"Working Them Out...Working Them In":

Ideology, Discourse and the Everyday Lives of Female Military Partners Experiencing

the Cycle of Deployment

by

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by   Deborah McGinn Norris

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents:

Daniel Gregory McGinn (1889-1968)

Agnes Sarah Callaghan McGinn (1898-1995)

James Gregory Roy Mullally (1902-1992)

Jane Irene Flahaven Mullally (1899-1983)

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ABSTRACT

This study is a feminist qualitative research project which proceeded from the local and particular standpoints of seven female military partners experiencing the cycle of deployment, that is, pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment. The male partners of these women all served in the Navy and were deployed for seven months off the coast of the former Yugoslavia with the NATO fleet responsible for enforcing the United Nations Arms Embargo in place in this war-torn area at that time.

The purpose of the study involved displaying the everyday practices of the participating women as they experienced the cycle of deployment. In so doing, the meanings underpinning the practices were revealed. Some of the practices were articulated as coping strategies and psychological resources employed by the women as the deployment unfolded.

This research was grounded in accounts of everyday experience, rather than from a theoretical standpoint. This approach is consistent with Dorothy Smith's (1987) contention that experience should not be used as a mere resource in research, but as a starting point. Accordingly, this study is based on the premise that the broad complex of relations, including the relations of ruling, that constitute the military institution can be discovered in the routine practices inherent in the everyday lives of female military partners. Moreover, I assumed that ideologies and discourses coordinate these practices and link the practices to the institution.

Intensive interviews at each of the three phases of the deployment cycle as well as regular meetings of the entire group of women comprised the methods employed in this study. The data which emerged was analyzed using Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method" as well as certain other reflexive, reflective and intersubjective processes.

As the practices, meanings, strategies and resources relevant to deployment emerged, gender and military ideologies embedded therein were extricated and analyzed. Discursive concepts and categories implicated in the invisibility of the everyday practice of female military partners were also examined.

Because this research began with everyday experience, the *work* involved in living through a cycle of deployment was displayed. The complexities of the work which cannot be reduced to simple discursive frameworks were also revealed. The results of the study explicated how the daily work embodies both gender and military ideologies and how these ideologies are reinforcing. From this, it was possible to see that some military ideologies are contradictory and linked to the relevances of the military. Finally, other aspects of a general ruling apparatus, such as the media, were seen to intersect with the ruling practices of the military through this study.

Implications and recommendations for educational and counselling practice were derived from these findings and presented and discussed within the thesis.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

"Starting Where I Am"

In writing about qualitative research methods, Lofland and Lofland (1984) discuss how one's personal biography can provide the impetus for developing and sustaining a research interest. These authors refer to this phenomena as "starting where you are". This research which analyzes the cycle of deployment[1] using the experiences of Naval wives[2] as a starting point does arise from my own background and experience.

My interest in Navy families began during the years when I worked in a bank while an undergraduate university student. The bank that I worked at is located close to a "permanent married quarters" (PMQ)[3] community in Nova Scotia. Because of this location, many of our customers were military personnel serving in the Navy and their family members. I learned to recognize the exhaustion on the faces of the Navy wives whose husbands were deployed or "at sea" as they struggled into the bank, often with two or more children in tow, to pay household bills and draw money from their accounts. In

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[1] In the Navy, a "deployment" refers to a military tasking which requires a ship leaving home port for a tour of duty. Deployments are a regular feature of Navy life and may be anywhere from two to three weeks to six or seven months in duration. For military personnel serving in the Navy, a deployment can involve either regular training exercises, peacekeeping duties, or less frequently, war-related duties. In this thesis, I use the phrase "cycle of deployment" in an effort to capture not only the actual time that the ship is deployed, but also periods of time preceding and following the deployment.

[2] Throughout this thesis, when I am referring to the study that forms the focus of the thesis, I am referring to the Navy only when I use the term "military". Other authors that I cite may be referring to other branches of armed forces in their work, but this study was limited to women whose male partners were serving in the Navy.

[3] "Permanent married quarters" (PMQs) are base housing units provided at market rent to military personnel and their families. The housing units can be either apartments, row houses or detached dwellings which are assigned on the basis of rank and family size. PMQ communities also often contain various facilities and support services such as gymnasiums, skating and curling rinks, swimming pools, churches, schools, military police detachments, "Canadian Exchange" (CANEX) department stores, Women's Activity Centers, child care facilities and, in some cases, Military Family Resource Centers.

helping them with these tasks, I learned about the particulars of their lives, as they shared with me some of their thoughts and feelings about their experiences within the military. One of the most intriguing aspects of this interaction involved the women's use of linguistic terms and expressions in describing the military institution and its work. I found the use of this language interesting at the time (and still do) and quickly became familiar with these forms of expression. For example, I found it necessary to learn the meaning of words such as "allotment"[4], "posting"[5], and even "the old man"[6], in order to facilitate the banking transactions. As I did so, and as I interacted in a more general way with these women, questions began to form in my mind. I became increasingly more curious about an institution which seemed to have its own "language" and which housed many of the women I was interacting with in self-contained communities. I was also forming an impression that the military was more than a workplace, a realization that intensified my curiosity about this institution. As far as the wives were concerned, I began to think about the particulars of their lives and their role and place within the military. I questioned how these women coped with some of the realities of military life such as frequent relocation and recurring separations. I also pondered whether or not the women as well as the institution conceptualized the "coping" as a contribution to the institution.

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[4] The term "allotment" refers to the pay allowance received by a serving member of the Canadian Armed Forces. In the case of naval deployments, "dependents" or partners receive a portion of the allotment necessary to cover household expenses. Family members are encouraged to negotiate financial arrangements before the ship sails, but in some cases, partners at home find that they are not left with sufficient funds to meet their financial obligations. When this happens, partners are expected to contact the Financial Section of the Base Orderly Room (BOR) which sends a message to the ship (The In-Dependent's Book: A Handbook for Naval Wives, 1992).

[5] The term "posting" is used to refer to a transfer to a new unit and/or geographical location.

[6] In the Navy, the term "old man" is used to refer to the captain of a ship.

