to do for families, for adults to do together. So, a group of us got together and

started demanding more recreational facilities in town.

Most daughters of oldtimers, who remained in the region, followed the pattern of their mothers in maintaining a commitment to the Women's Auxiliary. Like their mothers' generation, these young women considered participation as a practical solution in meeting the specific needs of family members. In the following account, the daughter of an oldtimer expressed this attitude and pointed to a significant feature of volunteer work for young women: the modelling function of oldtimers and the persistence of personal initiative as a value for north island women.

My mother was on the executive of the Community Club many times. Now, she says it's my turn. The purpose of the Community Club is providing programs for children in Coal Harbour. We have no organized recreation like Port Hardy and the kids really do need to be able to play here. So, I've joined and I'm organizing a play group.

The daughters of oldtimers formed temporary alliances with other women who had similar child care needs in order to organize work tasks. These temporary alliances crossed boundaries between oldtimers, the daughters of oldtimers and newcomers. The daughter of an oldtimer stated:

Four or five of us young mothers are trying to form a play group. We all have children who are too young to go to school. We have a spare room in the school and some toys and each of us is responsible for one day's supervision. Any mother is welcome to join us.

Other women in the community recognized the daughters of oldtimers as belonging to a special category in the age cohort of child-bearing women. These younger women did not necessarily conform to the patterns outlined for oldtimers although many adopted certain values of their mothers. While many of their age cohort will be treated in Chapter Five as newcomers, they are not identified as members of this category by other north island women.

In summary, four features identified oldtimers. First, women identified themselves as grandmothers. Second, they arrived in the region near or following World War Two. Third, oldtimers provided leadership in the shift from a concentration on the lifestyle of single, transient males to family based neighbourhoods. Fourth, while they were born elsewhere, they viewed themselves as north island women and displayed a high level of identification and commitment to the region which was measured, in part, by a positive adaptation

to the region and by a desire for permanent residence. The above features were criteria by which an oldtimer recognized other oldtimers. The label oldtimer was associated with a set of three interrelated values expressed in self-reliant behaviour: (a) the importance of maintaining the family unit, (b) the building of family based municipalities, and (c) long-term residence in the region.

In the chapter which follows, I examine the label newcomer. Arriving at the end of the oldtimer period, newcomers represent the most recent group of in-migrating north island women.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### NEWCOMERS: PRESERVING THE WILDERNESS

#### NEWCOMERS: TRADITIONAL AND FEMINIST WOMEN<sup>5</sup>

The label newcomer identifies the most recent group of in-migrating women. They are usually described by north island women as feminist or traditional women.

#### A TRADITIONAL WOMAN'S STORY

Esther was born in 1948 in Holland. She was the second youngest of eleven children. Her Dad was a furniture maker. The family immigrated to Canada in 1955 and settled in Vancouver. Esther grew up in a family that was devoutly Christian Reform. Her childhood and teenage years were centred on church related activities. She attended a private

---

<sup>5</sup> The label newcomer identifies women who have recently arrived on northern Vancouver Island. The terms traditional and feminist are the most common labels used to identify newcomers. These labels have a variety of meanings, frequently overlap and are characterized by flexibility in usage.

Christian Reform elementary school in Vancouver and a public high school.

As a teenager, we went out generally as a group of teens for a church activity. There was a lot of rollerskating parties, etc. You weren't left on your own, which, as a girl, I appreciated. I didn't like the idea of being out on my own as a young teenager. By the time you were sixteen, seventeen, then, you started dating on your own. Parents were happier if you were going with a group.

Esther's parents had foster children when they lived in Holland and continued to accept foster children in Canada. The experience of living with foster children was significant for Esther in two ways. It brought her into contact with children and teens who had experiences and values different from her family. In addition, it provided opportunities for Esther to become competent in child care by her mid-teens.

When I was thirteen, we had our first Canadian foster child. She was around my age. Then, we use to have infants, babies. Then, we became an emergency foster home. We would get kids at any time - even in the middle of the night. Once, I remember we got four kids at one time in the middle of the night. They might stay a week or two weeks. There was a great variety. Teenage girls and infants. I became very attached to the foster babies. I found it very hard to let them go. I think that my interest in doing volunteer work now at the school in Coal Harbour grew out of this experience - the

experience of trying to understand foster kids who came into our home. We saw so many teenagers who had problems. My parents stopped taking in foster children when I was sixteen.

Esther came to visit her married sister in Port Hardy in the summer of 1964. She arrived near the end of the oldtimer's era. Her recollections of the region were vivid and positive. For her, Port Hardy was a pioneer area and her sister lived in the wilderness.

I had come up to Port Hardy as a fifteen and sixteen year old for two summers. My sister Nellie was up here and her husband Jake was here. Jake was working for B.C. Tel (British Columbia Telephone Company) and he was transferred up here. Then, downtown Port Hardy had a big shopping centre. That was really the only fancy building in town. That was a big thrill that year when it opened up because before that there was just a general store. There might have been 350 people here. I don't think anybody had running water then. They all had to go down to the pump on Market Street. I think Nellie liked it here. It was quite an experience but I don't think that she wanted to stay. Every two or three years, Jake got promoted and moved on. I was up two months both times - my summer vacation. I came up just as a holiday. My sister really wanted to have me up. We are quite close as sisters. I think they were having a hard time. No running water and she was expecting the youngest one. It was nice for her to have company.

My impressions of the place was that it was a pioneer area out in the sticks. By the time I

arrived, they had fresh food in with the new store. It was a fairly large store and they had a butcher shop in it which they hadn't had before. There weren't a lot of young children and families in the Christian Reform Church at that time. There were a lot of single young men working in logging and mining. It was a very small church. In the evening, you would go to Fort Rupert for the service there.

At that time, you could hear the cougars fighting in the bush. I remember there was a dead eagle. Two eagles were fighting over territory and one got killed and we found the eagle in our backyard. There was bush all around. Everyone had dogs here at that time - mainly because of the wild animals. The first year I was here, there was no paved road. By the second summer, they had paved a short distance along Market Street and that was the only pavement on the north island. That was a really big deal to have pavement there. I spent a lot of time in my sister's boat, in the old Indian dugout. I used to go and get the mail each day in the boat. I thought that was really something. I'd park it at the Government Dock and go collect the mail. It wasn't that far. Jake left the boat on the beach and anybody who wanted to use it could. It had been stolen a few times but each time it came back again. There was some organized activities for teenagers. Not swimming, of course, because there was no pool here. They did show movies. The Cafe was a good hang-out for the teens. We use to wander down there at least once a day for coke and chips. There wasn't that many girls up here then.

The Bensen Mine was open in 1963 when I was here. It was a gold mine. When those fellas were off the shift, it was close your doors.

They'd be in the Seagate Hotel. I can remember babysitting for the pastor one night and hearing a lot of noise outside and being scared and hearing the next day that somebody had been stabbed. It was a big fight. It had gone from the Seagate to the Cafe to close to the street where I was. A fella had been stabbed because the Bensen Mine gang was in town.

We came to Coal Harbour and saw the Whaling. I thought it was gross. Not only that but I felt sorry for the poor whales. I saw the process of them cutting up the whale. They had several whales there. They had a grey whale laying there and killer whales. The stench was overpowering. It was like a brick wall hitting you as you went down the hill. I really remember the smell.

Marriage and motherhood were valued in Esther's family. She first met her future husband in grade school and they started dating in 1967. Like Esther, Andy belonged to the Christian Reform Church and his parents had immigrated from Holland.

I went through part of Grades One, Two and Three with Andy, my future husband. Then, he moved on to the Christian school in Richmond. When I met Andy again, we were both seventeen. He was working by that time. He was pulled out of school to work on the farm. We met at a skating party that was put on by the church youth group in Vancouver.

There was no problem maintaining contact after we met because he wouldn't give up. From there, we went to another rollerskating party.

Then, we went to various other youth group gatherings. Within two weeks, I was taken home to mother, his mother. It wasn't love at first sight but I knew he was going to mean something in my life. There was something different about the relationship right from the beginning. It was frightening in a way. It's very hard to explain how I felt because I had managed to keep all my other boy-girl relationships strictly hello-goodbye.

There were two concerns my parents had about who their daughters might marry. They wanted us to marry a devout Christian and for my Dad, his question was, "Will your husband be able to support you?" Those were the two main concerns about marrying a husband. In my family, you became a woman when you were married. The attitude about you changed when you got married. It was completely different. I remember it starting to change just a few weeks before I was married. The difference I'm thinking of was primarily with my Mom. When I first started going out with Andy, my Dad used to talk to us, and to Andy by himself, about what was expected of us in marriage. Andy was quite open with my father and Dad was quite open with him. Andy was really able to talk to him really deep. Andy had a lot of respect for him. My Dad was able to talk to him about what was expected of marriage and what was expected of him as a husband. I think that it made our marriage a lot easier because he had all these ideals my father had put before him. Sometimes, I was there when they talked, but there were a few times when I wasn't. They had a few conversations on their own. My father probably talked about respect for me as a person. I'm sure that my father talked to him about extramarital affairs, you know, that type of respect. He talked to him about how he

would have to be the spiritual head of the house. Generally, just his attitude about marriage, I think. When I finished high school, I was working for a chartered accountant as a receptionist and became a secretary later.

In the early days of our marriage, we were expected to go to all birthday parties and to all social events that went on in the family. We went through a rough time with the church at this time and we weren't going regularly. We lived in the same area as his parents and went to the same church. So, when we missed going on a Sunday, we would get a call from his mother later in the day. She was a lot like my mom in that the family stayed as a unit whether you were married or not.

It wasn't until Andy and I moved up here to the north island that we got a whole different relationship with my parents. It was then, I think, that they finally realized we were grown up and on our own.

At the time that we were married in our church, there were a lot of young couples and we used to go out quite a bit to hockey games and go out for pizza afterwards. But Joan and Everett were the one we would go camping with on the weekends. They were special. We socialized with them on a one to one basis. With the other ones, it was like a group.

Esther had a close and warm relationship with her father whom she respected and admired. According to Esther, he was a role model for her and her brothers and sisters.

We all held my Dad in great regard. He had that quality about him. Most of us in the family have tried to model ourselves after my Dad. He's highly respected and very much loved.

When I was pregnant with David and in my ninth month, my Dad was in the hospital. My Dad had been in the hospital for ten days. I knew he was dying. One Wednesday, the hospital called to say he was dying. We were walking the halls, taking turns going in to see my Dad. In the wee hours of the morning, my Dad's doctor came in. He was also my own doctor. He became angry at my being there. He sent us home and the following morning, I was in labour. David was two weeks early. He was ready to be born. When David was two days old, I requested permission of the doctor to go see my Dad. So, we went through the tunnels in Vancouver General from one building to another and they took me to where my Dad was, but he was unconscious. I didn't get a chance to talk to him. He was aware apparently of the fact that we had a boy. Andy had talked to him and told him that and he nodded his head.

It was the winter of 1968 when my son David was born. Andy was in construction at the time and everything was closed down. Everything was shut down because it was frozen and it was unsafe to be up on the roof. That's when he got his license for the taxi. He was extremely busy trying to make money for the family.

I had no problems raising David as an infant at all. I was very experienced in child care. The only problem I had was that I looked younger than the twenty years I was. A lot of people would say this is what you have to do. They would be telling me what to do. I can



remember crying on my sister Irene's shoulder when David was very young because everybody was giving me advice. She gave me the best advice. She said what you do is, you say thank you very much, that's really good, I'll think about it. Then, you do whatever you think is right. She had the same problem. She was three years older than I was and she looked young too.

Andy changed after our marriage. He became more responsible. The real change started with Andy when I became pregnant. There was this feeling he had that said you belong to me. He became responsible. I changed too. I felt different about myself after the birth. I felt more confident. I don't know if it was because of the birth or because we were married.

David was Andy's pride and joy. He actually looked after David. When he went to work for Altran, he worked an evening shift, from four to twelve-thirty. I worked day shift. So, he was on his own with David. Andy would wake up about ten and David would have his morning nap by then. He'd get up and give him a snack and feed him his lunch and spend the day with him. Every Friday, the two of them would come into town and the two of them would have lunch with me. For a while, we had a woman babysit but that didn't work out as well.

We were very compatible about how to raise David. Andy was much more consistent than I was. I think men are like that. Andy never ever wanted me to go to work when we were married. It was a great blow to his pride that I had to go out and work. But with jobs and that many men being out of work and winter conditions, he had no choice. I had this job before I was married and I stayed at the job until I was eight months pregnant. After the

birth, I went back to work for another chartered accountant. The same kind of work. I didn't enjoy going back to work after David was born. The work situation in my second job wasn't pleasant. Finally, Andy told me to quit.

I worked at the second job until David was two and then quit. Andy and I had bought the property in Maple Ridge. We would go there during the day and work on the house and at night, he would go to work. Consequently, I wasn't fixing proper meals and I wasn't eating properly. I wasn't cooking proper meals. I'd stop at A & W and get a burger. I became extremely anaemic and started having problems with my periods. I had been on the pill and the doctor suggested that I go off it until such time that I became regular on my own. Then, I became pregnant with Sherril. There are three and a half years difference between my son and my daughter. I became pregnant with Sherril in 1976. I guess that I'm really independent. After Sherril was born, I didn't want help. I preferred just to be with Sherril, myself and Andy. He's very good with the kids. Once, when I was sick in the hospital, he took the kids with him to work each day and came home after work and made supper. Sherril was a real tomboy, a go-getter. She was standing in her crib at four months. At six months, she was walking around furniture and letting go a little bit. By seven months, she was walking all over. At nine months, she was running. I always like to take care of my own kids and not ask others to do that. They were my kids. I had them. Therefore, they were my responsibility.

Esther and Andy made two significant changes early in their marriage. They changed church attendance from the Christian Reform Church to the Pentecostal Church and they moved further away from their parents' neighbourhood.

In the church that we went to, there wasn't that feeling of closeness. It was all fire and brimstone. I'm not saying that was wrong. I'm just saying that I needed a balance. We found that balance in the Pentecostal church. We became Charismatic.

This change was important. We were very concerned with hurting the parents. We approached it very cautiously. We had several discussions with Andy's Mom and Dad at that time about how we felt spiritually. There had to be a change. They knew we weren't sitting right with the Christian Reform Church because we weren't attending regularly. I think they really didn't like to see us leave but they didn't hold us back. They were very interested. I can remember the Bible being pulled out and different points discussed. They'd say, "Well, we have a hard time with it but if this is what you believe, well, then, we will pray to the Lord for it." At this point, we were getting much closer to his parents. Our relationship was being established on a much better basis. They knew we were looking for a place out of town and were moving away on our own. It changed their perspective of us as a family. Also, many of my brothers and sisters were moving into a more Charismatic Pentecostal Church. It happened over a long period of time.

I was really surprised at my mother's reaction when I told my Mom that we were moving to Port Hardy. She accepted it. She said, "Yes, I can see that is what you need to do." She accepted it quite well. But Andy's parents were quite different. They said, "Why are you moving away up there? It's so isolated and it rains all the time and there are all kinds of Indians up there." They had never been there but they had all these impressions of the place.

Just before we moved up to Port Hardy, Andy quit his work in construction. He applied for different jobs all over. Andy sent out eight letters for employment and the first one that came back was the Vernon area. One of the people there was an old instructor from when Andy was at school. The inspector saw him and told them to hire him. So, the next day, Andy got a call saying that there was a possible job in Port Hardy. So, they flew him up here, all expenses paid and flew him back the next day.

Sherril started kindergarten when we moved to Port Hardy in 1977. When we moved up here, we realized that there would be no Christian Reform Church and even if there were, we wouldn't have gone. When we moved up here, we immediately went to the Pentecostal Church.

I had spent the summer of 1964 in Port Hardy and, the following summer, my sister moved out. So, I never thought that I would ever get to move up here. When Andy showed me the airline ticket for Port Hardy, then, I knew we were going there. That was it. However, when I got back here in 1977 and saw how they had cut all the trees away and just razed everything down, I was really disappointed. They had cut the trees away from all over town. There used to be big trees all over. Every new subdivision

they put in, they just logged it right off. Another difference, when I returned in 1977, was that there was more stores. Shortly after we came, a lot of the old landmarks were taken down. When we came, the old Post Office was still standing but shortly afterwards it was brought down. The old Lyons house was taken away and the Old Community Hall. Everything seemed to happen shortly after we were here. Port Hardy Pentecostal was the only church that had a building in 1977. I think, maybe, the Catholics might have met in homes out at the airport.

In 1977, we moved right into our present house in Coal Harbour. There was a great housing shortage in 1977. Some friend told Andy to come to Coal Harbour to check out the apartments. Then, they mentioned that this house was for rent but that it was expensive. Andy had already seen the ad in the paper and decided we definitely couldn't afford it. But the friend that was with him wanted to see the inside of the house because it was recently renovated. She was curious. So, this friend persuaded Andy to go with her to see the house. Andy had already decided what he could afford in relation to his paycheck. Other than the landlady accepting that, Andy decided it was not the Lord's will that we stay there. The house was set for about \$50.00 more than what he was set to pay. He looked through the house and really liked it and decided this was the house. They wanted first and last months rent in advance which we didn't have. The landlady said that if Andy was willing to do some yard work, then, she would reduce the rent by \$50.00. She said, "And you look like the kind of person we can trust, so, this month's rent will be fine." So, they moved out and we moved in that weekend. There were no other houses up

here for rent. There were none available. Since that time, a lot of apartments have been built. In 1977, the housing shortage was such that there were people camped out in Quatsi Lake, in trailers and tents.

Andy was working as a heavy duty mechanic in the field . He was sent to logging camps to repair motors. Andy really liked the area. We both did. He would go up to Nimpkish Camp, Vernon Camp. They would fly him out to different places like Bull Harbour, Holberg, Winter Harbour. He stayed at that job right until the beginning of this year. He became the charge hand there, like a foreman. He was in charge of the shop and getting the work done. He didn't like being away from home. He's always been a bit of a homebody. If the weather was bad and he was at a camp, then, he couldn't get out to come home, maybe for a few weeks. He didn't like that.

I didn't know too many people in Coal Harbour at the beginning. It wasn't a very friendly town at all for newcomers. A lot of people came and went at that time. A lot. Much more so than now. They would stay for six months, eight months and they'd be gone again. So, the people who were established here tended to ignore the crowd coming in. It wasn't until we were here almost two years that people began to realize that we were here to stay. I wasn't lonely. We had a lot of friends at church in Port Hardy. They weren't living in town but I would be going back and forth quite a bit. My friends would come to see me here all the time. The road from Coal Harbour to Port Hardy was paved then. It had been paved for one or two years before we arrived.

One of the first oldtimers I met was Alice. She was a pioneer. She had a foster child at the time, Dona, and I met Alice through her. She was really the only little girl around here for Sherril to play with. Simone was the Post Mistress at the time. You talked when you saw them out there on the road or at the Post Office.

We had to bus Sherril to kindergarten in Port Hardy. She was terrified of going to Hardy on the bus with the teens. They switched the kindergarten to Port Hardy the year before because of the lack of kids in Coal Harbour. There were only three or four of them. The following year the Grade Ones were bused to Fort Rupert.

I volunteered at Coal Harbour School. Sherril's teacher had some twenty odd kids in three grades and there was a big variety. I think there was something like eight reading groups. So, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, I would more or less supervise, keep the kids going, answer questions. I think I was the only Mom volunteering at the time. I don't think anyone else was volunteering on a full time basis. The majority of kids at that time in Grade One, Two and Three were native. David was in Grade Four. I found the kids here were much less disciplined, more rowdy than I had ever known before. It scared me and was one of the reasons why I volunteered at school. Here, it seemed that instead of being friends and playing together, they all fought together. They seemed to rotate. They'd pick on this one. Then, they'd form a gang and pick on that one. They were constantly fighting. It seemed like they didn't know how to play with each other. They didn't know how to play. There was quite a bit of native, non-native fighting

as well as oldtimer-newcomer fighting. They just couldn't get along. Now, there is not as much fighting going on with the kids. They seem to be able to play more. They still are different from the kids in the city.

I don't know why the kids used to fight so much. I think it was because they moved around so much and were unsettled. At that time, there was a lot of people moving in and the kids wouldn't have time to settle in and they'd be gone again. Now, people are more settled. There are a lot of nice kids here now. It was a real transient community here for a while.

When Andy was away working in the camps, I did become more independent to a certain degree. You had to learn to stand on your own two feet. Although I did not like it, I didn't become independent to the point that I resented him coming back and taking up his role again. I always looked forward to him coming back. I resented his leaving. I'm not that independent. I prefer to have him around. I like that role better, I think, than the independent one. When he's back, I think I can relax more. You don't have the full responsibility. We're very compatible. We're friends and I guess, when a friend isn't around, the whole feeling of the place changes. Generally, I would just do what I had to do in the house and do the major cleaning when he was gone. More for something to do to keep myself busy and not be dwelling on the fact that he's gone. We never knew when he would be gone. He'd leave with his lunch kit and I'd get a phone call in the middle of the day saying that he had to fly here or there. He'd say I'll probably be home tonight but if not, don't worry. It just means I can't fly out because of the weather. You might see him two or three



days later because he got involved in work. It was very unpredictable.

Esther and Andy had a third child, Nicole, the year

Esther and I recorded her life history.

I had to have a scan done and I had to go to Campbell River for it. So, the kids were told we had to go to Campbell River today. We told them that when they got home, we won't be here. So, they asked, "Why?" We said that I had to have a test done and we would discuss it when I got back. So, the following day at supper, we were all sitting around the supper table. David said, "O.K., why did you have to go down?" So, just to make light of it, we joked around a bit. I said I had to go down for a special kind of x-ray called a scan. I said the doctors have discovered that there is something inside of me that eventually has to come out. David sat back and folded his arms and said, "What's that - a kid?" But then, when we turned around and said "Yes," they wouldn't believe us. Then, we told them that we didn't want anybody knowing. The only reason we told them was that I had been working for three years and never went for afternoon naps. Suddenly, I was home for just a few months and every afternoon, when they came home, I'd be in bed napping because I was really sleepy in the beginning, in the first trimester. We didn't want anybody knowing yet. We told them that we weren't going to tell the family until New Years. Just before we went to visit our family, we would tell everybody here and in Port Hardy but we were scared it was going to get back through church channels if we mentioned it now. They were delighted I was pregnant but the fact that they couldn't tell anyone was totally frustrating.

What you teach your kids in the first eight years is very important. After that, you leave them in God's hands. That's all you can do really. You're given the first few years and after that, they're on their own. Whatever I try to teach David now, at age fourteen, is too late, he should have those morals already well established.

It is important to me to be a wife and mother. But the kids will someday leave, and so, being a wife is very important. When I think of my mother, she was very family oriented. The kids would revolve around her even as adults. My sister and I are different. I know I tend to depend on my husband and not on the kids as much. I don't know if we deliberately did this or came to realize this through the marriage, that the husband was more important than the kids were. I love my children but my relationship with my husband is very important. He's my number one priority and, then, the kids come into it. I think that's the only way you can really base a marriage. I think I would probably tell my daughter Sherril that her primary bonding should be with her husband. She's become quite the little mother. I was too at her age. I think my first priority would be to teach her the type of male she should go after, that she should be looking for good husband material. Basically, I want her to find someone who would show her respect. I think basically that's what missing in a lot of relationships. Respect as a person Someone who's not going to knock her down for what she is. Someone who's going to publicly build her up. Someone who's not going to knock her down by extramarital affairs. That's the biggest sign of disrespect for a female in our times.

Someone that she is friends with. Andy and I are friends.

Ten years ago, I wouldn't have had the self-confidence to work in the elementary school but now I do. I've thought about my future. When Nicole has grown up, I'll definitely go out and work again but this time with more of a career in mind and knowing that I can do it. The job I had before, I more or less went into it by chance. I worked my way into it. But I wouldn't have gone out and actually applied and said I can do it. But now, I think I have the confidence. I think I would probably work with kids again. I'm not sure in what capacity. I think I have the attitude now that I could do it and be good at it. Andy encourages my involvement with the school. He's proud of it. He wouldn't want me to go back to work in September with Nicole this small. We discussed this before I got pregnant. He would definitely want to see me out working again once she's in school. Hopefully, by the time I reach retirement, I'll still be working in the child care field. I'd enjoy that and hopefully I'd be doing more painting, more along the arts and crafts line. I've even thought of raising dogs. I'd really enjoy that. Breeding and showing purebred dogs. I've always been interested in that. Because I've got kids, I can't get involved in all that right now. I find that I spread myself around too thin. I'd like to get my child care certificate. I'd need to take some psychology courses through the North Island College. I'll probably start studying slowly when Nicole is two or three years old.

It looks like we will continue to live in the area. It depends on the work up here. So far, it looks like we will be up here and setting

down roots. When we retire, I would probably want to move to a place that was a little bit warmer. Dry out the old bones. I don't know how Andy feels about it. We have never really talked about it. I think that I'd probably want to move further down island. As soon as we came here, we felt at home. I guess it's a kind of bonding. Our work in the church has something to do with it. I've seen a lot of changes and I've been involved in a lot of changes in the church. We've made a lot of friends through the church. It's just a very pleasant place to live. It's very different from when we lived down Vancouver way where everything was so much faster.

I was a child care worker at school for three years, 1979-1982. I started out taking the librarian job. I applied for it and got the job. When I went there in September, I found the child care worker in the ungraded primary class had moved over the summer. I told the teacher, "Boy, if I had known that, I wouldn't have applied for the librarian job, I would have applied for the child care job." She turned to me and said, "You've got it." It all happened in one day. I fitted in well. We got along good after a few months down the road. Then, I became a child care worker in the third year.

Easy access in and out of the region is an important theme in the life stories of newcomers. In reflecting on her time in the area, Esther elaborated on two themes commonly expressed by newcomers who have been in the area for over a ten year span. Although access to the south of the island was

easy, families tended to reduce their travel down island. The north island experienced a steady influx of tourists as a consequence of the paved road.

In the past three years, we have left the area maybe three times a year at Christmas, Easter and summer holidays. We would travel down to Vancouver and maybe start into the interior. When we first came here, it use to be we'd travel every long weekend. We really enjoyed being here but we felt we had to leave every once in a while. I think that I was homesick even though I liked it here. I found it very peaceful here. I missed my sisters and being able to talk to them. We had become very close the last few years, just before we left. It was fairly easy to get down island.

The roads here have really improved. When we first came up here, it was a five and a half hour trip to Campbell River because you had a fifty mile logging road to go over. It was only paved three or four years ago finally. You prepared to go on the trip by putting everything in plastic bags, including the suitcases, because of the dust. You always prayed for rain before you went. The dust was incredible. If you had a car in front of you or a logging truck, you were just choking in dust. By the time you hit Gold River, you were grimy. Other people travelled lots at the time too. Our church, for instance, every long weekend, it would be empty. It's still now, you still notice it. In July and August, the people who are regulars in our church are no longer there - Christmas, the same thing. It's only in the last two years that I've noticed it hasn't gone down as much. At first, at our church, we had a lot of single guys who worked

at the Mine and lived in bunk houses there. Now, we seem to have a lot of families and they seem to have settled down a lot more. Now that the road is paved, you see a lot more campers up here. You see a lot more tourists. It's a lot easier to get out. You probably don't feel as confined. You don't feel as isolated anymore.

Esther and Andy intend to settle in the area for an indefinite period. However, they are like other young families in Coal Harbour who preferred to live in Coal Harbour but were considering moving to Port Hardy to accommodate the educational and recreational needs of their children.

I take the kids into Hardy often. It varies with what the kids are doing. Tuesday night is Youth Group from our church. So, they would be going in at least on Tuesday nights. If there is anything to do with band, when Sherril was in band, there was Monday night practices. This coming Friday, the boys have a banquet from the Youth Group. Saturdays was bowling. In between, there is also baseball tournaments. They would have practices two or three times during the week, including some Sundays. If it was a Sunday, then it was a family affair with fathers and mothers versing the teens. It varies with what is going on. Right now, we don't drive in Saturdays because bowling is over. We're trying to move into Port Hardy but it doesn't seem to be working out at the moment. I prefer to live in Coal Harbour but financially, with teenage kids, you just can't afford to live here.

A FEMINIST'S STORY<sup>6</sup>

Marie was born in 1947 in a farming valley in Oregon. She was the eldest of six children born of Irish/Welsh parents. As a girl, Marie was influenced by her father's stories about the women in his family who were pioneers and settled in the Western United States. Marie's recounting of her attraction to pioneers and pioneer life throughout her life story is similar to the life stories of other feminists who prefer to live in the wilderness or on the edge of towns. For her, emulating pioneers and a pioneer lifestyle are idealized as living in an environment that promotes self-sufficiency and provides the opportunity for equal access to male and female roles.

I always kind of rejected the fact that I had to act like a lady. I liked the idea that I came from a pioneer family where the women did unusual things that weren't expected of ladies. That there were times when they went out and shot a bear because it was out there in their chicken patch or they pride themselves on their

---

<sup>6</sup> The term feminist is a self ascribed label used by some newcomers. Although some theorists explore definitions of feminist from various analytical perspectives, in this thesis I examine the label feminist solely from an emic perspective, that is, I focus on the meanings north island women associate with the term feminist.

stamina and their strength or their ability to do something that a man would do and not think that they couldn't do it. Whether those women were like that, I don't know, but I think I consciously compared both groups of women rather early because one of my grandmothers was always asking me to be a lady. Whereas, the stories that my Dad would tell me about was what it was like to be a pioneer and live in pioneer times and do what pioneers did. My Dad was right into that, you know, remembering and being part of that whole pioneer past. It fascinated me and intrigued me. I would have loved to have lived in that time. I don't know why. I'm sure that it would have been a great hardship and a drag but I feel that I would have loved to have been living at that time. The independence and the self-sufficiency that comes from that type of lifestyle would have appealed to me, I think. Those pioneer women could be as weird as they wanted. They didn't have to rely on anyone else if they didn't want to. They relied when they wanted to and not when they had to. It's not that you don't need people but they didn't have someone buy their food for them and open doors for them and do those sorts of things. They could do those things themselves.

Marie attended university in Portland in 1964-67. At this time, she met peers who were experimenting with a variety of different religious philosophies and lifestyles. She began to associate with a group who she described as non-conforming early hippies. At one time during this period, Marie lived in an apartment and, at another time, she lived in a large house



with a transient group of young people, some of whom used drugs, experimented with sexual relationships, discussed philosophy and wore "back to the earth" clothing. In this experimental milieu, Marie reassessed the value system of her family.

I was eighteen when I went to university in Portland and moved into the apartment. Although my parents probably thought of me as their little girl, they both, particularly my mother, decided that if I didn't have a strong system of values to stick by as a teenager, then, I wasn't going to acquire it. Basically, they had real strong faith in me. They told me this many times. They had every confidence in the world that I would be wise and that I would not break my value system. They were assuming that my value system was similar to theirs. In some ways, they are right. The very basic core value system that I have is similar to theirs. I don't think that I've ever broken it. I've broken some of their peripheral values. Their extension of some of their basic values I've broken and I won't adhere to even now. They accept that now. But their basic values, I don't think that I've ever transgressed them.

But, by this time, I was becoming part of the hippie community. We socialized in groups rather than couples. Lots of time, impromptu gatherings would happen at your house and it became clear to me that the best times were had when they weren't planned. Therefore, you couldn't say well, everyone should gather at my house and we'll do this. Rather, it just had to be more or less impromptu. I felt that a lot of being a hippie, at that time, was to act

on what you felt. At first, I didn't think of myself as a hippie, but when the media started labelling people who thought as we did as hippies, then, yes, very probably so. As a matter of fact, there was a uniform that went along with being a hippie. It was long flowered skirts, old fashioned clothing, more like costumes really. I loved to dress up like that and going downtown with a van of other kids and parking it and getting out and standing around and watching all the people making a face at us. For some reason, there was a point in my life where I really enjoyed doing that. It wasn't really intimidating to people who watched us, but shocking, I guess. You couldn't say there was a beginning or an end to this period in my life. I'd say probably from 1967, there probably was a good year when I was like that, before I went away to Europe on my own. When I came back from Europe, a lot of people in the circle of my friends had moved. Things change a lot in those circles over a short period of time.

Before I went to Europe, I lived in a house for a while where, more or less, I was the organizer of the house. It was a big, huge house with lots of floors and rooms. We brought in groups to Portland and we would put on concerts. The groups would come from San Francisco or wherever on the west coast and we would do the Light show for visitors. We more or less made enough money to support this huge house and all the people who were just passing through town and came to stay with us for a short time. That took up a good chunk of that year, before I went to Europe. I enjoyed it. I didn't go to work and I didn't go to school or anything. I hardly ever corresponded with my parents. I was in a different world. I loved it. I think that I felt that I was my

own person finally. I wouldn't have to check in with my folks. I didn't have to meet any deadlines. I could actually not do anything all day. I had no deadlines to meet. Except, that I discovered that living in this house, that everyone else felt the same way and there are some deadlines that you have to meet. So, it pretty well came to me. It ended up being me who thought of the rent first and so I always collected it. It ended up being me who went to do the shopping or whatever. It had to be done and no one thought of it before I did. So, after a while, it got to the point where people considered me, like the house mother. I would keep outrageous things from happening in the house, you know. I guess that I liked that role. When I think back on it, I think that it's really interesting that I subscribed to that version of being a woman and it was really basically the same thing that I had been told all along in my family and had rebelled against.

Hippies were not really into any kind of women's lib feelings or ideas. The women, in going back to old fashioned clothing, just became frilly and feminine. Actually, they were going back to a more basic time when women were more Victorian. Sexually, there was more freedom. Women did the cooking. Women were earth mothers, so to speak. Being with the group combined fantasies I had about pioneer women. I still have a real liking of old times. I had always worn pants or less feminine apparel and I was wearing floor length dresses and long sleeved blouses. I can't believe now that I swallowed it because it was the same thing I had rebelled against. The only difference, I guess, was that I was making that choice. Women did most of the cooking and you experimented with all these different ways

of cooking. We experimented with different religions. You could be anybody you wanted to be. For the fun of it. As long as you didn't hurt anybody, you could be anybody you wanted. Your clothing helped you be that. I think that we were all experimenting with who we were and what part of the whole regime we wanted to keep and what part we wanted to throw away. Sexually, I think it was not Victorian at all. There was a lot of experimenting with relationships then. Everyone considered that to be the norm.

It felt very pioneerish to me living with hippies. It felt more like back then in pioneer times. Like, I dressed in old clothing. Everybody's goal in the circle that I lived in was - and I don't know why it was - we were very happy living in the older section of town. But our goal was that we, eventually, all wanted to live on a farm. We all wanted to get back to the earth. There were lots of different styles of being hippie. We wanted to cut down on our dependency to such things as BC Hydro. We didn't have telephones. We cut down on all the expenditures so that you could have more time to yourself and less time for working and supporting that whole system that you didn't really approve of very much. So, the more you could cut down on expenditures and material possessions, we thought the freer you were. What you did have, you just shared around and that made it secure.

I lived in that city hippie environment for about two years but it seemed a lot longer, like it was another lifetime. At one time, I wasn't really working except for this Light Show that we put on and just getting by. I had an internal kind of timing. I had always had a goal to travel and see Europe. Well, I wanted

to travel all over the world but Europe was one of the first places that I wanted to see. Something just started coming into my mind and said that, well, you'd better start saving for that. So, I got a job and I worked that job for about three months. Then, I got a second job being a waitress at nighttime. So, I worked two jobs. I worked an eight to five, eight hour job five days a week and then I worked four nights a week until midnight as a waitress. I saved what was at that time a considerable amount of money. I saved two thousand dollars in eight months and went to Europe.

When I come back from my year in Europe, I more and more got into my fantasy of being a pioneer woman, going back to the earth. I changed from being a city hippie and wanted to go back to nature. A whole lot of hippies at that time became what you call back-to-earthers and they dropped the old fashioned clothes and the city and went back to being back-to-earth hippies. That was a whole other movement within the hippie movement.

I think that I've kept some of the attitudes I had from my hippie days but it is less behaviourally. I've gotten very traditional looking behaviourally. I work and I'm a mother and I'm a wife. At the present time, Larry and I are working at a relationship. We are working at being a parent. All those things have taken precedent. They are more immediate. I don't have the time left to think about the world in general that much any more. Even though I would like to be more laid back and have less, my lifestyle just isn't conducive to that anymore. I feel like I should be resisting this impulse to be traditional but I also have acquired a taste for nice things. In

order to get nice things, you had to work X number of hours to get a salary just to own one nice painting or a nice table setting or whatever. Those things were considered negative to the hippie mentality. You just lived off of boxes or whatever. The whole beauty of that thinking I still yearn for really but I still like having my coffee grinder and drinking my coffee that way and I like things being gracious and nice. My feelings about that past time in my life, when I was a hippie, is very much feelings of nostalgia. I can get the very same feelings when I think back on my tomboy childhood. So, I really don't think that I would wish myself back to that point in time. I think that one of the main ways that the past has stayed with me, and is still in my thinking, is in terms of my attitude about people. I understand that everybody has had different experiences and maybe they have come from different cultures. But, there are a few basic things that are basic to humans and all the other things you have to just live and let live. I can't pass judgment on anybody.

According to Marie, she made "a significant transition" in her life when she decided to "put down roots" by buying property on the north island and subsequently marrying Ron. Like many newcomers who migrated to the north island, she was initially attracted to the area because of opportunities for a simple lifestyle and the living out of the pioneer spirit. Unlike the arrival stories of oldtimers,

feminists described coming to the north island through their own initiative rather than that of fathers or husbands.

After I returned from Europe, I was looking for property. When I was travelling around Europe, I had a strong reaction in terms of - I wanted some roots. Roots of my own. I didn't want to settle in my parent's basement or their backyard or anything. I wanted some roots of my own. The reason why I left the valley, where I grew up, was that I was related to so many people there and I felt like doing something away from my family. So, I started travelling and looking for property to buy. The cost of land in Oregon was very high, so, I came up to British Columbia and travelled around with some friends. We travelled up to the interior and travelled to Bella Coola and travelled to Ontario and back and to Quebec looking for land. Some friends of mine were camping on the west coast of northern Vancouver Island and they discovered Quatsino. We got together at the end of the summer. They told me that there was a piece of property in Quatsino that they were going to buy really cheap. So, that December, I decided that I was going to come up here and look at it. They told me that there was a house on this property. So, I went in and spent my winter vacation, about a week up here, and met lots of people. They all seemed really friendly. There was a 35 acre lot right next to my friend Launie and Jim's which was for sale. Launie was my friend since kindergarten days. So, then, I went home and wrote a letter to the people who owned it. I talked to my father because, at that age, I was only twenty and I wanted his advice. So, he lent me the money. I bought the property. I wasn't married at this time. I married in 1972. I bought it in

1969. Then, I went to work down in Oregon to start to make payments to my father.

I met Ron, the man I married, in 1972 in Oregon. Actually, he worked for my father for a while. I think that we split up in 1975. We weren't divorced until 1977 or 1978. I didn't talk to my parents about whether Ron was suitable to marry before we decided to marry. They very much liked him from the word go. They liked him a lot. They were quite taken with him. When Ron and I got married, there were a lot of factors in play. From my earliest memories, I never had any intentions of ever getting married. I didn't mind a living-in situation but I didn't like the institution of marriage. I didn't want to marry. So, I told Ron that I didn't want to get married. When we decided that we wanted to come up here and live on the property and we had to make payments up here for it, it became really clear that it was much easier for a couple to immigrate than two single people to immigrate. My folks were so taken with him that I guess that I more or less trusted that. Not necessarily that I wouldn't have married somebody that they didn't approve of, but that it made me feel even more secure in making this decision, that I really didn't want to make, because they were so taken with him that I figured that their judgement was good. Ron was really intelligent, had a good sense of humour and was a super hard worker. He worked for my father and my father was continually taken with a young man working so hard. He was very good physically. He's the kind of guy that could pick up a bowling ball and he's never been bowling and do well. He's really co-ordinated. He's a perfectionist, a real perfectionist. He's an outdoor person. He's climbed most of the high mountains in North America. He has tons of climbing gear.