This evolving interest in the military institution and in the experiences and perceptions of Navy wives in particular, was sustained over the intervening years by living in a community where the military is a visible presence. The Halifax Regional Municipality contains both a large naval base and a naval air force base. Consequently, a significant proportion of the population residing in this community are either military personnel or are military family members. This means that the military and its activities are prominent in the life of this community. For example, local newspapers regularly grant front-page coverage to the leave-takings and arrivals of deployed military personnel. Television and radio reports also often chronicle these and other aspects of military life. The visibility of the military in this community is also evident in the vicinity of the naval base where the sidewalks are sometimes congested with military members, saluting others in uniform as they pass by. These gestures and the other rituals and realities associated with the military institution that I have observed over the years in the context of daily life within this community as well as recollections of my interaction with military wives conducting business at my former place of work lie at the heart of my unfaltering fascination with the military and its work.

My ongoing preoccupation with the military institution was also, in part, responsible for my later academic interest in issues related to work-family relationships. As I interacted with military wives in the bank and observed other members of the institution in the general context of this community, I was left with the impression that military family members are faced with particular challenges as they endeavour to balance work and family concerns in their lives. In subsequent years, this realization contributed to the

development of my academic involvement in issues related to the relationship between work and family. Specifically, as a family life educator, I became involved in planning and implementing programs designed to ameliorate the stress that is often present in the lives of workers balancing work and family responsibilities.

Personal biography also played a role in this regard. I grew up within a corporate family at a time when the corporation placed considerable constraints on family life. Consequently, I was well aware of the effort involved in maintaining equilibrium within a family where the institution seemed to be a constant presence and where realities such as frequent re-location were regular occurrences. As I attempted to make sense of this experience over the years, I frequently contended that some of the difficulties associated with life within a corporate family could have been alleviated through supportive workplace policies and programs which were largely unavailable at the time when I was growing up. These contentions as well as my persistent curiosity about the relationship between the military institution and military wives prompted me to become involved in the development and implementation of work-family programs.

When I later learned of the opening of the Military Family Resource Centre located at a Canadian Forces Base within my community, I was immediately interested. It seemed to me that this new Centre could serve as a location whereby I could simultaneously pursue my interests in both work-family programs and the military institution. I contacted the Centre and became involved in developing and implementing various support programs for military parents and military wives. As I participated in this work, I learned more about these individuals' perceptions of the work-family relationship within their

lives and the ways in which they manage the challenges they face.

"Working Them Out... Working Them In"

<u>The Purposes of the Study</u>

One of the challenges characterizing life within the military, particularly within the Navy, is deployment-related separation. My particular interest in deployment emerged in response to an off-hand comment overheard at a coffee break during a program I was facilitating for military wives. One of the participating women was discussing with other program participants the impending deployment of her husband on a six-month NATO[7] tour of duty. As she shared her feelings in this regard, she commented: "Well, this is all about working them out and then working them in".

This seemingly innocuous comment precipitated this research study. As I reflected on this woman's words, I began to think about the ways in which deployment may be accomplished. This pondering was prompted by the woman's use of the word "work", which suggested to me that deployment may not be just a discrete event or a period of time which periodically punctuates the lives of female military partners, but a process involving purposive activity or practices. Conceptualizing deployment in this way enables one to see that deployment may not just be a phenomenon that "happens", but may be actually *accomplished* by female military partners[8] through the work that they do. I embarked on this study in an effort to learn more about the practices which may "accomplish" deployment.

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[7] The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an alliance of nations which maintains military preparedness in order to prevent war or to engage in peacekeeping activities. In peacetime, each nation's forces receive orders only from its national authorities (The In-Dependent's Book: A Handbook for Naval Wives, 1992).

[8] Throughout this thesis I use the terms "military wife" and "female military partner" interchangeably.

The motivation for this aspect of the study arose, in part, from my desire to explore the contribution made by female military partners to the military institution through deployment-related work. As will be discussed in Chapter Two, deployments are vital and necessary in terms of the way that the Navy, in particular, carries out its work. However, as the overheard comment previously referred to suggests, a certain amount of work is also enacted by women at the local level in relation to deployment. In relation to this, questions arise. Specifically, can deployment-related work at the local level be articulated to the overall work of the military institution? To what extent is this work, or the accomplishment of deployment, constituted by and constitutive of ideologies and discourses characterizing the military?

This focus on the accomplishment of deployment represented one goal for this study. In this regard, the everyday practices enacted by women participating in the study in relation to each of the three phases of the deployment cycle, that is, pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment were displayed through this research. The participants were asked to talk about their daily lives from their local and particular standpoints and it was from this that the concrete practices were extricated and rendered visible. These practices were then articulated to the "work" of the military institution and, in so doing, the ideologies and discourses embodied within the daily practices were revealed.

Because this research proceeded from the everyday lives of participating women, rather than from the standpoint of a particular discipline (for example, sociology or psychology), it was possible to not only display the practices associated with deployment, but also to "pull out" from the words of the women the meanings they ascribed to their

practices. Gaining a sense of the meanings underlying experience is indeed possible when a researcher *begins* with that experience. When researchers proceed from a disciplinary standpoint, meaning may be lost if there is a lack of fit between everyday experience and the concepts and categories characterizing the discipline (this will be discussed in depth in Chapters Three and Four). However, this particular research project began with the women's experience, rather than from a place or position outside of that experience. Consequently, the meanings associated with everyday life were recoverable.

To this point, I have identified two purposes for this study. The first purpose entailed displaying the practices or "work" characterizing the everyday lives of female military partners, particularly with reference to the cycle of deployment. The second purpose involved uncovering the meanings the participating women ascribed to these everyday practices. Concomitantly, as the practices and meanings were rendered visible, it became possible to display related coping strategies and psychological resources that the women believed they employed as the deployment unfolded. This comprised the third purpose of the study. The fourth purpose of the study underpinned the other three. This purpose involved using the accounts of practices, meanings, strategies and resources as starting points for the analysis of ideologies and discourses embodied therein.

There was yet another purpose for this study. As an educator who has always intended to continue to work with female military partners, I was interested in reflecting upon the ways in which their experiences proceeding from local and particular standpoints could be incorporated within educational programs and counselling services. This represented the ultimate purpose of this study and the accomplishment of it took me

back full circle to the educational settings where some of my early questions about the lives of female military partners were, in part, first formulated.

Given the centrality of the practice dimension of this study, it is appropriate at this point in the thesis to provide background in relation to the practice settings - Military Family Resource Centres.

Practical Significance of the Study

A system of military family support has been in place on military bases in the United States for about thirty years. The United States Army initiated family support efforts in 1965, the Navy in 1979 and the Air Force followed in 1982 (O'Keefe, Eyre & Smith, 1984). This system consists of family service centres which offer organized educational programs and various services for military personnel and their families. Some evaluations of these programs and services suggest that military family service centres have a positive impact on the quality of life of military families. Educational programs and counselling services appear to buffer stress and diminish the perceived disequilibrium between work and family. On another level, results of evaluations conducted in the United States suggest that these systems of family support contribute to personnel retention, fleet combat readiness, decreased work loads, improved productivity and reduction in emergency leaves during deployment (O'Keefe, Eyre & Smith, 1984).

The first Canadian Military Family Support Centre (these Centres were later renamed Military Family *Resource* Centres) was opened at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax in 1986 as a pilot project associated with a military initiative known as the "Family Support Program Project" (FSPP). The purpose of the FSPP was to develop a policy for

the Canadian Forces which would support military families (Collier, 1994). The Military Family Support Centre located at CFB Halifax was seen to be a "test case" for the provision of institutional support. Evidently, this pilot and the related policy were favourably received because in 1991 the "Military Family Support Program" was established for the Canadian Forces (Collier, 1994). The establishment of this program meant that "resource" centres[9] could now be set up on all military bases in Canada and at foreign bases where there was a sufficiently large population.

Military Family Resource Centres offer three different kinds of support. First, these Centres provide counselling services to military personnel and their families. Therapeutic intervention is also available to military families in crisis. Second, the Centres implement educational programs and workshops which focus on specific concerns such as raising children in military families, the needs of military partners as well as deployment issues. Third, the Centres provide 24-hour telephone crisis counselling and information and referral services. As far as deployment programs are concerned, "Wives' Networks" are established and maintained for military units engaging in extended tours of duty (the history, role and function of the networks will be discussed at a later point in the thesis).

The Organization of the Thesis

This thesis proceeds in a particular order and sequence. Chapter One has served as a general introduction to the purposes of the research. In Chapter Two, the literature which focuses on the experiences of military wives in general and their experiences with

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[9] The name of the Military Family Support Centre was changed to the Military Family "Resource" Centre because administrators of the Centre believed that the term "support" conveyed a negative meaning that might discourage serving members and their families from participating in the Centre's program and using the services.

deployment in general is presented and critiqued. This leads to a discussion in Chapter Three of the conceptual perspectives which have informed the process of this research and enabled the analysis of the findings. Chapter Four details the methodology and method. It is important to note that this chapter is lengthy because the process of this research was such that it illuminated some of the interesting challenges commonly associated with qualitative research. Chapters Five, Six and Seven are the central analytical chapters. In these chapters, I display the practices, meanings, strategies and resources emerging from the words of the participating women as they experienced the complete cycle of deployment. Woven through each chapter is also an analysis of ideologies and discursive concepts and categories, which, as I will argue, are embodied within the everyday lives of the women. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I discuss the implications of the findings in terms of educational programs and counselling services planned and implemented within Military Family Resource Centres.

CHAPTER TWO: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Military Families

Military families are regularly challenged by conditions that test their capacity for

healthy functioning. Forced relocations, the risk of injury or death, family separation,

residence in foreign countries and normative constraints on the behavior of spouses and

children are inevitable aspects of the military lifestyle (Bowen, 1985; Fernandez-Pol,

1988; Klein, Tatone, & Lindsay, 1989; McCubbin, Marsden, Durning & Hunter, 1978;

McKain, 1973; O'Keefe, 1980). These realities combined with the isolation from

traditional sources of support such as extended families, close friends and stable

community relationships (Black, 1993; Chandler, 1989) are associated with emotional

and interpersonal stress for some military families. Another factor which may exacerbate

this stress involves the perception held by some family members that when military and

family requirements conflict, the family will be relegated to a secondary position

(Reinerth, 1978; Segal, 1986).

While some authors discuss the conditions generally faced by military families, little

is known about the experiences of women who are military partners. The particulars of

their daily lives, the meanings they ascribe to their experience as well as perceptions of

their position within and contribution to the overall military institution have largely

remained unexplored (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994). However, a small group of

researchers (Enloe, 1983; Friars, 1987; Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994; MacBride-King,

1986; Stoddard & Cabanillas, 1976) contend that it is worthwhile to understand the

experience of female military partners, particularly since it appears that their activities

contribute to the sustenance of the military system as a whole (Enloe, 1983; Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

<u>Female Military Partners</u>

There are a number of studies published in the literature which do examine general questions regarding the relationship between the military institution and military wives. Some of these are clinical studies published within journals such as <u>Military Medicine</u> . Other studies are part of the plethora of social science research studies that the United States military, in particular, commissions on a regular basis. In fact, the United States military spends millions of dollars contracting the services of social scientists to conduct studies (Enloe, 1983; Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

Some of this literature focuses on the impact of military life stress on the quality of life of female military partners. For example, Rosen, Carpenter and Moghadam (1989) surveyed 947 military wives through a self-administered questionnaire for the purpose of assessing psychological adjustment to life in the military. Psychological adjustment was determined through measures of general well-being and life satisfaction. Results of this study suggest that factors such as "demands of military duties", "unit training schedule", "unit concern for families", "relocation", "coping with separation" and "rules and regulations" affected general well-being and life satisfaction for this group of female military partners. Given the design of this study and the way that it is reported, one could deduce that all of these stressors are equally relevant to the psychological adjustment of female military partners. A study by Martin (1984) addresses this point. Subjects were asked to provide relative values for various military stressors through a self-administered

questionnaire which was distributed to 315 female military partners. Respondents were asked to rank order a list of possible stressors felt to affect overall life satisfaction with the military lifestyle. From this, three issues emerged as the most salient for this sample. In particular, problems with neighbors while living in military housing, lack of privacy in military quarters and concerns about obtaining or maintaining a job or career were cited most frequently as factors affecting life satisfaction with the military. However, other conditions of the military lifestyle also had some impact on life satisfaction for these women. These conditions included concern about a mobile lifestyle, difficulty maintaining extended family relationships, problems establishing and maintaining friendships, difficulty with rules and regulations that affect life in a military community and difficulty with the amount of time and energy required by the husband's military duties.