He doesn't go into things in a hobbyist way. He goes into things totally, mastering them. My parents liked that out-going, daring, very macho style. Ron thought that people should live on the edge, not just men. That everybody should push themselves to their limits. His background was middle class like mine.

After the divorce I went through in 1978, I went through a really hard time. It was a time when I was so busy self-examining that I could walk right by somebody that I knew on the street. There was a part of my mind that was always on this. No matter what I was doing, I was a divided person. I could only give half my attention to anything I did. I was so introspective at that time in my life. It was really painful. I was never really absolutely without pain even though sometimes the pain was less. It was a really hard thing to go through. The whole time that I was going through it, I keep telling myself " But this is what you've been wanting. You've been wanting it ever since you married him. You've been wanting out." There was really no way around the pain. I had to go through it. I learned a lot from it and I think that if I had to go through it again, that it would be easier in one respect, although I haven't gone through it with a child before and that would be very painful. What I learned about myself during this time was not really a fact but a feeling. I found myself questioning myself as to whether or not I was a likeable person. Because here's this person who everybody liked. I know the type of women that my former husband has been with since and they are much more traditionally feminine than I am.

My women friends helped me most in the transitional period after I left my first

husband, Rena and Nancy and my sister Susan. It was more automatic to go to women friends in that period than to go to my family.

The thing that I came out of it with was that when you reach rock bottom, you realize that no matter how close your friends are, that down deep underneath it all, you are alone. That was the first time that I realized this. I might have realized it before philosophically but not emotionally. I was never that naked before. But, then you are there for a while and then, you start realizing that you can deal with that. That you are strong enough to deal with that situation. That it's OK and that basically I'm an OK person and that - you almost come to the belief that everyone could disapprove of you and it's alright. That I like myself basically. So, once that I came to that conclusion, it wasn't so necessary to find a relationship or to fit back in or anything. But I think that I did find a relationship too soon. I think that I got together with Larry too soon. I don't think that I had really consolidated in my own mind what were the characteristics of the person that I wanted to live with, or what I want from my life, let alone what I want to be present in a person that I would live with. Right now, I have a very strong feeling that I would like a person that would just let you be the kind of person you would want to be and support growth but not pass judgement on who you are and what you want to be. Just kind of let you be. Mutually live together. It must be too idealistic. I wish that it wasn't. Larry and I are working very hard on our relationship. That makes me feel disheartened because I don't want to have to work at a relationship all the time. If it does happen in the future that Larry and I

split up, I think that I would like to not have another relationship with a man.

When I lived in Quatsino, we used to have parties in people's homes. There were no fights in Quatsino parties in people's homes. What happened was that people get outrageously drunk. They still do. It feels very secure over there. If it needs be, you can walk home. In the old days in Quatsino, Quatsino was just one big party. You just went up and down the road. The next day, if you drove down the road, you'd see every car possible in the ditch or sideways on the road. People still asleep in them and they are in the ditch. You'd go walking up and down the road and you'd find people asleep under trees. So, they did get outrageous but not belligerent outrageous.

Women fight up here too. As a matter of fact, they fought more often than men did. When I first came up here, there wasn't a weekend that I didn't go into the pub. I went to the Seagate in Port Hardy because it was the only one up here that some fight didn't erupt at some point. You see it in movies but it's different to hear real fists butting into real bodies and shirts being ripped off and bloody noses and full grown, huge men actually not play fighting. I'd never seen it before. It was gross. My girlfriend was once involved in one fight actually. It started because some guy was paying attention to her. There were very few women up here and lots of men and they would come in here from the camps on the weekend and drink. Usually they would get into a fight with their best buddies. They'd get to drinking. Then, they would irritate each other over something. Well, in this case, one of the guys at the table was making kind of lewd or crude comments towards my friend, thinking that

she should flirt with him or something. Because she wasn't responding, he got outrageous about it. The other guy told him to stop it and the other guy told him to mind his own business. I can't remember what happened exactly but the guy who started the fight had a chair pulled out from underneath him. He stood up and took the whole table and lifted it up and dumped all the beer on her. So, the other guy beat it around the table and threw him across the room and they started hitting each other with chairs and beating each other up. It was always some little incident that drinking alcohol exaggerates. Men didn't usually fight with women.

Marie, like other newcomers who arrived near the end of the oldtimer's era, participated in social activities described by oldtimers as characteristic of single males. Oldtimers did not approve of these activities and never told me stories of their own participation. Rather, they identified themselves as observers and justified the establishment of family recreational activities on their disapproval of these activities.

Coal Harbour dances were notorious for that, going out to the porch or out on the gravel and having it out. It used to be a very lively community hall. There were dances all summer long. You'd get Norm Jones and the Hat Tricks in to play. People view these fights as not serious. No one really put down the people for it. The people who did it were just considered characters. You'd watch out for them when they

were drunk. People would break up these fights but I think it was always after they got a few swings in. Of course at the pub, they were always broken up by the bouncer. The bouncer got there as quick as he could and he'd get them broken up. One night, this fellow wouldn't stay out. The bouncer threw him out one door and he came right in the other door. So, the bouncer threw him out that door and started locking doors on him. He said he was coming back with a gun and he came back with a gun but he didn't use it.

Like many young newcomers, Marie left the north island for a time to further her education. She moved to Vancouver to be professionally trained as an elementary school teacher and entered into a permanent relationship with Larry. They moved back to the north island and settled in Port Hardy at the end of her teacher training.

I met Larry in 1978. I think that it was the first year that I was in Vancouver getting my teaching certificate. We aren't married. We started living together in 1978. I'll never make that mistake again. Two seconds after I had married Ron, I realized that I should never have married him. My relationship with Larry has Jamie, my son. That's permanent between us and I don't know about the rest right now. In some ways, Larry is the opposite of Ron, but they both have aspects of my father. I love my father dearly but I would never ever want to live with a man like him. I don't want a relationship with a man like him. I always knew that. So, it is really frustrating to find myself attracted to men who continually

crop up with things that are like my father that I don't really like.

Marie's recounting of her life experiences at this period contained several themes characteristic of newcomers who identified themselves as feminists. She had a continual commitment to her further educational and professional training. For her, personal and professional self-development were priorities. In addition, Marie consistently focused on the nature and meaning of personal relationships. This focus on defining and describing the nature of interpersonal relationships was absent from the life stories of pioneers and oldtimers.

Basically, I guess what I've done is that I've played around with the real thing rather than images. I have tried on relationships and I've never gotten very clear about it. I've never gotten very clear about what I've wanted in a relationship. Before Larry, I thought that I was clear. This is part of the problem. People portray themselves differently at the infatuation stage in the relationship than they are in reality. Larry and I would have long talks and I'd lay a whole lot of things out front. The things that bugged me about other relationships, I laid out front. Larry agreed to them. But as years go by and we are more and more together, he reverts back to being traditional and we fight about it. When I first met him, he was a fantastic cook. He cooks great Italian food. Although he is not

Italian, he cooks excellent food. Now, I'm lucky if he cooks once a month. The meals have become my job and I don't like that and it makes me mad. A lot of things that I thought we had straightened out, we obviously hadn't straightened out. He has to think about doing them because, the minute he stops thinking about doing it, he reverts back to type. If I don't keep my energy up and resist it - which I don't do all the time - I revert back too. It's so easy to revert back to more traditional roles. Marriage - and even long term living with a relationship - push certain buttons and you just fall into those routines.

As Marie entered her thirties, she focused increasingly on two aspects of her self-development: the need to define and enter into a healthy long term relationship with a man and the need to define the boundaries of her own autonomy and competence. These themes were consistent with the focus of other newcomers who were feminists and were in their mid-thirties.

When I compare myself in my twenties and my thirties, one of the things that I think that I have finally outgrown is the idea that I think that I have to be with somebody. That I have to be part of a couple. That old age will be a drag if you don't have somebody. That it's a drag if you don't have somebody to share it with. That you need a relationship. I think that we are more or less brainwashed into believing that. When I went into my twenties, even though I didn't believe in marriage and I didn't believe that I ever wanted to have kids

and this and that, I still don't think that I had given up, totally given up, thinking that I should find a relationship. That was my number one goal, was to find a relationship, a person that I could live with. Of course, it was through my twenties that I had most of my relationships. After all the experiences of my various relationships, each one taught me a little bit more about how much - showed me the nice things about relationships but also showed me, that in between them, that life alone was also good. That with a network of friends who love you and family, like my sister and my brothers, I don't feel any lack in my life. I don't need to have this one on one relationship with someone necessarily all the time. I don't know anymore if it's possible to have a one on one relationship and maintain your autonomy. At some point in going through these relationships, I realized that is what I would like. Towards the end of having different relationships, I was looking for that kind of a relationship. I didn't seem to be able to find it. None of my friends have been able to find it. Friends of mine who stayed together the longest in my circle of friends have now separated in Victoria.

Sometimes, women stay in a relationship because of dependency but not always. Sometimes, it's because they have nothing else to do. It's like because they have been so prepared for that kind of life, it's hard to know. The unknown is being a total career person and not having anyone. You wonder, will I be lonesome when I'm old? You have to finally come to grips with understanding that life's OK as long as you have people that care about you around you. But it doesn't have to be a mate. I think that, until you come to that understanding, you just hang onto a



relationship because you don't want to go through starting another one with anybody and you can't imagine not having one, so, you just stay with it.

Like other north island women who were feminists, Marie structured her life story to describe a series of changes related to ongoing personal development. In her narrative, all the stages of her life, including old age, provided opportunity and challenges for further personal development. For Marie, personal development was based largely on initiative and personal choice.

When I think about my old age, I see myself alone but not lonesome. Maybe it's because, before this stage in my life, I will have much fewer responsibilities. I could make decisions about doing this or that. If I didn't want to worry about where the next meal was coming from, I didn't have to worry. I didn't have to have any more worries than what I felt like having. Now, I'm involved in the sort of life that has a lot of responsibilities - my job, my child, my relationship with Larry, this house. I've even compounded it by having a garden that needs me to water it. I've just filled my life full of responsibilities. I see old age as a movement back towards that earlier stage where I can maybe commit my time to something. It doesn't just have to be for myself. I could commit myself to some organization that I felt was a useful thing to be doing. I wouldn't have to worry about Larry's time and Jamie's time and then, my dog and my cat and once again, my time would be my own. It would be a time when

I could get involved again outside of myself or outside of my immediate circle. I don't necessarily want to hurry into old age. There are a lot of things that make me nervous about old age too, about physical deterioration, etc. but it could be a really neat time.

What do I see myself doing in my forties and fifties? A good question. In the forties, I'm going to be resolving some of the things that I'm working on right now. Things that are going to be resolved one way or another in terms of issues in my relationship with Larry. Resolving parenthood, in the sense that Jamie is going to be older. He'll still be my child but he'll become more and more independent. A lot of things will be winding down to the point where there will be changes made in my life. I can't really predict, I can't really say how I really want things to turn out, I just know that it will be happening.

#### NEWCOMERS

Newcomers represent the largest category of women presently living on North Vancouver Island. In this chapter, I briefly examine the attributes which identify women who are newcomers and the cluster of values north island women associated with these attributes.

While pioneer women and oldtimers acknowledged similarities in life experience and values as a basis for collective identity as either a pioneer or an oldtimer, this was not the case with newcomers who stressed the diversity

present in their life experiences and values. The extent of this diversity became evident to me shortly after I arrived on the north island. I was standing in a circle of eight women after attending church services. We were admiring a newborn. In talking to the women present, I noted that all had arrived in Port Hardy in the last five years. Three of us were Canadians and only two out of the eight women present had English as a first language. A recent newcomer summarized a common understanding about the range of diversity present among newcomers.

You can find just about any kind of women you like among the newcomers. The whole range. There are some who are more traditional, like the oldtimers. They are into the housewife and motherhood thing. Then, you have the feminist and career woman. Some of them are into motherhood and some are not and you have a whole lot of women in between.

North island women identified newcomers who were traditional women as being in the majority. Traditional women valued complementarity as an expression of self-reliance, that is, they prefer to separate male and female work tasks. They aligned themselves with both oldtimers and other newcomers to maintain a high level of volunteerism in the region. However,

unlike oldtimers and pioneers, most traditional women worked outside the home.

Some traditional and feminist women identified themselves as sharing values which they described as back-to-earth values. The meanings associated with the term back-to-earth vary. As Marie noted in her narrative, the term was associated in the late sixties and early seventies with the hippie movement that swept the west coast of Canada and the United States. At the present time, the term had a positive or negative connotation. The meaning was largely derogatory when used by oldtimers and pioneers who recalled an influx of hippies in the 1960's. It had a positive connotation for some newcomers who associated the label with a contemporary pioneer spirit and lifestyle. As Marie stated:

The north island attracts all kinds of women. Some are back-to-earthers and are like modern day pioneers. Or you might say that they are a throw back to the real pioneers of olden times. They like to live out in the bush. To be independent. They think civilization and all its rules are too restrictive.

In their life stories, newcomers associated the term back-to-earth with two characteristics: back-to-earth women preferred to live outside the confines of municipal rules. As

well, they tried to be as independent as possible on a subsistence level. A newcomer, who identified herself as a back-to-earth woman, commented on these two features.

I left Vancouver to come to live on the north island ten years ago. I wanted a simpler lifestyle and not to be hemmed in by so many rules. The north island is getting too populated now. Too many people and too many town rules. They're even starting to get to me and I'm living in an isolated Bay nearby. We don't like that. We like to be independent. To live off our own resources. We like our privacy. We're like the old-time pioneers.

Women who claimed back-to-earth values identified themselves as sharing many of the values associated with pioneer women. They placed a high value on the roles of wife and mother. Independent, self-sufficient behaviour was held in high esteem. Like pioneer women, this self-sufficiency was contained, as far as possible, within the kin group. They chose to live outside of towns near or in the wilderness. A newcomer summarized her feelings and that of other back-to-earth women by stating:

As soon as you move into town, you have to start relying on other people. You can fight it but finally you give in. Out here, we rely on ourselves.

Like pioneer women and oldtimers, the attributes which identified newcomers had a temporal dimension which focused on time of arrival and settlement patterns. However, the attributes of newcomers differed from those of pioneer women and oldtimers in two significant ways. A distinct age cohort was not a significant feature in identifying newcomers. Furthermore, newcomers did not express a common motivation for settling in the area.

To be a newcomer required residence in the community after the road down island was paved. The image of the newcomer's era as a time associated with the paving of the road down island was an image which integrated several interrelated themes in the life stories of newcomers: (1) ease of mobility in and out of the region, (2) the building of transregional social networks, (3) an absence of isolation, and (4) self-reliance. The paved road was also an image for a sense of belonging and identification with place which characterized newcomers.

Many newcomers have been in the region less than 25 years. They identified their time of arrival as overlapping the end of the oldtimer's era but still within the period of

a small group of pioneer women. In their life stories, newcomers identified this overlap as significant in that it offered women an opportunity to interpret their own experience and to identify their values as either more closely aligned to pioneers or to oldtimers. An oldtimer reflected on the significance of newcomers arriving after the completion of the paved road. In common with other oldtimers, she identified two features descriptive of the newcomer's era. There was a great influx of women and these women were diverse in age and values.

When the road was finally paved, it was done by the persistence and work of oldtimers. We just kept pestering the government until it was done. The newcomers started coming then. In droves. It was easy to drive up island then. You could come and go as you like. The days of isolation were over. Lots of different women started coming up island then.

In contrast to pioneers and oldtimers, newcomers represented a cross-section in age of women presently living on the north island. Unlike the era of pioneers and oldtimers, there has been a recent influx of elderly women to the region. Some of these elderly women came to retire near or in residence with adult sons and daughters who were

oldtimers. Meg was typical of many elderly who had recently settled in the area. She was 82 years old and had been a widow for ten years. Meg was born in Toronto and moved to Victoria with her husband and four children in 1948. She commented on one of the reasons why many elderly women came to the north island.

I just recently came to live in Port Hardy. My daughter has been here for twenty years. My husband died ten years ago and she's been trying to get me up here ever since. They built a small addition onto their house and that's where I stay. I'm within calling distance but I still have my privacy. Port Hardy is nice but I guess that I would have gone anywhere to be near my daughter.

Like Meg, elderly women who were newcomers were close in age to pioneers but did not share their status in the community. However, elderly women who were the mothers of oldtimers had easy access to both oldtimers and pioneers. This access gave them a special status among the elderly newcomers to the area.

Other elderly women came to the area with adult children who were newcomers. Veronica was typical of this group of elderly women. She was 78 years old and had been living with her married son for the past twelve years. He



moved to Port Hardy six years ago. Like many newcomers who were seniors, Veronica found Port Hardy had many activities of interest to her age group. She stated:

I moved up here six years ago with my son and his family. Now, I feel fully integrated here. I go to the Seniors Centre often and there is always the Mall nearby. There are lots of seniors here now. Many more have come since I arrived.

There has also been an increase in the number of single women and widows who have settled in the region. These women came to the north island primarily seeking employment. Sarah was representative of this group of women. She had lived in five different locations on the north island during the past thirty years. Her husband died ten years ago. She moved from Port McNeil to Port Hardy four years ago. She noted:

Now that I am a widow, it is very important that I continue to work. I moved from Port McNeil to here because I was offered this secretarial job. I'm in my late fifties and need to think of retirement. I have no children. Port Hardy has a nice group of seniors now and I'm looking the place over to see what it has to offer for retirement ten years from now.

Newcomers, who were traditional women, often used the labels mother or grandmother to describe themselves. Adele was a traditional woman in her early forties. She moved with her husband and three children from Vancouver to Port Hardy in 1977 when her husband got a job at the mine. Adele represented the views of traditional women in the area regarding the importance of the labels mother and grandmother. She stated:

I'm a nurse and like a lot of newcomers here, I work full time and still manage to make my family life a priority. I've always enjoyed my nursing but there is no doubt in my mind that being a Mom is the most important thing. My two daughters are almost out of their teens and one part of me is hoping they will get firmly established in a profession, but the other half of me wants to tell them not to wait too long to make me a grandmother.

In their life stories, the labels mother and grandmother were a common means by which traditional women aligned themselves with the values of oldtimers. A newcomer clearly expressed the connection traditional women make between the values oldtimers associate with family life and the labels mother and grandmother.

I know a few oldtimers now. It seems to me that we have many values in common centred on

family life. The oldtimers placed a high priority on being mothers and raising children and having a good family life. They were really home-based women. Now, they are grandmothers and revel in that. I can understand what they mean, and why they think being a mother and grandmother is so important, because I feel the same way.

Many women who identified themselves as feminists referred to themselves as mothers and grandmothers but they also placed a high value on the label woman in describing themselves. Self-identity for them was not necessarily based upon, or synonymous with, being a wife and mother. In other words, the labels wife and mother were optional rather than essential identity labels and feminists chose which label to use as the situation warranted. This approach was in direct contrast to pioneer women and oldtimers who consistently gave primacy to the labels wife and mother in describing who they were in their life stories. In common with other feminists, Marie commented on the necessity of considering features other than motherhood for self-identity.

Out of the group of four good friends, two of us are mothers. Being a mother is a very important aspect of who I am. I will always be a mother. But I wouldn't say that it is the primary or the only feature that tells who I am. I don't place all my identity in that

role. My friend Mary has four children. She manages to be both an excellent mother and an excellent teacher at the same time. She is also a feminist. It was her choice to have children. But if you talk to her, she will tell you that motherhood is not necessarily a good experience for all women. It's up to the individual woman to decide what is best for her own life. It's not necessary to be a mother to have a good life.

Newcomers arrived in the area after or near 1960. Many came from urban areas along the west coast of Canada and the United States as well as central and eastern Canada. Unlike pioneer women and oldtimers, many newcomers did not settle in the north island as a response to their husbands' job opportunities. The life stories of newcomers revealed that while some newcomers arrived as a direct result of their husbands' employment, others came as a result of their own initiative.

Two newcomers, who were single, professional women living in the region for four years, commented on their reasons for settling on the north island. Like many of the single women I spoke to, both women would remain permanently on the north island if they married.

I needed to come to the north island if I wanted to get teaching experience. I applied

for positions everywhere but this was the only place that gave me a positive response. I'll be moving on as soon as I can. I'm beginning to like the area and I certainly like the kids I teach, but I want to settle down and marry. If I found a husband up here, I would definitely stay on and continue teaching in the area.

I just kind of wandered up here looking for a job. A girl friend of mine moved up here first and wrote and told me I could probably get a job as a receptionist if I came here. I didn't think twice about it. I needed steady work. My friend moved away and I got promoted to her job as secretary. I meet other women who just wandered up here looking for work. There aren't a lot of us but there's enough to take notice.

Like pioneers and oldtimers, there was a wide range of residential mobility present in the initial settlement patterns of newcomers. Two newcomers commented on this pattern of residential mobility. In the first account, a newcomer who arrived in Port Hardy in 1978 and began teaching in an elementary school, outlined that she originally came to the north island for work related experience. She commented on a transregional pattern of mobility southward characteristic of her and many single professionals. In the second account, a newcomer, who was a former teacher in her thirties, came with her husband and their two children to Port

Hardy when he accepted a teaching position. As a feminist, she reflected on the settlement patterns of back-to-earth women who migrated to less accessible regions of the north island.

I went to my first Teachers Federation Meeting last week and realized, in talking to other single women, that there were quite a few single women teachers in the region. Quite a lot of young professionals have come up here in the past ten years. We are all experiencing the same problem - the lack of single professional males in the district. There are lots of fishermen and loggers. Most of the single women I know are looking for jobs down island and that is part of their reason.

The Women's Group is organized by two different types of women. All are newcomers to the north island. There is a group of professional women and then there is a group of women that I would call 1960 hippies. They represent the back-to-earth trend that hit the coast in the 60's and 70's. The back-to-earthers like to live off the land with little interference from neighbours. They'll move on as the district gets to be more populated. They're sort of like pioneers, liking the bush and being independent.

The majority of newcomers were uncertain as to the length of time they would remain on the north island. This uncertainty was due to the vagaries of employment opportunities. For many professional women, the north island

was only one phase of an ongoing migratory pattern associated with their career development. Two feminists illustrated the attitudes associated with this mobility. In the first account, a single mother in her twenties, who had lived on the north island for three years, viewed her residence as temporary in order to accommodate career advancement. In the second account, a single woman in her thirties, viewed the north island as a place to commute for work opportunities.

I expect to live here only two more years. All my closest friends live in Vancouver and I've never severed ties with them. I have no social ties here. The north island has been a good career move for me but past that, I wouldn't live here indefinitely.

I came here for work in order to get some experience as a social worker. I guess most of the people who came to the north island came for that reason. I intend on moving on, though. My networks are elsewhere. A lot of the oldtimers say that they came here for a few months and stayed twenty years. They had families and I guess that they saw some kind of future here for their families. I'm not in that position. I have no reason to stay here other than myself.

For newcomers, part of their initial adjustment to the area was deciding if it was possible or desirable to remain living on the north island over an extended period of time.

The decision as to length of time of residence on the north island was a common concern for newcomers during the initial adjustment period. The life stories of newcomers listed the presence of family members and the possibility of employment as two significant reasons for staying in the area.

For pioneer women and oldtimers, the label newcomer was closely associated with a lack of commitment to long term residence in the region. Because newcomers were viewed as transient, they were perceived by pioneer women and oldtimers as being less committed to the development of the region. Two oldtimers summarized commonly held opinions by oldtimers regarding the transient nature of newcomers:

We get a lot of newcomers to the area. They never stay long. I never pay them much mind. They're here one month and gone the next. You can't count on them over the long haul.

If I tried to be real friendly with all the newcomers in town, I'd always have to be making new friends because you never know if a newcomer is going to settle down in the town or not. A lot of newcomers come and go.

Not only did pioneer women and oldtimers view newcomers as transient but newcomers also described themselves in this manner. Two newcomers commented on the transient



nature of newcomers. In the first account, a single woman, who occasionally worked as a waitress and identified herself as a back-to-earth woman, described her motivation for moving out of the Coal Harbour/Port Hardy region. In the second account, a feminist reflected on the dilemma of the professional woman who needed to leave in order to increase her professional qualifications.

I came to Port Hardy ten years ago because I liked the idea of being a pioneer and living simply in the wilderness. Now, Port Hardy has grown and I'm thinking of moving into a more isolated spot. There are quite a few other people like that up here. They like their privacy. For instance, some live on houseboats on isolated Bays in the district. As soon as they can see a neighbour on their Bay, they move on. Others live in Quatsino Sound, in areas that you can only reach by boat.

I hope to be accepted into Law School in the next few years. Then, I'll move to whatever school accepts me. When my husband and I came up here, we agreed that my husband would have some time for professional experience. Then, it would be my turn. He has had time to acquire experience and feels more confident in his profession. So, it's time for us to move on. I like the north island but there is no way that I can advance professionally here. All the training that I need, I can only get by moving to an urban area. I've enjoyed the time I've spent here but I've made very sure that I haven't become committed to the area because I knew that we were not staying that long.

The perception of living at the edge of the wilderness continued to be a strong attraction drawing women toward the north island. The lure of a more isolated environment, that is, the attraction of living in the wilderness, was often mentioned by women in their life stories as motivation for moving to the north island. This attraction cut across all categories of women who were newcomers. For traditional women, this attraction was largely symbolic. For them, the wilderness belonged in the recent past. A traditional woman, who had been living in the area for ten years, commented on the concept of wilderness shared by many traditional women in the region.

I'm a town person. I don't have any experience of living in the wilderness. I just go about my way as if I were living in the suburbs. I know that many newcomers here are attracted by the notion of the wilderness. I don't pay much attention to that talk. With easy access to the south of the island and all the facilities of a modern town, I feel like I'm living in the suburbs. The oldtimers tell us that it's only been recently that we've moved away from being isolated and living in the wilderness. That might be true. Certainly, it's foremost in the memory of the region but that has little direct impact on me. I can afford to ignore it in the present because of all the modern conveniences here. The actual notion of wilderness is part of the past.

For many women, particularly those women who had back-to-earth values, the notion of the wilderness was immediate and physically present. It had a direct impact on their sense of belonging and adjustment to living in the area. A newcomer, who claimed to have back-to-earth values, commented on the attraction of the wilderness. She characterized her attraction to the wilderness as being at home with nature. The description of the wilderness as interaction with nature was a common theme in the life stories of newcomers who espoused back-to-earth values.

Right now, it's still possible to have a house in the wilderness, the bush, and still plant your own gardens and take care of much of your subsistence needs. There is much less municipal bureaucracy than you would find in the cities. You feel more at home with nature here. This is what first attracted me to the area, the opportunity to live in close contact with nature and to live simply off the land.

Many newcomers who lived outside of town felt compelled to return to town life. Marie described the dilemma of young couples living in the wilderness who needed to make provision for the schooling of young children. She commented:

A friend lives in Quatsino with her husband and two kids. Now that her son is school age, they are considering moving closer to Port Hardy.

They don't know what to do. That will be a real problem for them to decide because they both like living in the wilderness. That's why they came up here in the first place in the 1970's. Quatsino doesn't have a school or a store, otherwise they wouldn't bother coming to town at all.

As the above narrative indicated, commitment to the region for some newcomers was dependent on the accessibility of the physical wilderness. This commitment differed from pioneers and oldtimers who adapted positively to the transformation of the region from an encroaching wilderness to town life. Residential long term commitment and a sense of belonging was also problematic for some single professionals who frequently commuted for visits to other areas of the Province and did not identify their home as being on the north island. In the following accounts, two newcomers expressed the attitudes of this group towards residential mobility.

I've settled in here now and I've lots of friends and things to do but my heart is really in Victoria. My whole family is there and so is my boyfriend. So, I try to go down to Victoria as often as I can. I guess you could say that I live in Victoria and I commute up here for work on a weekly basis.

When you are a new social worker, you go where the placement jobs are. I'll stay here for a few years experience. Then, I'll move on.

They keep sending up a group of single young women up here but no one expects us to stay on past our placement.

As was the case with pioneers and oldtimers, the theme of self-reliance was a common thread for the interpretation of life events in the life stories of newcomers. However, while pioneers and oldtimers described themselves as having a set of common values associated with self-reliant behaviour, newcomers claimed diversity. This diversity was a commonly expressed characteristic by which oldtimers and pioneers identified newcomers. An oldtimer remarked:

I've been here for a good many years now, and the newcomers keep coming. You can't tell about them at first. It takes some time. They're all different. You don't know if they want to stay or if they'll adjust. A lot don't. They can't wait to get away and go down island. Some women just can't get a sense of the place. You have to wait and see if they are really north island women.

Newcomers were perceived as being in the process of choosing or rejecting the option of becoming north island women. One of the dynamic features of this process was continuous negotiation related to a definition of their self-reliance as individual women adjusted and committed themselves to long term residence. The label newcomer was

transforming and remained ambiguous in the view of north island women. Newcomers created the attributes associated with this label by reinterpreting values associated with oldtimers and pioneers. As these women continued to negotiate the attributes which identified them as newcomers and subsequently chose to identify themselves as north island women, they acquired a sense of place. It was this sense of belonging and identification with place which identified newcomers as north island women. This process was evident in my discussions with three newcomers when I asked them specifically about how they were adapting to living on the north island. In the first account, a single woman and feminist, who has been living on the north island for six months, revealed that she had not yet acquired a sense of belonging. In the second account, a traditional woman, who came to the area when her husband was employed at the mines three years ago, had acquired a sense of belonging and identified with the wilderness and pioneers. In the third account, a feminist with back-to-earth values, who has been living on an isolated bay on the north island for fifteen years, identified herself as a north island woman.

I like the north island so far but then I'm still settling in. I feel really cut off from my women friends. They all live in Vancouver. I still haven't found things to do here or got into a crowd. The few people that I know are just like me. They are unsettled and thinking of moving down island. It's like we still haven't put down roots here.

I liked the north island right from the start. I like the idea of living close to nature. Women here seem to be more independent than in the city. I think that's because of the pioneers and the pioneer spirit still being here. That's what I like. You can have the pioneer spirit and running water at the same time. I'm a north island woman in spirit.

I've been here for fifteen years now living in a floathouse. I guess you could say that I've settled in and become part of the local scenery. I'm a permanent fixture in the Bay. I like the isolation and being the only family on this Bay. I've come to accept the rain and the oldtimers ideas about how to run the place.

As newcomers developed a sense of place and began to identify with the experiences of women who built up the area, they constructed a definition of self-reliance. While feminists and traditional women held self-reliance in high esteem, the meanings they associated with the term vary. In their life stories, feminists described self-reliance as a sense of independence which placed value on personal autonomy of thought and action. Unlike traditional women, personal

autonomy for the feminist was not tied up primarily with a maternal model or the concept of household. The household, with its cluster of traditional family values, no longer provided an exclusive framework for exercising self-reliance.

Both traditional and feminist women described themselves as being in partnership with their husbands or partners. Feminists, however, carefully distinguished this partnership as based on egalitarian rather than complementary roles. Both feminist and traditional women viewed this partnership as assuring the maintenance of a high quality of material and emotional well-being for each member of the family. Unlike traditional women who, as managers of the household, characteristically placed their own preferences as secondary to that of family members, feminists were adamant in placing the needs of adult family members, including themselves, on an equal footing. Marie stated:

My mother thought being a mother and a wife meant that her needs came second to us children and to Dad. She still behaves that way even though we are all grown. Her needs are always placed second. I don't want to live my family life that way. I want my needs as a person to be equal to those of the other members in my family.



Personal autonomy was expressed most clearly in independent behaviour and was characterized in the life stories of feminists as egalitarian interaction. The expression of this egalitarianism was perceived by feminists within marriage as a negotiation for an equal compromise between various members of the family. In the following account, a feminist illustrated the implications of negotiations based on a balanced compromise.

You will find that feminists negotiate with their husbands or partners on all major decisions. You met Carol. Well, she came up here with her husband because of his work. He needed to get started in his career. They negotiated that the family would give him a few years to do that. Then, the family would agree to go with Carol so she could further her career. Feminists don't mind compromising their plans to accommodate the family, as long as it works both ways.

In their life stories, traditional women described themselves as compromising to a greater degree, than do feminists, in assuring personal autonomy within the household. Ideally, the negotiative framework employed by traditional women was structured around the principles of complementarity. Traditional women expressed complementarity in a way similar to that of oldtimers. The similarities between traditional

women and oldtimers in the exercise of complementarity was well understood by most traditional women and was a common theme in their life stories. A traditional woman stated:

I suppose that of all the women here on the north island, my friends and I have the most in common with oldtimers. We are not identical to them, that's for sure, but we do share some common values with them about the family and the role of women in the household. We are more conservative, I guess, than the feminists around here. They are all for women as if husbands don't exist. We are more like our mothers. We value holding the family together and accommodating our husbands whenever we can.

Oldtimers served as role models for newcomers who were traditional women. However, while traditional women admired oldtimers, they did not identify with them in all respects. In the following account, a traditional woman expressed a common theme present in the life stories of traditional women: they perceive themselves as distinct from pioneers and oldtimers.

We admire oldtimers but we don't want to be like them. They represent the status quo around here. Because they built up the area, they feel they know how things should be in the future. They are friendly but it's hard to break into their circle or do things in a different way from what they want. I really admire oldtimers. They overcame hardships like

isolation and made it a good place for their families. We are building on what they started but we are different from them.

In their life stories, feminists described themselves as compromising in assuring personal autonomy within the household. However, they carefully described the nature of this compromise. In particular, it was important for feminists that negotiations occurred within a context that stressed equality of opportunity for their own occupational and personal development. In this negotiation process, feminists did not necessarily subordinate their needs to other family members but rather they sought a more balanced compromise. In the following account, a feminist illustrated this ideal of a balanced compromise. She has lived in Port Hardy for six years and has been married for four years and has one child. Like other feminists, she strategized, prior to marriage, in an attempt to assure equality within the household.

Before we were married, we had talked about how the housework and the raising of the children were to be divided up. We even drew up weekly schedules when we were first married. This was so important to me in our marriage that I had a marriage contract drawn up. I wanted to assure that it was done.

Unlike traditional women, feminists did not conceptualize the household as their primary context for expressing self-reliance. Rather, the concept of household was but one situational context which demonstrated egalitarianism and enhanced personal autonomy. In the following account, a feminist, who has recently applied to Graduate School to be a clinical psychologist, illustrated a feature common to the egalitarian expectations of feminists, that is, that present choices were made with a view to long term consequences for self-development. Feminists attempted to control contingent features as much as possible by careful planning for the future.

We decided that we would take the first five years of our marriage and my husband would get settled professionally and I would have a child. During this time, I would make concessions in terms of my own career plans. At the end of that five years, then, it would be my turn to get advanced professional training. He has agreed to go wherever I need to go to get my professional training and to make whatever concessions are necessary for me to get a good career start.

Alternating career compromises in marriage was an ideal. When I mentioned similar examples to traditional women, they dismissed the compromise as extraordinary and

impractical. A traditional woman summarized a common understanding of traditional women: a balanced compromise in marriage was based on complementarity.

Traditional women here consider themselves equal to their husbands. Most women in their thirties and forties that I know have been affected to a certain extent by the women's movement. We are not the doormats of our husbands. You need to be practical in a marriage. One person has to have the dominant or main provider role. In my family and those of my friends, it's the husband who has this role. The wife's career is important but secondary. Most of the women I know have portable careers. I'm a nurse and two of my friends are teachers. When we moved up here, it was important to my husband and I that I have the opportunity to work. We need the money and working at my profession is important to me but, if there was no work for me as a nurse or I had to wait a few months to get work, I still would have come with my husband.

In the role of wife and mother, both traditional women and feminists facilitated the nurturing of qualitative aspects of family life related to health, education and recreation. They perceived their role as managing the household.

Like oldtimers, traditional women viewed the management of the household as primarily their responsibility.

A traditional woman expressed an opinion common to other traditional women and oldtimers regarding the household.

It seems to me that it doesn't matter if a woman is working or not, she still is in charge of managing the household. Husbands can be helpful but you can't count on them a lot of the time. The onus is on you as a woman to see that everything is running smoothly. Husbands can be counted on in emergencies, and some can be helpful in ordinary times, but the main responsibility is the woman's.

Feminists insisted on joint management of the household with their husbands or partners. Two feminists commented on the difficulty in reaching this goal. They stressed that although joint management was the ideal norm, most women still felt responsible for a larger share of household and child care tasks.

We try to evenly divide up the management of the household, but I find that the largest burden still rests on me. I'm the one that always seems to be preoccupied with making it work. I guess this is partly due to the fact that my husband works shift work and my teaching hours are more regular. I think the real reason is due to the fact that there is an underlying assumption, on the part of my husband, that I will manage the house, just like his Mom did. It's hard to be fighting that assumption all the time or even to identify it. He denies it.

My husband is very good at helping around the house and assuming shared responsibility for child rearing. But I still do a large part of the child care and cooking. I don't plan it that way. It just seems to happen.

Both of the above comments expressed a commonly held desire of feminists: the need to recognize, at an attitudinal and behavioral level, equally shared responsibility for household management. Within this context of shared responsibility, adult female self-development did not depend primarily or exclusively on the expression of nurturing qualities by women in interaction with other family members. Rather, individual women perceived their own self-development towards independence and egalitarianism as equally important as that of other members of the family.

As the life stories of traditional women indicated, women used the role of wife and mother as a primary filter for the interpretation and identification of their self-development as a woman. They compared their roles to that of other oldtimers, traditional women and their own mothers. This comparison was based on identifying similarities in values and experiences through generations of women. Three traditional women commented:

I think that you go through a natural rebellion stage with your mother when you are a teenager but that changes when you are a mother yourself. You find that you start to remember all the good things your mother did and you start to behave in the same way she did. You start asking her for advice about raising the kids. I sometimes find myself doing the same infuriating little things my mother used to do with me. The other day I found myself using a phrase she always used with us to scold us when we were young. I never realized that I had absorbed so many values of my Mom about child rearing. It has been a shock realizing that it's true.

I was taking stock yesterday and realized that I have a lot of my mother's values about how to be a good mother and wife. I find myself getting more middle of the road conservative as I get older. I hope that I'm adopting my mother's best qualities and rejecting her negative ones. I'm trying hard to have family values that are similar to the core values of my family when I was a child.

I'm a conservative person, I suppose. I'm like my mother in lots of ways. Our values are pretty much the same. She's the kind of mother that I am. I'm more traditional than some of my neighbours. I think being a good mother is the most important thing that a woman can do. Being a good wife is a close second. I don't think being a wife and mother becomes less important as you get older. The roles change as you get older but they are still as important. The other roles I have, like being a teacher, are not as important to me. It's not as primary.



In contrast, the following accounts of two feminists illustrated the fact that, for them, motherhood was not the only important marker for self-identity as a woman. While motherhood was a significant marker for self-development, its significance was felt most profoundly during child bearing years.

I see the fact that I am a mother as one of the significant factors in my development as a person. Other things in my life are important and significant as well.

My mother thinks that being a mother is wonderful. She will always automatically view herself as a mother. Even when we are not there, living with her in her home, she still sees herself in the mother role. She still misses not having infants around the house. When I think of myself as a woman, I don't always automatically think of myself as a mother. Being a mother, now that David is young, occupies a lot of my thinking. I don't expect that to be the same as he gets older. Even now, I don't always think of myself in the role of mother.

In describing a composite of roles as a basis for self-identity in their life stories, feminists most often compared and contrasted their values and experience with those of their mothers. In choosing to emulate the value system of other feminists rather than their mothers, feminists

consistently compared similarities between their mothers and the values of oldtimers and traditional women.