Another study (Martin & Ickovics, 1987) endeavored to gather data about psychological distress from a population of female military partners. These data were gleaned from an ongoing three-year, longitudinal panel study consisting of 277 participants. Study participants were assessed at two times, 12 to 15 months apart. On both occasions, respondents completed a self-administered questionnaire designed to assess the relationship between marital and military-specific stress and general psychological well-being. The survey data were supplemented by in-depth interviews with one-third of the study participants (volunteers) which took place at various points during the study period. Results indicate that as marital stress and military-specific stress are reduced, general psychological well-being is increased.

While these studies are useful to some extent in understanding the impact of the military lifestyle on the psychological well-being and life satisfaction of female military partners, the linear relationship they suggest between the impact of the military institution and the lives of military partners may be overly simplistic. Mitigating influences associated with the "everyday world" such as individual resources, material circumstances, coping strategies, formal support (such as that available through Military Family Resource Centres) and non-formal support (friends, neighbors) may not be acknowledged and accounted for through studies of this type (that is, the Rosen, Carpenter & Moghadam and Martin & Ikovics studies in particular). In addition, in grounding research with categories such as "psychological distress" (Martin & Ikovics, 1987), these studies also suggest that when female military partners are negatively affected by their embeddedness within the military institution, that there is some kind of pathology involved on the part of the women. The institution itself is not scrutinized through studies of this type. Rather, the focus is on whether or not female military partners are coping with the implacable and overarching institution of the military.

Furthermore, in responding to the questionnaires utilized in these studies, participants would necessarily find themselves attempting to fit their individual experiences with the military lifestyle into predetermined categories contained within the questionnaires that may or may not have any relationship to their everyday lives. As a consequence, the responses and the meaning that is made of those responses through analysis may not actually reflect their lived reality. This may also mean that the epistemic products of these studies may be somewhat facile in that they would not reveal mitigating circumstances or

conditions nor would they address the fundamental question of what actually constitutes "coping" or "adjustment" from the perspective of the women.

Incorporation

Another prevalent theme characterizing the literature on female military partners relates to the extent to which these women are "drawn in" or incorporated within the boundaries of the military organization. A related theme inherent within this particular body of literature focuses on the contributions made by these women to their male partners' careers.

Examples of the literature focussing on incorporation present interesting contentions regarding the lives of female military partners. Incorporation is defined as "involvement" in and "identification with" the military (MacBride-King, 1986). In a master's thesis entitled "Whose Job is it Anyway? An Exploratory Study of the Relationship between the Military Organization and the Military Wife", MacBride-King argues that women married to men in the Canadian Forces are "drawn in" or incorporated within the military system. She makes her claims in this regard on the basis of her quantitative study of 239 military partners living on base at CFB Gagetown.

While MacBride-King (1986) acknowledges that other work environments also incorporate family members, she nevertheless claims that the level of incorporation within the military is so high that it can be thought of as a particularly "greedy institution". She claims that a greedy institution imposes expectations and demands on workers and family members that exceed those normally associated with other institutions and organizations. MacBride-King is citing Coser (1976) when she uses the

notion of the "greedy institution", as do a number of other researchers (Bowen, 1989; Segal, 1986) who write about this phenomenon. This idea of the military as a greedy institution is similar to Goffman's (1961) depiction of the military as a "total institution", one which has an encompassing impact on the lives of its members.

In justifying her claim that the military is a greedy institution, MacBride-King (1986) argues that the level of incorporation for military wives is higher than for other women whose lives are connected in some way to other work organizations and institutions. She supports this claim by pointing out the means by which the incorporation of military wives is accomplished. Essentially, MacBride-King maintains that incorporation is accomplished in three ways: by utilizing the fear of sanctions if appropriate behavior is not enacted, including the fear of damaging the male partner's career; through such institutional constraints as frequent relocation and deployment; and by "creating and encouraging the maintenance of a particular image of what constitutes the 'good' serviceman, family and wife" (MacBride-King, 1986, p. 65).

The use of sanctions as a form of negative reinforcement and the enforcement of the expectation that military wives fit the institutionally relevant image of the "good" military spouse are perhaps understandable ways and means for an institution such as the military to accomplish incorporation. However, it is interesting to note that MacBride-King (1986) also contends that frequent relocation and deployment are implicated in the incorporation of military wives. In her view, such realities incite a level of uncertainty within many military families which encourages dependence upon and thereby, incorporation within, the institution. If you are never quite certain where and when you

will be moving or if it is difficult to determine exactly the nature of a deployment or how long it will be, it is conceivable that military family members, especially military wives who are often responsible for managing the individual and familial effects of a deployment and\or handling a move, will become thoroughly entwined or "incorporated" within the institution.

Another master's thesis supports MacBride-King's (1986) arguments. This thesis, simply entitled "Military Wives", is based on qualitative research designed to assess the "quality of life" of female military partners (Friars, 1987). Various themes emerged from this study of ten women, all of whom but one lived at CFB Rockcliffe (Ottawa). For example, this group of female military partners also believed that they were "drawn in" or incorporated within the military system. Moreover, within these women's words there are echoes of MacBride-King's contentions regarding the ways in which incorporation is accomplished. Specifically, all of these women generally felt that their behavior contributed significantly to their male partners' careers and that any "inappropriate" behavior could actually adversely affect those careers. At the same time, this group of female military partners believed that while they were expected to contribute to their male partners' careers, the military was not responsive to their individual needs.