Traditional women were similar to oldtimers in that they viewed male and female tasks as complementary. However, the degree of complementarity and the situation where it applied could vary significantly among traditional women. Some traditional women clearly favoured distinct male and female domains. A traditional woman stated:

I think men and women have different jobs in a marriage. They have different roles. My role is primarily within the household and I concentrate on managing a good household. My husband's role is more the protector/provider role. I know this sounds old fashioned but it's true. It works well in practice.

Other traditional women restricted the complementary roles of men and women to specific circumstances and periods in the life cycle.

Now that the children are little, we have decided that I will stay home and take the domestic role. John will go out to work. We complement each other, inside and outside the home. This split in roles will be less obvious when the children are older.

In contrast, feminists described their personal autonomy within the family as predominantly egalitarian in its

expression. This egalitarianism was expressed most clearly in an interactional style that promoted shared allocation of responsibilities in the roles of women and men. The emphasis placed on complementarity by oldtimers and traditional women was largely rejected by feminists who perceived male and female tasks as interchangeable. For feminists, the criteria for allocating tasks was either need or preference. In the following accounts, Maria illustrated a core feature of egalitarianism by discounting complementarity as a necessary feature in marriage. Like other feminists, she viewed roles as cultural constructions that were learned and open to changing and re-learning.

I'm trying to raise my little boy so that he doesn't assume there is a special role for boys that is different from that of girls or that a woman's role is dependent on that of a man. I think that it is possible to teach him so that he realizes that separate roles for men and women isn't natural but that it is learned from his culture. My mother was always very clear about her role as a wife and mother. Her place was in the home. She was an excellent homemaker. She tried to raise me with those values. When I was little, she was always telling me that girls could do this and boys could do that. I don't think that there is a definite role for men or women. I can do anything that I want. I'm not restricted like my mother. My mother reminds me a lot of the

traditional women here. They think the same way that she does about the role of women.

The concept of household was a key connecting theme in the life stories of traditional women. Like oldtimers, they viewed the household as the base from which they operated. However, they did not see community activities and employment as an extension of the household. The boundaries between home and the workplace were quite distinct.

The lack of distinction between domestic and non-domestic spheres for feminists was clearly indicated by the choice of work patterns at the time of marriage. Feminists did not perceive marriage as a reason for an interruption in wage labour. This was in contrast to oldtimers and some traditional women who discontinued wage earning at the time of marriage and re-contextualize their work patterns to give priority to domestic labour. A traditional women, who discontinued wage earning at the time of marriage, stated:

We decided when we got married that I would stay home until all the kids were in high school. We both thought this was really an important priority. I may go back to work when the youngest is in high school but, even when I do, I will still manage the household. I'm typical of some women here. There are other women who have to work even though they would

prefer to stay home with the kids. The ideal would be to be there for them in their early formative years, to be there for them in the home.

Feminists did not relegate themselves to a sphere that was distinctly female and bound up with the concept of household. For them, women had no distinctly circumscribed place. Thus, for feminists the concept of household was not a significant interpretive marker for their behaviour nor was female labour interpreted primarily with relation to the concept of household.

Feminists strived for predictability in planning for their future whereas traditional women planned with a greater emphasis on the role of contingency factors (e.g., husband's employment). Like oldtimers, the plans of traditional women were marked by the necessity to accommodate the job opportunities of husbands and adult children in the household. A traditional woman, whose employment pattern accommodated that of her husband, stated:

My husband has worked for the Mine for over ten years. We seem to move every four years. From here, we could be transferred to Australia. It's played havoc with my career. I'm a trained social worker. I haven't been able to find work in my field here in Port Hardy. So,

I volunteer just to keep my skills up to par. I'm hoping that in our next move, I'll be able to work at my profession. When John decided to follow this career route, it was plain to us both that our family would follow him. I thought with a social work degree I would be more marketable. Social workers fit in anywhere.

Unlike oldtimers, who described wage labour as based on a specific familial need, feminists viewed wage labour as significant for meeting their own individual needs for self-development. The majority of feminists saw themselves as employed throughout their lifetime, that is, they did not restrict wage earning to any specific age or circumstance. A feminist stated:

When I married, I didn't stop working. Few of my friends did either when they got married. We work because we need the money, of course, but it goes past that. I enjoy my work. I intend advancing to a managerial position in a few years and I intend working most of my life.

For some feminists, work outside the home was important as a means for self-development. Not only did feminists view themselves as employed throughout their adult years but most women predicted career changes. Marriage and child-bearing were significant variables in planning for the

future along with career opportunities and the development of interests and abilities. Feminists described the constraints imposed by motherhood as that of an interruption or pause in the life cycle.

For traditional women, the roles of wife and mother were not perceived as an interruption or pause in the life cycle. Rather, they were seen as integral. A traditional woman commented on the significance of the role of wife and mother.

I'm a wife and mother. That's how I perceive myself. I don't think I'll ever not be a wife or mother in my mind. It's always there influencing what I think and do. It's the basis for my future decisions. Both roles are important. Now the fact that I'm a mom with teenagers makes the mother part take more emphasis. Soon, they will all be gone to university and the wife part will be emphasized. It flips back and forth.

In the following accounts, two feminists reflected on the consequences of mothering. They described motherhood as most intensely focused on early child care.

I intend having several careers beside that of teaching. Teaching is fine now that my son is small. The whole teaching schedule is good for both of us at this time in his development. In certain respects, my career is on hold until my son is older. Right now, when I consider my

forties, I can't make up my mind which of my interests I should follow. Perhaps I will be a landscape designer or maybe a carpenter. Both require time for re-education. In the next few years, my husband and I will be considering the implications of this decision on our lifestyle.

When we decided to marry, I knew that I wanted four children quickly. So, I stopped working. Now, I have four children under seven. The youngest will be going to play school in a year and then I'll go back to work. My main job of mothering will be done and I can get on with my life.

While the majority of feminists and traditional women felt it was necessary to work outside the home, others preferred to work primarily within the home. For feminists, both patterns of work reflected an attitude of independence. Feminists made individualistic choices about the work pattern they preferred. In their life stories, they qualified these choices as requirements for self-development. In the following accounts, two feminists illustrated the rationale used for both of these choices as requirements for self-development.

I made a choice to stay home full time about ten years ago. It was my own choice. I don't regret it. I have time to do things in the community and for myself that I never would have had time to do otherwise. I spend a lot



of time being involved with the Peace Movement and conservationist issues provincially.

In my first marriage, I stayed home like a dutiful wife and didn't work. I thought being a wife was enough for me, but it wasn't. When I married the second time, I worked at a managerial level and had a higher paying job than my husband with more responsibility. He couldn't accept that and that partly caused his drinking problem. I feel that I have to work full time in order to develop as a person. I've come to realize that it is not my problem that my husband couldn't handle it. I am responsible ultimately only for myself.

Feminists maintained that career choices were made by the individual. Consultation with partners or husbands did occur. However, unlike traditional women, feminists did not perceive their choice of career or wage employment as largely dependent on, or as complementary to, the occupation of their husband. Rather, they viewed their careers as parallel and discrete from that of their husbands. In fact, for some feminists, different careers for husband and wife enhanced the relationship and were, therefore, preferred. In the following account, a feminist illustrated the value perceived in divergent careers. She viewed the lack of compatibility between her employment and her partner as an advantage.

If I married, I would want to have a husband who enjoyed his work and was intellectually stimulated by life. He wouldn't have to be a professional person like me as long as he was intellectually stimulated by life. The last man I had a long term live-in relationship with for five years was like that and our different perspectives about our careers were stimulating.

Although there was some overlapping of membership, most feminists did not join the volunteer associations of oldtimers. Feminists viewed associations such as the Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital as too traditional to address the needs of feminists. They perceived the association as merely maintaining established services in the area. While these established health services were important for feminists who benefit from them, they preferred to contribute volunteer labour to associations which had recently been formed in response to immediate needs centred directly on self-development issues. Traditional women were attracted to the associations of oldtimers rather than to those of feminists. A traditional woman expressed an opinion commonly held by other traditional women concerning feminists and their involvement in associations:

Most of the younger women in the area who arrived recently won't join the Women's Auxiliary to the Hospital. They say that all the women do is just sit around and drink coffee. They don't realize what these women have done for the hospital or how extraordinary these women are in the community.

Feminists formed and staffed associations that were recreational or service orientated. In addition to associations which focused on mothers and the needs of the family, feminists also formed and staffed associations which centred on women's self-development. There was a concern with global and regional issues which clustered around a quality of life framework.

In summary, the category of newcomer represented a diverse group of women. Newcomers were commonly referred to as feminists or traditional women. Those women who were not easily distinguished as belonging to one of these two categories represented a combination of values identified as both traditional and feminist. Several features identified newcomers. First, newcomers represented a cross section of ages. The majority of newcomers were mothers. However, single women and widows were well represented among newcomers. Second, they settled in the region in the 1960's to 1980's.

Newcomers came largely from urban areas in Canada or the North Western United States. Like pioneers and oldtimers, many newcomers came to the north island with few kin or friendship ties. Third, traditional women, like pioneers and oldtimers, accommodated and complemented the occupations of their husbands, while feminists had career paths distinct from those of their husbands. Some came to the north island seeking work as professionals: teacher, social worker, psychologist, etc. Others were employed in non-traditional wage earning jobs such as truck drivers, tugboat operators, etc. while still others were housewives. Newcomers made a substantial contribution to the regionalization trend started by oldtimers which has been present in the area since the 1970's. Fourth, many newcomers viewed their settlement in the north island as transient. When questioned, most stated they intended to move out of the region in the near future or expressed no assurance that they would be residing in the north island for over a ten year period.

In the following chapter, I examine the diversity of meanings that north island women attach to collective identity

labels as I trace the process by which these labels are transformed over time.



## CHAPTER SIX

### NORTH ISLAND WOMEN: IMAGES OF THE WILDERNESS

#### AND WOMEN TRANSFORMED

... that pioneer spirit of being equal to whatever happens around you is a great legacy for women living here.

The ideal north island woman is a pioneer. This was apparent in my informal discussions with pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers and was a central theme in the life stories of north island women. The experience of pioneer women legitimated self-reliance as the ideal strategy for adaptation to the north island and as a core element in identity as north island women. A newcomer, who has lived in the area for ten years, stated a common theme associated with being identified as a north island woman: the recognition that pioneer women and pioneer life were a present reality.

When I think of the north island, I think of pioneer life and pioneer women. Pioneer women remain the ideal even in these modern times. One of the good things about pioneer women is that they are still living in the area or live in our immediate memory. You have the sense

that what they did was real and in the present and you think, well, I could do that. I could be a strong independent woman, depending on my own resources.

For north island women, the presence of pioneers continued to legitimate the notion of the north island as wilderness and thereby promoted values attached to self-reliant behaviour. In effect, each time a pioneer woman was seen and stories of her exploits were recounted, the modelling effect on younger women and newcomers was reinforced. North island women aligned themselves with the concept of pioneer by placing themselves on a behavioral continuum for self-reliant behaviour which used the behaviour of pioneer as normative. Thus, the characteristics identified with pioneers served as the standard upon which the ideal for all subsequent cohorts of north island women was based.

In the case of oldtimers, the label north island woman also identified women as transitional figures placed midway between the pioneer's era and contemporary times. As transitional figures, they assumed the role of mediator or interpreter between pioneer and newcomer. This was true in my case. As a newcomer in the area, oldtimers consistently gave



me advice on proper behaviour towards pioneers and provided me with access to these women. Other newcomers, who did not meet pioneers through oldtimers, often found access difficult.

In their life stories, oldtimers described themselves as playing an important role in that they were responsible for perpetuating and transmitting the significant historical elements of north island women's experiences by circulating stories of north island life. Based on their observations of the lives of pioneer women, oldtimers took on the role of cultural biographers. Pioneer women had socially distanced themselves from mainstream north island life due to their age and, more importantly, their reticence. Oldtimers, as observers and mediators, transmitted, through stories and informal conversation, an account of the experiences of pioneer women. They also highlighted the significance of the achievement of pioneer women for successive groups of immigrating women.

As amateur historians, oldtimers were enthusiastic in collecting and retelling local history and, in particular, women's contribution to the history of the north island. Oldtimers recognized that, based on their initiative as

builders of towns and being town dwellers, the north island was transformed from a wilderness composed largely of single family dwellings to that of family based neighbourhoods. Due to their unique perspective on the impact of women on the cultural transformation of place, oldtimers were committed to an oral and written reconstruction of the social history of the island and the role of women in that transformation. This commitment was characteristic of oldtimers and acknowledged by other north island women. It was made evident to me, in informal discussion with other newcomers, that being identified as an oldtimer conveyed an image of specialized knowledge related to the development of the local community and region. I frequently heard the comment from newcomers: "If you want to know anything about this place, go talk to an oldtimer."

The role of newcomers in shaping the social history of the north island was not clearly articulated by north island women. While stories of pioneers and oldtimers circulated widely among north island women, key stories about newcomers were not wide spread. A newcomer, who has lived in the area for twelve years, commented:

Stories about pioneers and oldtimers are common here. In fact, it's probably one of the first things you pick up when you begin to talk to women here. Stories about newcomers are not as wide spread. It's almost like newcomers are not visible, even though we are the majority. The lives of pioneers and oldtimers seem more definite in the public mind. We feel part of the stories of pioneers and oldtimers but it's like we don't have our own stories yet.

Due to the fact that newcomers moved to the north island at a time when pioneers and oldtimers were both present, they perceived themselves as having the option of viewing the wilderness from the vantage point of both pioneers and oldtimers. In their life stories, newcomers emulated and aligned themselves either with the values of pioneers or oldtimers. They did not imitate the behaviour of pioneers and oldtimers indiscriminately but rather choose to emulate certain features from one or both categories. For instance, Terry, who was a young newcomer in her late twenties, talked of the satisfaction of building her own log house outside of town as she emulated pioneer behaviour. She commented:

When I arrived here four years ago, I was struck with the pioneer spirit, being self-sufficient as a woman and all that. It was a wonderful feeling after living most of my life in the city. I decided to build my own log house and I did. I lived outside of town. It

was exhilarating. I was doing everything myself and figuring out how to do it. The oldtimers would drive by and see me with a chain saw in my hands and shake their heads. I guess they didn't see that as a feminine thing to do.

Terry modelled her behaviour on her interpretation of the life of an idealized pioneer woman, that is, as someone who lived alone in the wilderness, was self-sufficient and competent in both male and female roles. In her life story, she described her first three years of settling on the north island as a period in her life when she lived alone in the wilderness and was self-sufficient in doing stereotypically male and female tasks. As she narrated this early period of adjustment to north island life, she reflected on the transformative nature of adopting the qualities of a pioneer.

I just felt a great sense of freedom coming here. Like, I had been asleep when I was in the city. It was like I could shift my expectations of myself here as a woman. It's like you could become a different woman here. Different from your other life before you moved here.

Although Terry admired the pioneer spirit, she also characterized herself as a town person and emulated values associated with oldtimers. She was characteristic of many young newcomers in that she merged the notion of pioneer with

the lifestyle of a small town rather than the wilderness. In aligning herself with town life, Terry expressed admiration for oldtimers and suggested further shifts in her self-identity and behaviour with age to emulate oldtimers.

Although I get great satisfaction out of being independent and not limiting myself to a female role, I'm basically a town person. I like to have ready access to a town. I like to be able to join women's groups and work for a common goal. Right now, I don't do much with the town. I'm not too involved. I'm not ready. Someday, when I get older, I think that I might be more like the oldtimers here. I'd like to get really involved with the town and maybe run for political office. I can see myself representing the interests of the town and having lots of authority in what happens in town. Just like the oldtimers here. I can see myself being more like them ten years from now. Not right now, though.

Women living on northern Vancouver Island constructed the label north island woman as an inclusive identity label composed of the exclusive identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer. This process was dynamic in that it provided women with the opportunity to emphasize similarities and differences in self-identity attributes. This capacity to identify similar attributes of self-identity through several generations, while simultaneously claiming dissimilar identity

attributes across diverse groups of women, was embedded in the meanings women associate with the label north island woman.

In focusing on the identification of similar attributes through generations, the label north island woman had a levelling effect in that it masked distinctions between groups of women. This levelling effect allowed women to identify themselves as being connected with diverse groups of women across generations. The theme of being connected to the values and achievements of other in-migrating groups of women in the region was an important element in the construction of individual and group identity.

This feeling of being connected with other women was closely associated with a sense of place and clearly articulated by north island women as they structured their life stories to reflect a continuity in the linkages of women's experiences through generations. Women consistently told me that their lives were similar to other women and, to a certain extent, key stories within their individual life stories were exchangeable with the life stories of other north island women. This turning away from a personalized construction of their life stories as unique, towards a more

collective sense of the recording of a generic life story of a north island woman, highlighted the sense of connection between diverse groups of women. An explanation for this sense of the connection of women was summarized most often in the phrase: "We are all the same here. All north island women."

A sense of connection between diverse groups of women was enhanced by the circulation of key stories in which women reflected on their own experience and that of other north island women of living in a place, characterized by them as wilderness. This sense of place, and the acknowledgment of a common experience in adapting to the wilderness, was a core meaning attached to the collective identity label north island woman. When women evoked a sense of place through the use of the label north island woman, the sociocultural distinctions between diverse groups of women on the north island was minimized. A newcomer, who lived in the area for seven years, commented:

I guess that although there are lots of different kinds of women here, we are basically the same. We are north island women. It's hard to describe the feelings around that. It's very positive energy. It's like you share

in the life of pioneers and oldtimers. Like you have their spirit, you know. So, they were strong women. Strong role models. You need to be that kind of women too because you live here in this place.

In emphasizing similarities in identity attributes, north island women appropriated the experiences of an increasingly wider circle of women living on north Vancouver Island and remained connected to the achievements of women in other generations.

Women also recognized distinct and sometimes conflicting differences in the meanings associated with identity attributes between groups of north island women. Pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers negotiated and maintained these distinctions through the circulation of key stories which stressed dissimilarities between groups of women. In this context, the label north island woman functioned as a reservoir of multiple and sometimes conflicting meanings for the construction of self and group identity. A newcomer, who has lived in the area for five years and travelled extensively in the region, commented on the need to distinguish between different types of north island women.



Women here like to call themselves north island women. But there is no doubt about it, they also like to point out differences between themselves and other women living here. Sometimes women here don't get along. Then, you see quite clearly that women don't see the world all in the same way. We newcomers, for instance. We are the new ones here and we upset the apple cart. We don't like to do things the way that it's been done for years by oldtimers. It's more than being new. It's also because we have a different view of what it means to be a woman.

The labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer identified women as belonging to a distinct group. These labels also provided women with a variety of identity attributes in which to debate normative criteria for the ideal north island woman.

The consistent use of key identity markers, that is, key stories and phrases, based on diverse interpretations of cultural norms, distinguished the life stories of pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers. These key identity markers described three portraits of the ideal north island woman as she was portrayed in the normative behaviour of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer. For example, as outlined in chapter four, oldtimers valued self-reliant behaviour and promoted the image of the ideal woman as someone who had a partnership with her husband in which there was a distinction between male and female

responsibilities in the family. The ideal woman, from the perspective of oldtimers, complemented her husband's wage earning role by promoting decisions that maximized the ability of the family to function well as an intact family unit. Thus, an important identity marker in the life stories of oldtimers was the explanation for the positive choice women made to accompany their husbands to the north island. The persistence and significance given to this cultural norm by oldtimers was apparent in the universality of the explanation given for the choice of accompanying their husbands to the north island.

All of those oldtimers, who were married before coming to the north island, explained their primary reason for coming to the north island as a response to their husbands' employment. In explaining their reason for the choice of settling on the north island, women consistently connected the initial reason for coming with that of a second and related decision to remain. Oldtimers acknowledged that it was a common practice for Canadian women of their generation to follow a husband as he was the wage earning member in the family. Therefore, their original reason for coming to the

north island reflected the cultural norms of the wider Canadian society. However, this was not considered, by them, as a primary reason in the explanation for their continued choice to remain on the north island. Women adamantly stated that the choice to remain was deliberate on their part and made on the basis of their ability to adapt positively to the experience of living on the north island, to acquire a sense of place and, subsequently, to become a north island woman. For them, the context in which they made this choice to remain on the north island coincided with a transformation in self-identity. This period of transformation was highlighted and dramatized in all the life stories of oldtimers by the elaboration of details of hardship and personal challenge as women initially adjusted to life on the north island. These accounts of personal hardship and challenges were concluded positively by reference to a transformation in self-identity as a north island woman.

In support of the explanation to stay, oldtimers also told contrasting stories of women who did not come with their husbands or who came for a period of time and then left. The reasons given for the departure of these women were based on

a woman's inability to adapt to the contingencies of place. Women who left were characterized by oldtimers as responding negatively to elements associated with the wilderness such as isolation, frequent rain, poor transportation linkages between towns and self-reliant behaviour.

The common experience of oldtimers, who chose to remain on the north island under challenging and difficult environmental circumstances, contributed to a group sense of identity with other women who shared similar hardship experiences. The fact that all oldtimers shared a common history of experience, based on overcoming hardship and responding to a sense of adventure, identified oldtimers to each other as heroic figures who were resourceful in making do in difficult circumstances. Moreover, in describing this adaptation process, oldtimers identified these hardships as common to the wilderness experience of pioneers. As a consequence of these hardship experiences, oldtimers felt connected to the lives of pioneer women. However, while oldtimers expressed empathy with and admiration for pioneers, they also rejected the pioneer's image of the wilderness as normative for their own lives. For oldtimers, a sense of

place was intimately connected with town life and a gradually receding physical wilderness.

The choice of oldtimers to accompany their husbands to the north island was explained as a woman's responsibility as a partner in keeping the family together. Women saw this choice by individual women as having far reaching consequences for all north island women. In their life stories, they highlighted an important consequence by contrasting north island life prior to the arrival of white women. Before the arrival of pioneers and oldtimers, white women were scarce and the population of the north island was dominated by native people and white men. In responding positively to her responsibility as a partner in keeping the family together, oldtimers changed the cultural configuration of place from that of single white males to that of families. The landscape was altered to reflect this new configuration of place by the building of towns linked by permanent roads. The building of towns, the establishment of family based neighbourhoods and the significant role of oldtimers are three core themes in the life stories of oldtimers. An oldtimer commented:

We, the oldtimers, built towns on the north island and made it a place for families. It wasn't like that when we came here. It wasn't a place for families. It was oldtimers who did that, who changed it. We take full credit for that.

In informal conversation, I consistently asked oldtimers why some women settled on the north island while others chose to return down island. In discussing women who didn't adjust well to north island life, oldtimers identified these women as not acquiring a sense of belonging to the north island. It was a common understanding that some women could not adjust well to north island life. They couldn't adjust to the wilderness, the sense of isolation and the constant rain. In describing their own experience, oldtimers outlined two key psychological markers critical to their ongoing positive adjustment to north island life: the need to respond positively to contingency and to be self-reliant. These qualities were a thematic link in the life stories of all oldtimers as they attempted to explain to me what a sense of belonging to a place meant to them. An oldtimer described the type of woman who acquired a sense of belonging:

You need to be easy with surprises. When a woman first comes here, she doesn't know what

will happen. You needed to be ready for that. You needed to be ready without a lot of help from women nearby. You had yourself sometimes and that was it. Even if you had women to help, and we did try to help each other out, you still relied on yourself and didn't interfere in the lives of other women.

Oldtimers further emphasized the significance of the event of arrival on the north island by recounting their initial arrival and early settlement in their life stories as a contrast between "before" and "after" arrival. Like the stories of arrival of newcomers, the arrival stories of oldtimers contained a theme of transformation of self. Newcomers described innovative and unusual behaviour as a consequence of coping with physical and emotional hardships which were outside of their previous experience. These stories not only outlined the acquiring of new skills but also recounted a change in self-perception. In describing the outcome of this transformation process, oldtimers identified themselves as self-reliant. An oldtimer, who arrived on the island as a young bride, commented on the personal impact of adapting to north island life:

I suppose the biggest change for me was a feeling of self-confidence. Coming through the hardships of the early years and relying on

myself, I began to see myself as more self-confident and independent. I knew I could cope. I knew I belonged here. It was quite a feeling for a young woman.

The telling of life stories was a very important way that north island women communicated and negotiated a sense of self with other women. Furthermore, they used these stories to claim or negotiate group membership as a north island woman. The degree of coherence in life stories indicated a clear understanding on the part of north island women of what constituted the proper identity attributes for recognition as a pioneer, oldtimer or newcomer. Adherence to these cultural norms were consistent across the stories in the life story. For example, when an oldtimer added a new story to her repertoire of stories, it was related in some way to the themes of the other stories included in her life story, or at least it did not contradict them. This reconstruction of the life story, to minimize potential contradictions in self-identity and enhance, coherence was apparent in the stories of oldtimers regarding the adjustment period of early settlement on the north island. Women contrasted their prior self-identity with an emerging self and group identity. This



comparison always reconciled or minimized possible contradictions between attributes of women's present and prior self-identity.

In the following account, an oldtimer, outlined changes in her self-identity as she initially adapted to the north island. Like many oldtimers, she integrated these changes in self-identity within a framework of temporal continuity. For her, changes in self-identity were not so much a contradiction of attributes of past self-identity as a recognition of a potential for developing attributes which were hidden or underdeveloped.

I was living in Seattle. I grew up with two sisters in a nice neighbourhood there. I was a city girl through and through. Then, I meet John and we got married. He took me with him to the north island the day after we got married. I hardly knew who I was then. Here I was, uprooted from my life as I knew it in the city and coming to this wilderness, and not just wilderness but a bush camp. And me, an educated city girl. All my women friends left behind, with no women and me cooking for seven men. I tell you, I didn't know which end was up. I had never really cooked before. My older sisters did that. I had never lived in the bush before. There was no water and no electricity. Everything I knew about was gone. I didn't know anything about the bush. How could I survive? But I changed and I found out things about myself that were there and I never

knew about it. Hidden strengths, you know. I got to like surprises and adventure. Even today, you never know if I would have developed the way I am now if I hadn't settled here and had to do what I had to do. I think that it would have stayed all hidden inside. I would be a different person.

A temporal sequence, based on continuity in self-identity attributes, was an important component in the creation of coherence in the life stories of north island women. In constructing temporal continuity in their life stories, that is, the recognition of similar self-identity attributes through time, women took into account cultural beliefs about the nature of a proper life.

There was a difference in the degree of shared cultural meanings in the life stories of north island women. Pioneer life stories expressed the greatest degree of shared cultural meaning. Their life stories were more of a cultural account of a life than a personalized account of an individual woman. Pioneer life stories were characterized by a reticence to reveal personal details or behaviours which would distinguish their life story from that of other pioneers. For them, shared cultural meaning around the nature of a proper life was a significant element in the construction of their

life stories. They did not perceive that the individual story of a particular pioneer woman varied significantly from the life story of other pioneer women. This was pointed out to me by one of my key informants who was a pioneer. In discussing with her whether she would like to record her life history, she stated:

Well, you don't really need to talk to me about my life. There are other pioneer women here. Our lives were the same. You could talk to anyone. There was not much difference in the story of our lives. Life here was the same. The stories were the same.

A key phrase for coherence in the life story of pioneers was the characterization of each other's life story by the phrase, "we are all the same." There was an expectation of a lack of diversity in experience and content across the life stories of pioneer women. This lack of diversity in shared meaning was highlighted by an expectation of shared knowledge with the listener. Pioneers rarely gave explanations for behaviour and detail around sociocultural context was sparse.

For oldtimers, shared cultural meaning around the nature of a proper life was also a significant element in the

construction of their life stories. Unlike pioneers, the stories of oldtimers were a more personalized account of their life. They were reluctant to reveal personal details of their individual lives. For example, they would describe feelings and intentions associated with their behaviour. Like pioneers, oldtimers valued privacy regarding revelations about family relationships and friendships and did not describe feelings and intentions associated with their behaviour in any detail. The stories of oldtimers were characterized by consistent attention to the structural aspects of women's lives, that is, the changing roles of women and the development of the region. Oldtimers matter-of-factly outlined the contribution and impact of women to the north island.

Like pioneers, oldtimers expressed a high degree of shared cultural meaning across life stories. They recognized that the life stories of other oldtimers possessed coherence. This was borne out by the frequent suggestion of oldtimers that I talk to other oldtimers in order to obtain sociocultural and historical details to insert in their own life stories. In this sharing of similar content and cultural themes, there was an implication that the individual lives of

women revealed and elaborated the life stories of each other. In the recognition of coherence across life stories, it was understood by oldtimers that the key stories of oldtimers had the authority to reveal the experience of individual women.

Unlike pioneers and oldtimers, the life stories of newcomers lacked as high a degree of coherence across and sometimes within the life stories of individual women with regard to shared cultural meaning. In the life stories of newcomers, there was a diversity of shared cultural meaning around the issue of what constituted a proper life. In addition, newcomers differed on what was the proper degree and the nature of self-revelation in disclosing their life story. Therefore, their life stories were characterized by a wide diversity in the revelation of personal details regarding the recounting of psychological development, intention and feelings. Some newcomers, who identified themselves as traditional women, were more like oldtimers in that they valued privacy with regard to the disclosure of the nature of relationships and their own psychological development. They were more interested in recounting role change across major events in the life course such as childbirth and motherhood.

In our first interview, a traditional woman commented on the boundaries for self-revelation in her life story:

I'll be happy to talk to you about my life. I think I've had an interesting life so far, particularly since I came up here ten years ago. My life has taken on twists and turns. I'm a wife and mother now. But I don't intend talking to you about personal family stuff. I've never put much store in talking about that. That's soap opera stuff. Real life up here is having babies and learning to like the rain.

Other newcomers, who identified themselves as feminists, were self-disclosing in greater detail regarding the nature of their self-development and their relationships. A newcomer, who identified herself as a feminist, commented:

I thought about writing my own life history. It's a project I hope to do in my fifties. Talking to you will be a good trial run. I think that talking about yourself is a good idea. It's like therapy, in a way. It allows you to sort out feelings and ideas and to make things clearer in your mind. Things seem different once you say them out loud. I don't think there is anything about my life that I would feel uncomfortable talking to you about.

Feminists, in particular, used the narration of their life stories as a forum for debating with themselves about the course and choices around their emerging self-identity.

One of the assumptions of newcomers, rising out of a lack of coherence across their life stories, was that the cultural meanings present in their life stories were not necessarily understood by the listener. Due to the fact that the life stories of newcomers represented multiple and sometimes conflicting shared cultural meaning, they required interpretation by the listener. Marie, a newcomer, who has lived on the north island for ten years, discussed the responsibility of the listener to interpret the cultural meaning present in the discourse:

When you talk to newcomers, you need to really sort out if they think the same way that you do. There are many kinds of newcomers here. They aren't like oldtimers. Oldtimers are predictable. You know where they stand. But with newcomers, you could have a feminist or maybe someone who is more traditional, and you need to sort that out when you talk to them.

Newcomers attributed the lesser degree of coherence across the life stories of women in their group to the fact that their individual, and to a greater extent, group identity was still under construction. A newcomer commented:

I don't think women here are sure that they know what the label newcomer is. I mean, everybody has a clear idea what a pioneer and

oldtimer are like. But with newcomers, you are never sure. We are a mixture.

The presence of diverse and sometimes conflicting shared cultural meaning in the label newcomer was considered an advantage by some newcomers in that it allowed for diversity in values and behaviours. One of the dynamic features inherent in this process was the debate among north island women as to whether the meanings attached to the label newcomer will come to reflect a more homogeneous range of shared cultural values or continue to promote a diverse range of shared cultural values.

The terms pioneer and oldtimer were recognized as stable and unambiguous identity labels by north island women. It was apparent to me in conversation with women early in my fieldwork experience that the identity attributes associated with the labels pioneer and oldtimer were summarized in normative statements that required little explanation or debate by north island women. In contrast, the label newcomer was in a state of flux. North island women acknowledged this ambiguity in attributes associate with the label newcomer and continued to debate as to the attributes necessary for



identity of the label as stable and unambiguous. One feature of this dynamic process was that the labels pioneer and oldtimer became ambiguous as attributes of these labels were recombined in novel ways to define the label newcomer.

The use of attributes associated with the identity labels pioneer and oldtimer in creating the more recent label newcomer, pointed to the continued affinity of contemporary women with the experience of prior generations of in-migrating women. This connection of women through generations was also reflected in a connection to landscape. When women claimed to be north island women, they identified themselves as belonging to a place, that is, the north island. In acknowledging a sense of place, they reaffirmed their connection to the experience of all north island women. The themes of connection to place and to the experience of generations of in-migrating women were key elements in the shared cultural meanings women associated with the collective identity label north island woman.

My examination of the meanings women attached to collective identity labels points to the central importance of place for self and group identity. The label north island

woman embodied a cluster of shared concepts related to the meanings women associated with geographical and cultural places in the region. Women expressed these shared meanings in their life stories as clusters of cultural themes which focused on shared core experiences of north island life. The life stories of north island women shared the following themes related to place: 1) residence - the importance of a woman's physical presence on the north island, 2) the recognition that women have similar environmental experiences based on a common understanding of the wilderness, 3) commitment to a bounded geographical space expressed as a responsibility for impacting on the historical and sociocultural development of the region, and 4) similar adaptive responses expressed ideally in the self-reliant behaviour of pioneers.

The shared meanings expressed in these cultural themes elaborated on a pervasive sense of place and contained cultural criteria whereby women living on the island recognized each other as north island women. By using the collective identity label north island woman, women expressed enduring themes of cultural continuity embedded in a sense of concrete place, the locality. The statements, "We are all the

same here. All north island women," concisely expressed the relationship that women have with each other as well as their relationship to place. When an individual woman claimed to be a north island woman, she described the nature of this attachment to place as closely aligned with a sense of commitment and belonging to the north island. This symbiotic relationship of self and group to place was clearly expressed by women in their use of the vernacular term for the region, that is, north island, as the label chosen for self and group identity. The close fit between self, group identity and locality was recounted in the shared remembrances of common environmental and sociocultural experiences of the wilderness.

The meanings north island women attached to the term wilderness has undergone two critical transformations associated with a conceptual shift in the boundaries of the wilderness. For pioneers, the wilderness surrounded the domestic dwelling. Contemporary stories, circulating in the community about pioneers, focused on women within family based settlements in the wilderness. In these stories, the ideal pioneer woman was often the only adult female in a particular setting. As I mentioned in chapter four, stories circulated

in the community about an ideal pioneer woman, Dinah. These stories about Dinah, her household and gardens and her competency with both male and female tasks, were particularly significant comments on the meanings of wilderness for north island women. The following two accounts by oldtimers about Dinah illustrated two commonly recurring themes regarding the wilderness at the beginning of the oldtimer's era: the wilderness surrounded the domestic dwelling and it was tamed with effort and skill by individual women.

I'll never forget the first time I saw Dinah's house. She kept a shotgun at her front door and at her back door. You were never sure what you might see if you stepped outside your door in those days. The wilderness was as close as your doorstep.

Everyone used to rave about Dinah's garden. It was a sight to behold, a beautiful flower garden right in the wilderness. Of course, she had to fight to keep it at bay, the wilderness.

The notion of an encroaching wilderness was closely aligned with two common themes in the narration of pioneer women: the establishment of individual family settlements surrounded by wilderness and a scarcity of white women in the area. In the pioneer setting, women valued self-reliance as the ideal strategy for adapting to the wilderness. The

scarcity of white women, and the perception that women had similar experiences living on the north island, had a levelling effect for pioneer women. This was evident in the degree of shared cultural meaning in the life history narratives of pioneer women in chapter three. For instance, pioneer women expected other women, including women who were strangers, to regard households and the performance of household routine as similar. The life experience of a pioneer women was thought to mirror that of other pioneer women. As a consequence, pioneer women came to the assistance of other needy women without special instructions as to the specific routines and expectations of particular households. This apparent homogeneity in the performance of household tasks and child rearing downplayed idiosyncratic differences between women.

A critical transformation in the meanings north island women associated with the term wilderness occurred during the oldtimer's era. For oldtimers, the boundaries of the wilderness shifted outward to surround neighbourhoods and towns. In effect, the wilderness receded but did not disappear. The life history narratives of oldtimers in

chapter four outlined the conceptual shift in the spatial boundary of wilderness which separated the bush from family based neighbourhoods in the early and middle years of the oldtimer's era. Two oldtimers commented on this shift. In the first account, an oldtimer established the boundary between town and bush as proximate and dangerous in the early years of the oldtimers era. In the second account, an oldtimer, who arrived fifteen years later, commented on the more recent concept of wilderness as a recreational area.

I remember once - a neighbour woman and her young daughter who was just barely a toddler. The toddler was playing outside with her young sister. They had a lot right near the edge of town. Well, one day the toddler was attacked by a cougar. The cougar came right up into the yard. It grabbed the toddler and wanted to drag it away. The mother didn't have a gun but she chased the cougar away and made a lot of noise. We women were all surprised because, by then, we thought that our yards were safe from cougars. But, her's being so close to the edge of town, I guess not.

As the oldtimer's era drew to a close, the boundary between town and wilderness extended into the bush itself.

I arrived near the end of the oldtimer's era. Mothers didn't have to worry about entertaining young children then. Not little kids. You just take them out to the bush at the edge of town. They'd be content. You'd make a picnic

and they'd entertain themselves while you watched. They found lots to do and they were safe with you nearby.

The notion of the encroaching wilderness was closely aligned with two common themes in the narration of oldtimers: the building of family based neighbourhoods and the management of these towns by co-operative groups of women. Oldtimers viewed their contribution to the north island as changing the cultural and physical configuration of place. By the end of the oldtimer's era, the north island was perceived as a network of family based towns with easily accessible transportation linkages locally.

During the newcomer's era, a second critical transformation occurred in the meanings north island women associated with the term wilderness. The life history narratives of newcomers in chapter five documented two themes associated with this conceptual shift. The physical wilderness continued to retreat further away from the boundaries of towns and, for some newcomers, the wilderness took on a largely symbolic meaning. Newcomers associated the retreating boundaries of the physical wilderness with the degree of municipal influence experienced by individuals. For

some newcomers, the boundaries of towns competed with that of the wilderness. Marie, who lived in a residential neighbourhood on the edge of town, commented on this competition and stated a common understanding of newcomers: in spite of resistance on the part of some north island women, the boundaries of the physical wilderness were retreating.

When I moved out here it was wilderness. Now, the area is building up. I still feel that I'm living in the wilderness but the municipalities are gaining in influence. You can see the effects of the municipal order reaching further and further into the bush. They tell you what you can build and where you can plant. The wilderness is retreating under its impact.

Newcomers associated images of the wilderness with the paved road as it linked regional and transregional areas. Access and mobility through the region was easy and the wilderness was associated with regional activities such as hiking or picnicking. For many newcomers, the wilderness was viewed as a set of symbols associated more with self-reliant behaviour than with actual living in a physical wilderness. The wilderness was pervasive and always present even if women did not experience the physical wilderness first hand.



The close fit between self, group identity and place were embedded in changing images of the physical wilderness and expressed by north island women in self-reliance. North island women promoted self-reliant behaviour as the appropriate strategy for adaptation to the wilderness. They described differences in gender imagery among pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers as centred on varying interpretations of self-reliance.

Pioneer women remained the ideal model for self-reliant behaviour. This was evident in the life stories of oldtimers and newcomers in chapters four and five. Current stories, circulating about pioneer women, described how they exercised competent independent behaviour both in the home as well as in the wilderness. This competence was displayed by pioneer women as they assumed both male and female tasks. A newcomer, who identified herself as a feminist and was initially attracted to the north island by stories of pioneers, commented on the modelling effects of the self-reliance of pioneer women:

I was living in Victoria at the time and two of my friends were teaching up here. They use to tell me stories about pioneer women. I was

always attracted to living independently and removing the artificial barriers put up for women. You know, women can do this and not do that etc. When I first came up here, I thought the stories I had heard must have been myths, that women couldn't live that way, doing male and female roles with no restrictions. But it's true. Pioneer women did male and female work and were respected as very competent in both areas. I figure that if they could do it, then, so can I.