Conceivably, the perceptions of the women included in these two studies could be colored by the fact that most were living in military housing located on base. If one can assume that living on base means that the military is constantly present to military members and their families (Chandler, 1989), then it would be reasonable for these individuals to feel that they are indeed "drawn in" or incorporated within the system.

However, the findings of another Canadian study which includes female military partners living both on-base and off-base strengthen some of the contentions made by the women in the MacBride-King (1986) and Friars (1987) studies.

Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) engaged in an institutional ethnography (Smith, 1987) designed to assess the ways in which a female military partner's contributions to the military system can be thought of as "work" which actually sustains the system. This was an extensive study. The research design included open-ended interviews with 112 current and former military spouses living across the country and on the Canadian bases still functioning in Germany at the time of the study.

Similar to the Friars (1987) study, but unlike the other studies cited to this point in this chapter, these researchers used as their starting point accounts of everyday experiences provided by the study participants. The open-endedness of the interviews left spaces for the women to talk about their lives and the meanings they ascribe to their experience from *their* standpoints. This is in marked contrast to the more deductive approaches utilized in other studies of military wives which require respondents to fit their experience within pre-determined concepts and categories derived from theory.

As an institutional ethnography, Harrison and Laliberte's (1994) study also placed priority on understanding how the accounts of everyday experience which proceed from local and particular standpoints embody social relations inherent in the "relations of ruling" (Smith, 1987). (This will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Three.) As the authors explicate this embodiment, it is possible to see the ways in which the daily experiences of the participants are implicated in the maintenance of the relations of ruling

and, in turn, to the sustenance of the institution as a whole.

Through their work, Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) affirm that female military partners do contribute to the military system and that this contribution is reinforced through their incorporation within the system. In particular, women interviewed in their study maintained that they were expected to be cooperative, to "get along" with the institution and to identify with their husbands' careers. To add further support to these claims, Harrison and Laliberte´ note that until very recently, female military partners were referred to as "DWs" (dependent wives) in military correspondence or on their overseas identification cards. Not surprisingly, relegation to such a category makes it difficult for women so identified to maintain an individual identity. Just as the uncertainty associated with relocation and deployment is thought to foster dependence upon the military for information basic to the material circumstances of life within the system (MacBride-King, 1986), the overt classification as a "dependent wife" (albeit unofficially in current times) conveys the image of a woman subsumed by and reliant upon the institution. Therefore, it appears that the "dependent" status of female military partners fosters and maintains their incorporation within the military system.

Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) seem to suggest that the incorporation of female military partners encompasses a peculiar incongruity. These authors would concur with the previous studies cited in this chapter discussing the incorporation of military wives within the institution. However, they also imply that the incorporation of female military partners is primarily viewed as a means by which these women are readily accessible and available to do the kind of work that sustains the institution. Otherwise, their

incorporation does not carry any meaning. In fact, despite their incorporation and the contribution this makes to the military institution, these women are still granted "dependent" status and thereby a particular location within the institution that lies outside of the circles of influence responsible for the relations of ruling. As Enloe (1983) states, military wives are "fundamentally marginal to the publicly articulated meaning of the military, even while they are integral to that same institution's day-to-day maintenance" (p. 56).

Other literature elucidates the nature of the contribution made to the institution through the incorporation of military wives. In synthesizing a review of military family literature, Hunter (1982) concludes that the incorporation of female military partners within the military system is considered to be a vital factor affecting the military member's performance on the job and retention. Relatedly, Hunter posits from this review that female military partners are usually expected to place their husbands' and the military's needs before their own, which may mean that these women submerge their identities into that of their husbands and that of the military system. Correspondingly, Hunter maintains that in submerging their identities, these women are better able to meet military expectations while being ever mindful that military considerations should have priority over personal or familial interests. One can construe from Hunter's writing that incorporation may mean that a military wife runs the risk of losing touch with her sense of self.

A possible consequence of this is that female military partners may live their life on the basis of an "ascribed status" (Snyder, 1978) or "vicarious achievement" (Reinerth,

1978). According to these authors, this means that women in this position derive some sense of accomplishment through the work-related achievements of their husbands. In other words, as the men succeed, they succeed. In addition, these authors argue that wives wear their husband's rank. They share, to some extent, the privileges, as well as the responsibilities and constraints associated with their husband's position in the ranking structure.

Papanek (1973) discusses a way of conceptualizing women's vicarious achievement and ascribed status through her articulation of the notion of a "two-person single career". According to Papanek, this phenomenon is a combination of both formal and informal institutional constraints and benefits experienced by both members of a couple, even when only one person is actually employed by the institution.

The two-person career pattern is certainly not limited to the military institution. Indeed, Papanek (1973) claims that this pattern emerges whenever the female partner, in particular, is perceived to be the main "supporter, comforter, backstage manager, home maintainer and main rearer of children" (p.858). Moreover, Papanek maintains that female partners in these arrangements (presuming that she is the one who is not working outside the home) endeavor to meet certain expectations emanating from the work institution regarding role performance. In meeting these expectations, female partners reinforce the aims and objectives of the work institution .

Callan (1984) adds another interesting dimension to the understanding of incorporation through a two-person career which purportedly characterizes the lives of some women. Callan suggests that to be living vicariously in a position of ascribed status,

"a woman will have to undergo the silencing or under-recognition of the rest of her personhood, which allows her to be so designated" (p. 1). In addition, Callan claims that to the extent that women are silenced or under-recognized, the world view that comes to be accepted within a relationship is likely to be the one shared by the husband and the organization. This contention is consistent with Enloe's (1983) and Harrison and Laliberte's (1994) implications that female military partners, in particular, may submerge their identities under the weight of expectations associated with their male partner's involvement in the military organization.

The work of Finch (1983) is also useful in developing the notion of incorporation. Finch studied women married to clergymen, plumbers, military men, policemen and others. Based on her study, Finch also posits that women are incorporated into their husband's work and that women are constrained in some ways by their incorporation. This conceptualization is very similar to that of Papanek (1973), however, Finch expands upon Papanek's analysis in her more in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of incorporation. Rather than viewing the wife as subsumed within one career as Papanek does, Finch envisages a wife's relationship to her husband's work as a "career" in itself. She refers to this as the "wife of" career (p.158). According to Finch, the "wife of" career denotes a woman's incorporation into her husband's work in a patterned way which parallels his own experience of that work. Interestingly, Finch also contends that the husband's work organization will provide "some kind of organizing theme for his wife" (p. 159) and that the wife is then able to make sense and order of her life in relation to that theme.

Finch 's (1983) work also adds an interesting dimension to Callan's (1984) perspectives. Unlike Callan, who also discusses the phenomenon of incorporation, Finch views the relationship between a wife and her husband's work as reciprocal; that is, his work both structures her life and elicits contributions to it (p.2). This emphasis on the reciprocal relationship between a wife and her husband's work separates Finch's work from the other writers who discuss incorporation.

Specifically, Finch (1983) contends that a husband's work environment imposes a set of structures upon his wife's life which may constrain her choices about living her own life. Finch dismisses the idea that this conceptualization may be deterministic, even though she states outright that her use of the word "structure" may lead one to believe that there are particular structures which are unchanging or unchangeable and that wives slot themselves into some preordained role within that structure (p.2). Rather, according to her, her use of the word "structuring" is merely intended to underline the externality of constraints as women experience them. In her view, the set of structures that she refers to are "givens" (or rather they are accepted as "givens") to be accommodated and worked around. Moreover, Finch asserts that "the patterns which they impose form fundamental organizing themes for women's lives" (p. 2).

From Finch's (1983) perspective, the other side of the reciprocal relationship between a wife and her husband's employment is associated with the contributions elicited from the wife to the husband's career. While acknowledging that the character and scale of these contributions varies with particular jobs, Finch does contend that all wives contribute in some way to their husband's careers. As she discusses and supports this

claim, Finch also points out that, for the most part, these contributions are obscured or rendered invisible by the ideological conceptualization of work and family as two separate spheres. Finch argues that work and family have become dichotomized into separate spheres as a result of increased industrialization over the past century and the concomitant separation of work from the family home (p.4).

This separation has meant that paid work has become associated with activities taking place outside the family home, leaving women to be assigned to the domestic sphere as their particular realm (Thompson, 1995). This gender-based assignment to each of the spheres results in a dichotomy between work and family which leads some authors (Chow & Berheide, 1988; Smith, 1987) to contend that the particular features of women's everyday lives in the private world may not only be invisible, but also denigrated and devalued. Moreover, an institutional ethnographer such as Smith (1987) would challenge the public-private dichotomization of women's lives by claiming that the private realm actually embodies the public domain.

These contentions are based on the view that the conceptualization of work and family as separate, fixed and dichotomous entities and the corresponding gendered division of labor within these spheres conveys a certain message about power relations between men and women. Men's activities in the public sphere are generally more highly valued by society than the activities of women in the private sphere. This primacy of the public over the private arises from the value we place in this society on the economic market (Finch, 1983, Thompson, 1995). Given that men are tied to this market by virtue of their activities within the public realm and considering that women's family work does

not count as a form of production with exchange value within that market, it is not surprising that activities within the private realm are thought to be both invisible and devalued.

Although Finch (1983) does convincingly point out some of the problems and limitations associated with continued dichotomizing between the public and private or work and family spheres, her emphasis on "structuring" within her discussion of the reciprocal relationship between a wife and her husband's career, while maybe not intended to be deterministic, is still, perhaps unwittingly, presenting a picture of an external structure (the public sphere) which is "acting upon" or imposing particular conditions and constraints upon women's lives (the private sphere).

However, Finch's (1983) work is significant. In reviewing most of the literature cited up until this point, it may be all too easy to conclude that women in general and female military partners in particular are passive victims. After all, the literature drawn from journals of military medicine and human stress (Martin, 1984; Martin & Ickovics, 1987; Rosen, Carpenter & Moghadam, 1989) emphasizes the negative impact of the military lifestyle on female partners' psychological adjustment and general well-being. Within this literature, there is no discussion of mitigating factors such as intra or interpersonal resources or particular coping strategies which may help to ameliorate the stress associated with military life. Indeed, any literature which does discuss coping (Hadaway, 1980) only refers to coping *styles* (ranging from "apathetic-independence" to "conflict-oriented" or "adaptive" to "maladaptive"), not the *strategies* involved. This focus on coping *styles* merely names experience. The actual details of the *work* which may

comprise specific styles are not explicated through the literature.

In addition, the idea of the female military partner as a proactive force is not entertained. While Finch (1983) does not specifically refer to proactive coping strategies or resources either, she at least leaves the reader with the impression that some women cope quite well while "married to the job". Regardless, the lack of consideration given to specific practices which facilitate coping is a major gap within the literature on female military partners.

Furthermore, some of the literature that discusses incorporation and the two-person career (Callan, 1984; Friars, 1987; MacBride-King, 1986; Papanek, 1973) implies that women may unwittingly step into roles awaiting them. Again, the idea of woman as passive victim emerges. While such may be the case for some women, this body of literature leaves little room for considering the extent to which some women may actually choose a life of vicarious achievement and ascribed status through their incorporation into their husband's work organization. In relation to this, Finch (1983) poses the possibility that the patterns of incorporation may make sense to some wives. In other words, Finch enables us to understand that this arrangement might be thought of as a satisfactory individual choice made by a woman whereby she satisfies her achievement needs through her male partner's advancement in his career. Or, a woman may glean satisfaction from her own "wife of" career. On the other hand, the vicarious achievement obtained through a two-person career or the satisfaction acquired through a "wife of" career could be a consequence of socialization which encourages women to accept any loss of identity associated with incorporation as a trade-off for socioeconomic security. Finch does not

have any answers in this regard, but unlike many of the other writers mentioned to this point in this chapter, she at least poses the question.