For newcomers, the gender imagery of the pioneer woman portrayed her as one who blurred the boundaries between male and female tasks through her equal competence in the home and in the wilderness. This gender imagery was clearly contrasted and transformed with the coming of the oldtimer's era. Oldtimers demarcated the boundaries of a woman's competence to that of the household and town and excluded the wilderness. For oldtimers, their choice of gender imagery clearly separated them from that of pioneers. An oldtimer commented:

We were different from pioneer women, a different breed of women altogether. We weren't comfortable with living in the bush and doing men's work. We weren't trained for that way of life and it wasn't what we'd chose. We're like pioneer women in that we are competent around the house and raising children but not in the bush. It's right outside our experience. We are competent in town life. You know the kind of management it takes to build a town and wrestle it away from the

wilderness. We weren't sorry to see the dirt roads go and the supermarkets come in.

For oldtimers, the experience of self-reliance in the wilderness was not only out of their experience but also rejected as a viable choice. The notion that oldtimers chose attributes of their gender imagery out of options, that is, in contrast with a well defined pioneer gender imagery, was a pervasive theme for oldtimers. An oldtimer commented:

I suppose that I could have learned how to be a pioneer woman. I observed them closely enough. When I first moved here, we were neighbours. But it's not my choice, nor was it the choice of other women here at the time. By the time I came up here in my twenties, I was already use to being civilized, you know, use to city living. But being a pioneer woman, trapping, fishing, shooting game etc., it just didn't appeal. I like men doing men's work and women doing women's work.

While oldtimers contrasted their preferred gender imagery with that of pioneers, they also admired the self-reliance of pioneer women.

You have to admire pioneer women. They were strong and resourceful. Very self-reliant. Their children and husbands counted on them being strong women.

The variety of gender imagery available for newcomers in constructing self-identity further extends options in

choosing attributes for gender imagery among north island women. Newcomers choose attributes for the construction of gender imagery from various combinations of pioneer and oldtimer identity attributes. A newcomer commented on the advantages of the availability of the various gender imagery present.

Newcomers have an advantage here. It's an advantage for women. You can be almost any kind of woman you want. You have pioneers and oldtimers and, although they connect, they are very different women. Different outlooks on life. When newcomers come, they are faced with these very interesting women. You find the differences in outlook can be stimulating. Personally, I think of myself as being sort of in between the outlooks of pioneer women and oldtimers. I like to think that I'm competent in the bush and competent at home. I'm a very good outdoors person and I've spent a lot of time camping alone before I was married. I really like to challenge myself alone in the wilderness. But I still like the idea of letting my husband be the dominant decision maker in our marriage. For instance, we moved up here to be near his family. When we have kids, he will be the sole provider until they are in high school. I'll probably do the oldtimer thing and volunteer a lot of my time in the community. I suppose that when it comes to marriage, I'm a pretty traditional woman.

An interesting feature of the presence of this variety in gender imagery was the fact that the concept of the

wilderness and, to a certain extent, the image of pioneers had recently acquired a symbolic interpretation in addition to the more accurate historical foundation currently presented by the first hand accounts of oldtimers. A newcomer, who identified herself as a feminist, commented on the importance of the presence of pioneer women:

Personally, one of the benefits of living here is the spirit of pioneer life and pioneer women that hovers about the place. It really suits my feminist ideal, the self-sufficiency of pioneer women. You know, pitting themselves against the elements and surviving on their own. Being really independent. I suppose, since I don't know any pioneer women that well, that I have idealized who they are, but still, that spirit of being equal to whatever happens around you is a great legacy.

#### SUMMARY

In this chapter, I examined the meanings women attached to the collective identity label north island woman. These meanings were synonymous with the image of the pioneer woman and her self-reliant behaviour. North island women constructed their self-identity around diverse definitions of self-reliant behaviour as a key attribute for self-identity.

In the case of oldtimers, the label north island woman also functioned to identify these women as transitional

figures who assumed the role of mediators or interpreters between pioneer and newcomer. They were responsible for perpetuating and transmitting the significant historical elements of north island women's experience by circulating stories of north island life. Newcomers had the option of viewing the wilderness from the vantage point of the perspective of pioneers and oldtimers. They were able to align themselves with the values of pioneers and oldtimers and emulated certain features from one or both categories in constructing their self and group identity.

Because women living on North Vancouver Island constructed the label north island woman as an inclusive identity label composed of the exclusive identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer, they were part of a dynamic process which provided women with the opportunity to emphasize similarities and differences in the creation of self-identity attributes. This capacity to identify similar attributes of self-identity through several generations, while simultaneously identifying dissimilar attributes across diverse groups of contemporary women, was embedded in the meanings women associated with the label north island women.

North island women expressed similarities in self-identity attributes by a sense of place and connection to immigrating groups of women. Dissimilarities between immigrating groups of women were emphasized as pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers negotiated and maintained distinctions in identity attributes. In stressing dissimilarities, women debated normative criteria for three portraits of the ideal north island woman and determined for themselves what they understood a north island woman to be.





## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

Newcomers have an advantage here.  
It's an advantage for women....  
You can be almost any kind of woman you want.

In this dissertation, I brought together the life stories of women living on north Vancouver Island in order to identify, from their perspective, the core attributes that constituted self and group identity as expressed in their use of collective identity labels. I examined the process by which women constructed the labels north island woman, pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer by determining and analyzing the meanings that three generations of women attached to them.

I demonstrated that the label north island woman was a composite of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer labels and argued that the label north island woman was a key symbol (Ortner 1973) which summarized, expressed and represented the common identity attributes of these women. As a key symbol, it not only provided orientations, that is, cognitive and

affective categories, but also suggested that self-reliance was an important strategy for displaying proper behaviour as a north island woman.

As women narrated their life stories to me, they were careful to portray themselves as self-reliant. This theme was contained in key stories within their life stories which were widely circulated throughout the region. As a consequence of the availability of these key stories, there was ongoing debate regarding which identity attributes portrayed the ideal north island woman. Both the life stories of individual women, and the key stories they circulated, contextualized this discussion in the everyday experience of women living on the north island.

North island women maintained that a sense of place was a central element in the construction of self and group identity. This sense of place referred to cultural as well as physical place. Images of the transformation of the physical and cultural wilderness were embedded as a core theme in life stories. The physical wilderness and images associated with it were interpreted by women in three interrelated ways. In the case of pioneer women, this spatial image was described as

a matrix of interconnected footpaths and waterways which linked isolated, scattered and often one family settlements. For oldtimers, the wilderness evoked the image of logging roads connecting the isolated towns of the north island with the southern parts of the island. For newcomers, this image was transformed, in part, by paved highways and increased mobility between the regions. The transformation of the cultural configuration of the north island over three generations was reflected in images of: 1) an increasing number of family based neighbourhoods in the region, 2) the encroachment of human settlement in the wilderness by the building of towns, and 3) expanded transportation linkages between north island settlements and the outside world through regionalization. Images of the physical and cultural transformation of the wilderness served as important symbols of belonging and identification with the north island. They were symbolic of human settlement and evoked powerful messages about the self-reliance and sacrifice of the women who lived in the region.

Images of the wilderness found in women's life stories forged linkages between two important elements in the construction of self and group identity: 1) a powerful sense of place and belonging to the north island, and 2) a connection to three generations of in-migrating groups of women. A sense of place was forcefully communicated in the transformation of images of the landscape, in particular, the retreating boundaries of the physical wilderness, the increased accessibility of interconnected paved roads and the expanding municipal boundaries of permanent towns. The wilderness remained an important and vital element for contemporary women even as the physical boundaries of the wilderness continued to retreat and the landscape was altered to reflect towns. This was evident in the reinterpretation of the concept of wilderness as largely symbolic in the life stories of some newcomers who had not experienced living in the wilderness.

When women said they were all north island women, they powerfully expressed the relationship that women had with each

other, that is, with generations of in-migrating women, as well as their relationship to place. They stressed homogeneity between groups of in-migrating women as a central meaning attached to the label. As a consequence, women created a rhetoric of historical and cultural continuity across life stories which formed the basis for appropriating the shared experience of diverse groups of women. By using the label north island woman, women counterbalanced the substantial change evident in north island social life as well as minimized the impact of the diversity present between groups of women, including native women, based on income, education and occupation.

North island women saw themselves connected to groups of in-migrating women. This connection conveyed a sense of belonging which was highlighted in a corresponding transformation of images of the cultural configuration of place, in particular, the impact of women on the creation of place. North island women viewed their presence as changing the cultural landscape of the north island from a place

identified with single males to that of women and families. The impact of women on the changing cultural configuration of the north island remained an important reality for contemporary women. There was a sense of urgency and commitment to the continued influence of women on the development of the north island. Women viewed the region as still largely "a man's world" and the influence of women as recent.

The significance of a sense of place and connection to in-migrating generations of women, which was reflected in images of the transformation of the physical and cultural landscape, were two powerful themes which forged coherence in the life stories of north island women. It was consistently pointed out to me that life stories were a very important way in which north island women communicated a sense of self to each other. Furthermore, they used their own life stories, as well as key life stories circulating in the community, to claim or negotiate group membership as pioneers, oldtimers and newcomers. The most common response to my query "What is a

north island woman?" was the naming of a local woman and the telling of a key story about her life. In the construction and telling of coherent life stories, women demonstrated that they understood and were properly following the moral standards implicit in being a north island woman. Strong coherence in life stories indicated an effective cultural presentation of self.

Coherence in the life stories of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer was enhanced through the consistent use of images of the wilderness and descriptions of self-reliant behaviour. As diverse images of the wilderness were transformed across the life stories of pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer, a sense of place and a connection with in-migrating groups of women was embedded in the meanings women associate with the collective identity label north island woman.

This self-ascribed label pointed to similarities between diverse groups of in-migrating women based on a core assumption: all north island women had acquired a sense of place. In everyday life, this sense of belonging and

identification with the north island was expressed explicitly by women identifying themselves and other women as north island women. Within their life stories, this sense of place was recounted in key phrases and stories outlining positive interactions with, and specialized knowledge of, the north island. Women agreed that acquiring a sense of place was dependent on a positive and competent engagement in the everyday lived experience of north island life through self-reliance.

My research has revealed that the label north island woman was also composed of multiple and sometimes conflicting meanings. Themes of discontinuity and differentiation occurred in life stories as women described identity attributes which distinguished them from successive waves of in-migrating women. In describing themselves as belonging to a particular group of in-migrating women, they situated themselves in a specific historical era in which transformations in collective identity occurred. The construction and maintenance of collective identity labels was a dynamic process. North



island women viewed this negotiable and flexible process as grounded in everyday life and in the cultural construction of place and historical time.

Another component in the meanings women attach to collective identity labels was the recognition by north island women of the close relationship between the collective identity labels pioneer, oldtimer and newcomer and the presence locally of variations in women's gender imagery. Women considered the availability of variations in gender imagery, and discussions between groups of women about the ideal north island woman, as a valuable resource in identity construction. Individual women used the gender images of other groups of women as a framework for comparing, contrasting and building the attributes they considered essential for their own identity.

The widespread use of the somewhat stable and less ambiguous collective identity labels pioneer and oldtimer presented newcomers with a clear portrait of two normative gender images which became part of a reservoir of information

about the lives of women on the north island. The rejection of contrasting and sometimes contradictory attributes, as well as the acceptance of similarities in another group's gender imagery in support of constructing their own gender imagery, pointed to an understanding by north island women of the dynamic and negotiable nature of identity construction on northern Vancouver Island.

My research makes an important contribution to regional literature on northern Vancouver Island. At the present time, there is no comprehensive ethnographic literature on non-native women living in the region. While my research contributes to an understanding of the process of identity construction among in-migrating groups of non-native women, it simultaneously points to the need for research on the interrelationship between native and non-native women and the process of identity construction for all women living on northern Vancouver Island.

This dissertation makes a contribution to life history research. Most often, an anthropological approach to life

history documentation emphasizes how collections of individual life histories reflect the culture of the group and the cultural identity of the narrator as representative of a particular culture. In examining the construction of life stories across life histories, this dissertation expands on the traditional approach by examining the process by which culture bearers use their life histories in a reflective exercise that creates and recreates over generations who they have been and who they are becoming. In focusing on life story, this thesis points out that multiple life history documentation which focuses on life stories offers valuable insights into the process by which self and group identity is constructed. Individuals, in creating the life story used to provide a framework for their life history, reveal the core identity attributes central to their self and group identity.

In addition, this dissertation contributes to current research on identity by examining the process by which individuals and groups create and negotiate attributes essential to collective identity labels from a composite of

diverse cultural values present in the community. The process by which these collective identity labels are reconstructed through generations has been a central concern of this thesis. In isolating collective identity labels as an important element in the process of identity construction, this research shows that diverse identity labels available in a society are a valuable resource for women as they create self and group identity. Little systematic attention has been placed on the examination of the transformation of collective identity labels over time. Most often, collective identity labels, like identity itself, are assumed as a given. In this dissertation, my focus draws attention to the importance of viewing collective identity labels as a significant cultural element in understanding how women construct self and group identity.

Finally, my research focuses attention on a largely unexamined element in the construction of identity: the central importance assigned to a sense of place. The literature on place is advanced by examining how the process

of identity construction of a particular group, north island women, influences their sense of place. For them, meanings attached to identity attributes are closely associated with their understanding of a transformation of the physical landscape and the changing cultural configuration of place. I argue for a more rigorous theoretical understanding of the concept of a sense of place as well as local interpretations of historical events as they influence a sense of place. In this dissertation, I have shown that in constructing and maintaining collective identity labels, north island women propose a close and essential relationship between notions of place and the construction of a sense of self.

As I consider the contribution of this dissertation to research on identity, I believe there are a number of directions in which fruitful work could be taken. There is value in a more comparative examination of the construction of collective identity labels by women who live in other regions of Canada, since there are certain common features in identity construction shared by women who have recently settled in less

densely populated regions throughout Canada. The approach taken in this work would be valuable not only in terms of regional identity but also ethnic identity since these common features are also present among newly settled ethnic groups. Research on regional and ethnic identity can be advanced by including the element of place in the examination of how self and group identity is constructed and transformed over time. Research on place currently conducted by anthropologists and cultural geographers could benefit by a closer examination of the construction of group identity.

## REFERENCES

- Abel, Emily K., and Margaret K. Nelson, eds.  
1990 Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Agnew, John A., and James S. Duncan, eds.  
1989 The Power of Place. London: Unwin Hyman.
- Allison, Charlene J., Sue Ellen Jacobs, and Mary A. Porter, eds.  
1989 Winds of Change: Women in Northwest Commercial Fishing. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Anderson, Kathryn, and Dana C. Jack  
1991 Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analysis. In Women's Words. Sherna Berger-Gluck and Daphne Patai, eds. Pp. 11-26. New York: Routledge.
- Ang, I.  
1993 To be or not to be Chinese: Diaspora, Culture and Postmodern Ethnicity. Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science 21(1):1-17.
- Atkinson, Ronald R.  
1989 The Evolution of Ethnicity Among the Acholi of Uganda: The Precolonial Phase. Ethnohistory 36(1):19-43.

Ballstadt, Carl P.A.

- 1983 Catherine Parr Traill. In *Canadian Writers and Their Works Fictional Series*, Vol. 1. Robert Lecker, Jack David, and Ellen Quigley, eds. Pp. 149-194. Toronto: General Publishing Company.

Ballstadt, Carl P.A., ed.

- 1988 Susanna Moodie: *Roughing it in the Bush*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press.

Banton, Michael

- 1994 *Modelling Ethnic and National Relations*. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17(1):1-19.

Bash, Harry H.

- 1979 *Sociology, Race, and Ethnicity: A Critique of American Ideological Intrusions Upon Sociology*. New York: Gordon Breach Science Publishers.

Bataille, Gertchen M., and Kathleen M. Sands

- 1984 *American Indian Women: Telling their Lives*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Becker, Adeline

- 1990 *The Role of the School in the Maintenance and Change of Ethnic Group Affiliation*. *Human Organization* 49(1):48-55.

Becker, H., and M. McCall, eds.

- 1990 *Symbolic Interaction and Cultural Studies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Berger-Gluck, S., and D. Patai, eds.

- 1991 *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*. New York: Routledge.



Bertaux, Daniel

- 1982 Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Bledsoe, Lucy Jane

- 1984 Adventuressome Women on the Oregon Trail: 1840-1867. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 7:22-29.

Blu, Karen

- 1980 The Lumbee Problem: The Making of an American Indian People. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blumer, Herbert

- 1969 Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Boddy, J.

- 1982 Womb as Oasis: the Symbolic Context of Pharaonic Circumcision in Rural Northern Sudan. *American Ethnologist* 9(4):682-698.

Boris, Eileen

- 1985 Regulating Industrial Homework: The Triumph of sacred Motherhood. *Journal of American History* 71:745-763.
- 1993 Home to Work: Motherhood and the Politics of Industrial Homework in the United States. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Breakwell, Glynis M., ed.

- 1992 Social Psychology of Identity and the Self Concept. Toronto: Surrey University Press.

Breton, Raymond

- 1988 From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: English Canada and Quebec. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 11(1):85-102.

- Brettell, C.  
1982 We Have Already Cried Many Tears: The Stories of Three Portuguese Migrant Women. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company.
- Brody, H.  
1982 Maps and Dreams. New York: Pantheon Books.  
1987 Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Brown, Jennifer  
1980 Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Bryman, Alan, and Robert G. Burgess eds.  
1994 Analyzing Qualitative Data. London: Routledge.
- Carter, Erica, James Donald, and Judith Squires eds.  
1993 Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Charmaz, Kathy  
1983 The Grounded Theory Method: An Explication and Interpretation. In Contemporary Field Research. Robert M. Emerson, ed. Pp. 109-126. Toronto: Little, Brown and Company.
- Chodorow, Nancy  
1978 The Reproduction of Mothering. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Chodorow, Nancy, and Susan Contratto  
1982 The Fantasy of the Perfect Mother. In Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions. Barrie Thorne and Marilyn Yalon, eds. Pp. 54-75. New York; Longman.

- Clifford, James, and George Marcus, eds.  
1986 Writing Culture, The Poetics and Politics of  
Ethnography. Berkeley, California: University  
of California Press.
- Cloke, Paul, Marcus Doel, David Matless, Martin Phillips, and  
Nigel Thrift  
1994 Writing the Rural: Five Cultural Geographies.  
London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.
- Cohen, Anthony P.  
1978 A Sense of Time, A Sense of Place: The Meaning  
of Close Social Association in Whalsay,  
Shetland. Manchester: Manchester University  
Press.  
1985 The Symbolic Construction of Community. New  
York: Tavistock Publications.  
1987 Whalsay: Symbol, Segment and Boundary in a  
Shetland Island Community. Manchester:  
Manchester University Press.
- Cole, Sally  
1991 Women of the Praia. Princeton: Princeton  
University Press.
- Colley, Kate Brighty  
1970 While Rivers Flow. Saskatoon, SK: Western  
Producer Prairie Books.
- Conrad, Margaret, Toni Laidlaw, and Donna Smyth  
1988 No Place Like Home: Diaries and Letters of  
Nova Scotia Women 1771-1938. Halifax: Formac.
- Copeland, Donalda McKillop, and Eugenie Louise Myles  
1960 Remember, Nurse. Toronto: Ryerson Press.
- Corbin, J., and A. Strauss  
1990 Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons  
and Evaluation Criteria. Qualitative Sociology  
13:3-21.

## Cornell, Stephen

- 1988 The Transformations of Tribe: Organization and Self-Concept in Native American Ethnicities. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 11(1):27-48.
- 1990 Land, Labour and Group Formation: Blacks and Indians in the United States. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13(3):368-388.

## Cosgrove, Denis E.

- 1984 *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. London: Croom Helm.

## Crapanzano, Vincent

- 1984 Life Histories. *American Anthropologist* 86:953-960.