As I synthesize the various claims drawn from the literature reviewed to this point, it is possible to construct a patterned sequence of contentions. Specifically, female military partners may be incorporated (Friars, 1987; MacBride-King, 1986) within the military institution to the extent that they submerge their individual identities (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994; Hunter, 1982) which may mean that the world view that comes to be accepted is that of the husband and his work organization (Callan, 1984). Furthermore, female military partners may live their lives on the basis of ascribed status or vicarious achievement (Reinerth, 1978; Snyder, 1978) within a two-person career (Papanek, 1973) or "wife-of" career (Finch, 1983). In addition, the relationship between the female partner and her husband's career may be reciprocal, that is, his work may both structure her life and elicit contributions to it (Finch, 1983). Some of the literature also argues that as women live their lives in this way, their daily activities and practices may serve to reinforce the aims and objectives of the work organization (Enloe, 1983; Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994). Moreover, any stress that may be associated with the lives of female military partners could affect their psychological adjustment and general well-being (Martin, 1984; Martin & Ickovics, 1987; Rosen, Carpenter & Moghadam, 1989).

One of the expectations associated with the incorporation of military wives is related to the deployment experience. Female military partners are expected to manage the family separations that ensue from periodic deployments in a way that the military deems to be positive.

Female Military Partners and Deployment

Some female military partners, particularly those associated with the Navy, are faced with the challenge of recurring separations from their male partners. Within the Navy system, military personnel can be deployed for a period of time ranging from three weeks to six months.

There are a number of reported difficulties associated with the deployment experience. For example, loss of companionship, loneliness and social isolation are discussed within the literature as common conditions related to deployment. Studies also indicate that some women present the symptomology of mild depression during deployment (Decker, 1978; Hadaway, 1980). Researchers conducting these studies claim that this is an understandable reaction if the separation is perceived by the female military partner as a type of bereavement whereby the absent male is "lost" to the family for a given period of time which thereby requires some sort of grieving response.

This depiction of deployment as a loss first emerged in Hill's (1949) classic study of the effect of military-induced separation during World War II on patterns of family adjustment. The model that ensued from this first study of deployment has been characterized by later-day researchers such as Black (1993) as evocative of a "roller-coaster". This analogy does indeed come to mind when one considers the stages purportedly experienced by family members during the absence of the serving member as conceptualized by Hill. Based on his work, Hill claims that after the leave-taking of the serving member, the family experiences a level of disorganization that is analogous to a crisis situation. Hill then maintains that the family manages to reorganize and recover

from the initial shock of departure. The third and final stage of this model involves the family settling into a new level of reorganization that either exceeds, falls below or is similar to the level extant before the departure of the serving member.

Hill's (1949) patterned sequence of responses to deployment resemble the stages commonly attributed to general grieving responses (Logan, 1987). This reinforces the idea visible within the literature that deployment is commonly associated with loss. For example, Hadaway (1980), a military family counsellor, expands on the themes of loss and grieving through her delineation of a sequence of reactions to duty-related separations which she claims are experienced by female military partners. According to this researcher, the phases are protest, despair and detachment, a cycle which is also not dissimilar from the general grieving process.

Hadaway (1980) discusses certain emotions and behaviors associated with each phase. Specifically, she claims that during the protest phase, female military partners may experience anger, anxiety and denial, while in the despair phase they may be more "accident prone", disorganized and restless. Furthermore, Hadaway maintains that detachment is the most taxing and tiring part of the grief associated with the loss and change of deployment. In her view, the female military partner is at risk for illness during this phase and may withdraw from social events and may even resort to the use of escape mechanisms such as alcohol, drug abuse or promiscuity.

While the Hill (1949) and Hadaway (1980) models are generally thought to provide insight into patterns of behavior ongoing while the serving member is actually deployed, they do not delineate the entire process comprising pre-deployment and post-deployment.

Kathleen Vestal Logan has devised a model which does describe the complete cycle of deployment.

In relation to the pre-deployment phase, Logan (1987) claims that military wives experience two distinct stages. In particular, stage one comprises a period referred to as the "anticipation of loss" (p.3).This stage purportedly spans the four to six week period immediately before the departure of the ship. Apparently, this period is characterized by a high level of emotional volatility and tension as members of the household, in both a material and psychological sense, prepare for the impending leave-taking.

Stage two of the deployment cycle is labelled "detachment and withdrawal" (p.3). This stage purportedly occurs in the days immediately preceding the departure. Logan (1987) claims that this is the most difficult stage, primarily because the emotional volatility associated with stage one intensifies at this time. Logan contends that this reaction is often followed by ambivalence and emotional numbness which, in her view, serves to facilitate disengagement.

The ambivalence and numbness apparently persist into stage three - the period of time labelled as "emotional disorganization" (p.4). This stage encompasses the actual departure of the ship. According to Logan (1987), many military wives feel relieved that the departure has actually taken place but then they feel guilty because of their relief. These feelings are supposedly accompanied by a sense of aimlessness as old routines have been disrupted and new ones not yet established. Withdrawal from friends and family, anger at being left alone and subsequent depression also purportedly transpire within this stage.

Stage four involves "recovery and stabilization" (p.4). Logan (1987) apparently believes that military wives manage to transcend the potentially debilitating feelings associated with stage three and come to a point where they proclaim "Hey, I'm doing OK!". According to Logan, this realization evolves as the women establish new patterns and routines and begin to "feel more comfortable with the reorganization of roles and responsibilities. Broken arms have been tended, mowers fixed, cars tuned up, and washing machines bought" (p. 4). Logan suggests that this transformation from despair to confidence and self-assurance is facilitated through and by the cultivation of new sources of support such as friends, church and military spousal support networks.

"Stabilization" (p.5) apparently persists into stage five. Logan (1987) maintains that this is the most appropriate way to characterize the prolonged length of the deployment. In this period, military wives are supposedly settled in and quite comfortable with the new routines and patterns. Logan contends that this stage is the most satisfying for military wives. In fact, she claims that many of the benefits associated with being part of the military system emerge at this time. In an article that is written in the form of guidance and advice to military wives, she states:

> This stage is one of the benefits of being a military partner. You have
> the opportunity to initiate new activities, accept more responsibilities,
> and stretch yourself and your abilities - all while secure in your relationship
> with your partner. (Logan, 1987, p. 5)

While Logan (1987) concedes that these positive responses to the deployment may also

be accompanied by occasions where the military spouse feels mildly depressed, anxious and asexual, she nevertheless maintains that "on the whole, you experience a new sense of independence and freedom and take pride in your ability to cope alone" (Logan, 1987, p. 5).