## Cruikshank, Julie

- 1983 *The Stolen Woman: Female Journeys in Tagish and Tutchone Narrative*. National Museum of Man Mercury Series. Paper No.87. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.
- 1984 Tagish, and Tlingit Place Names in the Southern Lakes Region, Yukon Territory. *Canoma* 10(1):30-35.
- 1988 Myth and Tradition as Narrative Framework: Oral Histories from Northern Canada. *International Journal of Oral History* 9(3):198-214.
- 1990 *Life Lived Like a Story*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

## Cuba, Lee J.

- 1984 Reorientation of the Self: Residential Identification in Anchorage, Alaska. *Studies in Symbolic Interaction* 5(2):19-237.
- 1987 *Identity and Community on the Alaskan Frontier*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- 1993 *Constructing a Sense of Home: Place Affiliation and Migration Across the Life Cycle*. *Sociological Forum* 8(4):547-572.

Da Costa, Yusuf

- 1994 Muslims in Greater Cape Town: A Problem of Identity. British Journal Of Sociology 45(2):235-246.

Davis, Dona, and Jane Nadel-Klein

- 1992 Gender, Culture and the Sea: Contemporary Theoretical Approaches. Society and Natural Resources 5(2):135-147.

Denzin, N.

- 1989 Interpretive Biography. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Dominy, Michele D.

- 1986 Lesbian-Feminist Gender Conceptions: Separatism in Christchurch, New Zealand. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 11(2):274-289.

Driedger, Leo

- 1987 Ethnic Canada: Identities and Inequalities. Toronto:Copp Clark Pitman Ltd.

Edwards, J., and L. Doucette

- 1987 Ethnic Salience, Identity and Symbolic Ethnicity. Canadian Ethnic Studies 19:52-62.

Ellen, Roy

- 1988 Persistence and Change in the Relationship Between Anthropology and Human Geography. Progress in Human Geography 12(2):229-262.

Eminov, A.

- 1986 Are Turkish-Speakers in Bulgaria of Ethnic Bulgarian Origin? Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs 7(2):503-518.

Epstein, Arnold L.

- 1979 Ethos and Identity. London: Tavistock.

- Erikson, Erik  
1959 Identity and the life cycle. Psychological Issues 1:1-171. New York: International Universities Press.  
1968 "Identity, psychosocial." International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. New York: Macmillan.
- Eyles, J.  
1985 Senses of Place. Warrington: Silverbrook Press.
- Fairbanks, Carol  
1986 Prairie Women: Images in American and Canadian Fiction. London: Yale University Press.
- Finch, Janet, and Dulcie Groves, eds.  
1983 A Labour of Love: Women, Work and Caring. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Fowler, Loretta  
1987 Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings: Gros Ventre Culture and History, 1778-1984. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Friedman, Jonathan  
1992 The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity. American Anthropologist 94(4):837-859.
- Frykman, Jonas, and Orvar Lofgren  
1987 Culture Builders: An Historical Anthropology of Middle-Class Life. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Garnham, Harry Launce  
1985 Maintaining the Spirit of Place: A Process for the Preservation of Town Character. Mesa, AZ: PDA Publishers Corp.

- Gerson, Carole, and Kathy Mezei  
1981 The Prose of Life: Sketches from Victorian  
Canada. Toronto: ECW Press.
- Gerson, Kathleen  
1985 Hard Choices. Berkeley, California: University  
of California Press.
- Gerstel, N. and H. E. Gross, eds.  
1987 Families and Work. Philadelphia: Temple  
University Press.
- Glaser, Barney, and Strauss, Anselm  
1967 Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for  
Qualitative Research. Chicago: Aldine.
- Glazier, Jack  
1987 Nicknames and the Transformation of an  
American Jewish Community: Notes on the  
Anthropology of Emotion in the Urban Midwest.  
Ethnology 26(2):73-85.
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano, Grace Chang, and Linda Rennie Forcey  
1994 Mothering: Ideology, Experience, and Agency.  
New York: Routledge.
- Godsell, Jean W.  
1959 I Was No Lady... I Followed the Call of the  
Wild: The Autobiography of a Fur Trader's  
Wife. Toronto: Ryerson Press.
- Goffman, E.  
1959 The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.  
Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company.  
1963 Stigma. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Greider, Thomas, and Lorraine Garkovich  
1994 Landscapes: The Social Construction of Nature  
and the Environment. Rural Sociology 59(1):1-  
24.

Gresko, Jacqueline

- 1992 "Roughing it in the Bush" in British Columbia: Mary Moody's Pioneer Life in New Westminster 1859-1863. In *British Columbia Reconsidered*. Gillian Creese and Veronica Strong-Boag, eds. Pp. 38-54. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.

Griswold, Robert

- 1988 *Anglo Women and Domestic Ideology in the American West in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. In *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives*. Lillian Schlissel, Vicki L. Ruiz, and Janice Monk, eds. Pp. 15-34. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Grossman, H., and N. Chester

- 1990 *The Experience and Meaning of Work in Women's Lives*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Harris, Kathleen

- 1984 *Sex Roles and Work Patterns among Homesteading Families in Northeastern Colorado 1873-1920*. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 7:45-46.

Hein, Jeremy

- 1994 *From Migrant to Minority: Hmong Refugees and the Social Construction of Identity in the United States*. *Sociological Inquiry* 64(3):281-306.

Herring, Frances E.

- 1913 *Nan and Other Pioneer Women of the West*. London: Frances Griffiths.
- 1914 *In the Pathless West with Soldiers, Pioneers, and Savages*. London: T. Fisher Unwin.



- Herzfeld, M.  
 1986 Within and Without: The Category of Female in the Ethnography of Modern Greece. In *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, J.D. Dubisch, ed. Pp. 215-233. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hochschild, Arlie, and Anne Machung  
 1989 *The Second Shift, Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*. New York: Viking Penguin Books.
- Howard, George S.  
 1991 Culture Tales. *American Psychologist* 3:187-197.
- Jackel, Susan  
 1982 *A Flannel Shirt and Liberty*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Jackson, Peter  
 1986 *Social Geography: The Rediscovery of Place*. *Progress in Human Geography* 10(1):118-124.
- Jameson, Elizabeth  
 1984 Women as Workers, Women as Civilizers: True Womanhood in the American West. *Frontiers: A Journal of Woman Studies* 7:1-8.
- Jeffery, Julie  
 1979 *Frontier Women*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Jenkins, Richard  
 1994 Rethinking Ethnicity: Identity, Categorization and Power. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17(2):197-223.
- Johnston, Ronald, J.  
 1983 *Philosophy and Human Geography: An Introduction to Contemporary Approaches*. London: Edward Arnold.

- Jorgensen, J. G.  
1990 Oil Age Eskimos. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Konrad, V., ed.  
1986 Focus: Nationalism in the Landscape of Canada and United States. Canadian Geographer 30:167-80.
- Korosec-Serfaty, Perla  
1985 Experience and Use of the Dwelling. In Human Behavior and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research, Vol. 8: Home Environments. Irwin Altman and Carol M. Werner, eds., Pp. 65-86. New York: Plenum Press.
- Kroeber, A.L.  
1955 Nature of the Land-Holding Group. Ethnohistory 2(4):303-314.
- Kuper, H.  
1972 The Language of Sites in the Politics of Space. American Anthropologist 74:411-425.
- Lanca, Margaret, Christina Alksnis, Neil J. Roese, and Robert C. Gardner  
1994 Effects of Language Choice on Acculturation: A Study of Portuguese Immigrants in a Multicultural Setting. Journal of Language and Social Psychology 13(3):315-330.
- Langton, H. H., ed.  
1950 A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals of Anne Langton. Toronto: Clark Irwin.
- Laslett, Barbara, and Johanna Brenner  
1989 Gender and Social Reproduction: Historical Perspectives. Annual Review of Sociology 15:381-404.

- Lawrence, Denise, and Setha Low  
1990 The Built Environment and Spatial Form. Annual Review in Anthropology 19:453-505.
- Lewis, Jan, ed.  
1987 Labour and Love: Women's Experience of Home and Family 1850-1940. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Lewis, Jane, Marilyn Porter, and Mark Shrimpton, eds.  
1988 Women, Work and Family in the British, Canadian and Norwegian Offshore Oilfields. Toronto: Macmillan Press.
- Ley, D.  
1985 Cultural/Humanistic Geography. Progress in Human Geography 9(3):415-423.
- Lian, Fee Kwen  
1988 The Sociopolitical Process of Identity in an Ethnic Community: The Chinese in New Zealand. Ethnic and Racial Studies (11)4:506-532.
- Linde, Charlotte  
1993 Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lorber, J., and Susan A. Farrello, eds.  
1991 The Social Construction of Gender. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Productions.
- Lowie, Robert H.  
1963 Indians of the Plains. Garden City: Natural History Press.
- Luborsky, Mark R.  
1993 The Romance with Personal Meaning in Gerontology: Cultural Aspects of Life Themes. The Gerontologist 33(4):445-452.

- Luxton, Meg  
 1980 More Than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home. Toronto: Women's Press.  
 1989 Gender Consciousness at Work: Modification of the Male Breadwinner Norm Among Steelworkers and Their Spouses. Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 26(2):240-275.  
 1990 Through the Kitchen Window: The Politics of Home and Family. Toronto: Garamond Press.
- MacCormack, C., and M. Strathern  
 1980 Nature, Culture and Gender. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Maguire, P.  
 1987 Doing Participatory Research: A Feminist Approach. Amherst, MA: Center for International Research, University of Massachusetts.
- McAdams, D.  
 1985 Power, Intimacy and the Life Story. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.
- McCall, G.J. and J.L. Simmons  
 1966 Identities and Interactions. New York: Free Press.
- McCready, W. C.  
 1983 Culture, Ethnicity and Identity: Current Issues in Research. New York: Academic Press.
- McMullen, Lorraine, ed.  
 1990 Re(DIS)covering Our Foremothers: Nineteenth-Century Canadian Women Writers. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.
- Mead, G.H.  
 1934 Mind, Self, and Society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Meinig, D.W.  
1979 The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moore, H.  
1986 Space, Text and Gender: An Anthropological Study of the Marakwet of Kenya. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Morton, Patricia  
1991 Disfigured Images. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Munn, Nancy  
1990 Constructing Regional Worlds in Experience: Kula Exchange, Witchcraft and Gewan Local Events. *Man* 25:1-17.
- Nagata, J.A.  
1974 What is a Malay? Situational Selection of Ethnic Identity in a Plural Society. *American Ethnology* 1:331-350.
- Nagel, Joane  
1994 Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture. *Social Problems* 41(1):156-176.
- Norberg-Schulz, Christian  
1986 Architecture, Meaning and Place: Selected Essays. New York: Rizzoli International.
- Okamura, Jonathan  
1981 Situational Ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 4(4):452-465.
- Ortner, Sherry  
1973 On Key Symbols. *American Anthropologist* 75:1338-1346.

- Ortner, Sherry, and H. Whitehead, eds.  
 1981 The Cultural Construction of Gender. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Paasi, Anssi  
 1986 The Institutionization of Regions: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding the Emergence of Regions and the Constitution of Regional Identity. *Fennia* 164:139.
- Parr, J.  
 1990 The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men and Change in Two Industrial Towns 1880-1950.
- Patai, Daphne  
 1988 Constructing a Self: A Brazilian Life Story. *Feminist Studies* 14(1):143-166.
- Peel, J.D.Y.  
 1984 Making History: The Past in the Ijesha Present. *Man* 19:111-132.
- Peet, Richard, and Nigel Thrift, eds.  
 1989 *New Models in Geography, Vol. 1*. Winchester, MA: Unwin Hyman.
- Perkins, E. B.  
 1922 The White Heart of the Mojave: An Adventure with the Outdoors of the Desert. Pp. 11-13. New York: Boni and Liveright.
- Peterman, Michael  
 1983 Susanna Moodie (1803-1885) In *Canadian Writers and their Works*. Robert Lecker, Jack David, and Ellen Quigley, eds. Pp. 62-99. Toronto: ECW.
- Peterson, Gary  
 1988 Local Symbols and Place Identity: Tuscon and Albuquerque. *The Social Science Journal* 25(4):451-461.

- Pinder, Ruth  
1994 Turning points and Adaptations: One Man's Journey into Chronic Homelessness. *Ethos* 22(2): 209-239.
- Pinkerton, Katherine  
1939 *Wilderness Wife*. Toronto: George G. Harrap and Co.
- Plaice, Evelyn  
1989 "Lemos!"— Perceptions of Ethnic Identity Among Settlers in Northwest River, Labrador Research Report. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 12(1):115-137.
- Poyer, Lin  
1988 *History, Identity, and Christian Evangelism: The Sapwuahfik Massacre*. *Ethnohistory* 35(3):209-233.
- Pred, Allen  
1984 *Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places*. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74:279-297.
- Relph, Edward  
1976 *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion Limited.
- Reminik, R.  
1983 *Theory of Ethnicity: An Anthropological Perspective*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Rodman, Margaret C.  
1992 *Empowering Place: Multilocality and Multivocality*. *American Anthropologist* 94(3):640-656.

- Rosenwald, George C., and Richard L. Ochberg, eds.  
 1992 Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Rothman, Barbara Katz  
 1989 Recreating Motherhood. New York: Norton.
- Rowntree, Lester  
 1986 Cultural/Humanistic Geography. Progress in Human Geography 10(4):580-586.  
 1987 Cultural/Humanistic Geography. Progress in Human Geography 11(4):557-564.
- Rowntree, L.B., and M.W. Conkey  
 1980 Symbolism and the Cultural Landscape. Annals of the Association of American Geographers 70:459-474.
- Ruddick, Sarah  
 1980 Maternal Thinking. Feminist Studies 6(2):342-367.
- Sack, R.D.  
 1986 Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press.
- Sayegh, Liliame, and Jean Claude Larsy  
 1993 Immigrants' Adaptation in Canada: Assimilation, Acculturation and Orthogonal Cultural Identification. Canadian Psychology 34(1):98-109.
- Scargill, D.I.  
 1985 Space, Place and Region: Towards a Transformed Regional Geography. Geography 70:138-141.



Schlissel, Lillian

- 1981 Frontier Families: Crisis in Ideology. In The American Self. Sam Girgus, ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- 1982 Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey. New York: Schocken Books.

Schlissel, Lillian, Vicki L. Ruiz, and Janice Monk, eds.

- 1988 Western Women. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Schwartz, Anita

- 1984 Ethnic Identity Among Left-Wing American Jews. Ethnic Groups 6(1):65-84.

Scott, George M.

- 1990 A Resynthesis of the Primordial and Circumstantial Approaches to Ethnic Group Solidarity: Towards an Explanatory Model. Ethnic and Racial Studies 13(2):147-171.

Scott, Joan

- 1986 Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis. American Historical Review 11:1053-1075.

Seamon, David

- 1979 A Geography of the Lifeworld: Movement, Rest, and Encounter. London: Croom Helm.
- 1991 Phenomenology and Environment: Behavioral Research. In Advances in Environment, Behavior, and Design, Vol. 1. Ervin H. Zube and Gary T. Moore, eds. Pp. 3-27. New York: Plenum Press.

Short, J.R.

- 1984 The Urban Area: Capital, State and Community in Contemporary Britain. London: MacMillan.

Shostak, M.

- 1989 What the Wind Won't Take Away: The Genesis of Nisa - The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman. In *Interpreting Women's Lives*. Pp 19-39. Personal Narratives Group, eds. Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press.

Silverman, Elaine Leslau

- 1984 *The Last Best West: Women on the Alberta Frontier 1880-1930*. Montreal: Eden Press.

Sinclair, Peter, and Lawrence Felt

- 1992 Separate Worlds: Gender and Domestic Labour in an Isolated Fishing Region. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 29(1):55-71.

Sintonen, Teppo

- 1993 Life Course and Ethnicity: Experiences of Canadian Finns who Immigrated to Canada in the 1920s. *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 25(3):76-89.

Soja, E.

- 1980 The Socio-spatial Dialectic. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70:207-225.
- 1985 Regions in Context: Spatiality, Periodicity, and the Historical Geography of the Regional Question. *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 3:175-190.
- 1989 *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso.

Spicer, Edward H.

- 1971 Persistent Cultural Systems: A Comparative Study of Identity Systems That Can Adapt to Contrasting Environments. *Science* 174:795-800.
- 1980 *The Yaquis*. Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press.

Staiano, Kathryn

- 1980 Ethnicity as Process: The Creation of an Afro-American Identity. *Ethnicity* 7(1):27-33.

Stigliano, Tony

- 1993 The Moral Construction of the Self. *Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 13(1):48-61.

Strauss, A., and J. Corbin

- 1990 *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park CA: Sage.

Strauss, Anselm

- 1959 *Mirrors and Masks: The Search for Identity*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.  
 1978 *Negotiations: Varieties, Contexts, Processes, and Social Order*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sundberg, Sara Brooks, and Carole Fairbanks.

- 1983 *Farm Women on the Prairie Frontier*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow.

Sundberg, Sara Brooks

- 1986 *Farm Women on the Canadian Frontier: The Helpmate Image*. In *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*. Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds. Pp. 95-106. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd.

Szala-Meneok, Karen

- 1993 *Time and Contingency: Temporal Organization in Southern Labrador*. Phd Thesis: McMaster University Hamilton.

Talai, V.

- 1988 When Ethnic Identity is a Mixed Blessing: Armenians in London. *Ethnos* 53(1-2):50-62.

- Taylor, Phyliss Mary  
1955 Buckskin and Blackboard. London: Darwen  
Finlayson.
- Thompson, Elizabeth  
1991 The Pioneer Woman: A Canadian Character Type.  
Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Thompson, Ruby Trench  
1967 Pioneers of Athabaska: Autobiography of a  
Trader-Trapper's Wife. Alderwood Minor, WA:  
Raymond Thompson Co.
- Thorton, Robert J.  
1980 Space, Time, and Culture Among the Iraqw of  
Tanzania. Toronto: Academic Press.
- Titon, Jeff Todd  
1980 The Life Story. Journal of American Folklore  
93:276-92.
- Totti, Xavier  
1987 The Making of a Latino Ethnic Identity.  
Dissent 34(4):537-542.
- Trebilcot, Joyce, ed.  
1984 Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory. Totowa  
NJ: Rowman and Allanheld.

Tuan, Yi-Fu

- 1977 Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 1978 Space, Time, Place: A Humanistic Frame. In Making Sense of Time. Tommy Carlstein and Don Parkes, eds. Pp. 7-16. London: Edward Arnold.
- 1992 Community and Place. In Person, Place and Thing: Interpretive and Empirical Essays in Cultural Geography. Shue Tuck Wong, ed. Pp. 47-59. Baton Rouge, LA: Department of Geography and Anthropology, Louisiana State University.

Turner, Victor

- 1967 The Forest of Symbols. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Traill, Catherine Parr

- 1929 The Backwoods of Canada. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Van Kirk, Sylvia

- 1980 Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society 1670-1870. Winnipeg, MN: Watson and Dwyer.
- 1992 A Vital Presence: Women in the Cariboo Gold Rush 1862-1875. In British Columbia Reconsidered. Gillian Creese and Veronica Steong-Boag, eds. Pp. 21-37. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.

Watson, Lawrence, and Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke

- 1985 Interpreting Life Histories: An Anthropological Inquiry. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Wearing, Betsy

- 1984 The Ideology of Motherhood: A Study of Sydney Suburban Mothers. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.

- Weigert, Andrew J., J. Smith Teitge, and Dennis W. Teitge  
1986 Society and Identity. New York: Cambridge  
University Press.
- West, Elliot  
1987 Beyond Baby Doe: Child Rearing on the Mining  
Frontier. In The Women's West. Susan Armitage  
and Elizabeth Jameson, eds. Pp. 185-189.  
Norman, OK: The Oklahoma Press.
- Wong, Shue Tuck  
1992 Person, Place and Thing: Interpretive and  
Empirical Essays in Cultural Geography,  
Vol.31. Baton Rouge: Department of Geography  
and Anthropology, Louisiana State University.
- Wyatt, David  
1986 The Fall into Eden: Landscape and Imagination  
in California. Cambridge: Cambridge University  
Press.