According to Logan (1987), this period of self-assurance and stability prevails throughout the deployment. However, as the date for the return of the ship approaches, positive feelings intensify. Logan identifies this period of time as the "anticipation of homecoming" (p.6). Logan believes that women are consumed with planning and preparing for the return of their partners at this time and recommends that they "count down the days" in order to build a sense of excitement. Logan does acknowledge that some women may be feeling some anxiety at this time, particularly if the deployment has been long, but overall, she claims that this stage, comprising the last month before the return, is a happy time.

The final stage of the cycle of deployment as conceptualized by Logan (1987) is referred to as the "renegotiation of the marriage contract and family relationships" (p.6). Logan posits that this stage spans a period of approximately one month following the return of the ship. This is the time when the male partner is re-integrated within the family. Logan advises a slow, patient approach in this regard. She also cautions the military wife that renegotiation may involve the relinquishing of some of the roles and responsibilities that brought such personal satisfaction in stage four. Regardless, Logan recommends that family members work together to create a space for the returning spouse.

It is important to indicate that I have noted in my experience as a planner and facilitator of educational programs for military wives that the Logan (1987) model has received a lot of attention. I have been at meetings where it has been discussed as a useful tool in the planning of deployment programs. I have witnessed Resource Centre staff diligently condensing the contents of the original article which outlines the model into a more readable form for military wives.

Perhaps the most relevant endorsement of the Logan (1987) model is the fact that it was included in the "briefing package" distributed to military spouses at the "pre-deployment briefing" held before the departure of the *Illustrious*. (This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four). The package also contained information of a more technical nature, but as the packages were distributed, one copy of the Logan model was extracted by a member of the Resource Centre staff and recommended publicly.

The apparent preoccupation with the Logan (1987) model implies that it is institutionally relevant. This contention will be addressed at various points within the remainder of this thesis, but for now, it is important to examine the Logan model with a critical eye.

Logan's (1987) model differs from the Hill (1949) and Hadaway (1980) models in that it spans the entire cycle of deployment, in other words, the pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment phases. Through this recognition that deployment comprises more than the actual time that the ship is away, Logan enables both military spouses and those who work with them as educators and counsellors in Resource Centres to develop a broader understanding of the cycle. The model is also useful in that it

identifies both positive and negative emotions and behaviors associated with each phase of deployment.

However, Logan (1987), like the authors who discuss the coping styles referred to previously, does not outline specific practices enacted by these women at each of the phases. The labels assigned to each of the stages *name* experience, but they do not elucidate the details and particulars of that experience. For example, Logan labels stage four as a time of "recovery and stabilization". Although she describes the feelings that she ascribes to this stage, she does not detail the ways in which "recovery and stabilization" are accomplished. One does not gain a sense of the *work* that is involved as military wives endeavor to "recover" and "stabilize". This imparts a superficiality to the deployment-related experiences of military wives as depicted through the model.

Moreover, if this depiction of female military partners' reactions to deployment stands as an authoritative source for military educators and counsellors, then their clients may find themselves attempting to fit their experiences into the predetermined categories or "stages" which may not have any relation to their lived reality. For example, certain contextual realities may preclude "recovery and stabilization" (stage four) for some women. Other women may be involved in relationships where "renegotiation of the marriage contract and family relationships" (stage eight) may not be possible or probable. In other words, this stage-oriented model has the effect of universalizing experience. The model assumes that all military wives experiencing deployment share the same reality, when indeed, such could never be the case.

The problem here though is not just one of relevance. The concern is not just whether

or not the model applies to the experience of military wives in general. Rather, I am concerned about the effect of such a model on the self-concept and self-esteem of a military wife who, for whatever reason, is living a reality throughout a deployment that does not fit within the categories imposed through the model. Understandably, the possibility exists that such women could judge themselves harshly if their experience does not match the model. If indeed experience does not match the model, the potential exists for military wives to interpret that this means that they are handling the deployment experience badly and that it is somehow "their fault". Furthermore, such a universalizing model so enthusiastically embraced as this model appears to be, could also potentially incite negative and perhaps unfair appraisals of military wives' behavior on the part of military counsellors and educators if there is an apparent "lack of fit".

Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) add to our understanding of these potential problems through their discussion of the "self-reliance" construction. In their view, the military system encourages female military partners to be self-reliant and to deny negative feelings associated with some of the realities of the military lifestyle, such as deployment. Difficulties arise when female military partners cannot or choose not to act self-reliantly. Harrison and Laliberte' assert that, as a result, these women may experience feelings of embarrassment, anxiety and guilt because they believe that they "should" be handling the separation in a more positive fashion. Conceivably, it may not be uncommon for such women to construct a repertoire of intra and interpersonal rationalizations and covering techniques to conceal what they believe to be an inappropriate response to the deployment of their male partners. Sustaining this would require considerable effort and

could undermine endeavors to develop and maintain a positive self-image.

Other Work-Related Separations

This discussion of female military partners' experiences with deployment leads to consideration of certain questions. In particular, do the female partners of personnel working at other jobs and careers that require travel and periodic separation have similar experiences? A study conducted by Gerstel and Gross (1984) sheds some light on this question.

These researchers interviewed Merchant Marines and their wives as well as couples involved in commuter marriages. Based on this work, Gerstel and Gross (1984) contend that, similar to the experience of female military partners, there are certain costs associated with separation. These costs include emotional distance between partners. Indeed, analysis of the interviews suggests that living apart may jeopardize psychological intimacy. Some respondents reported that they sometimes feel "weird", "strange" or "awkward" when they reunite (p.160).

Couples in this sample also indicated that they sometimes experience social isolation and feelings of "being different" during periods of separation. A certain ambiguity seems to characterize their social status at these times, that is, they are single but not really single.

Similarly, other individuals interviewed stated that they feel like a "fifth wheel" at social gatherings. Interestingly, these findings are congruent with documented perceptions of female military partners during periods of deployment (Boynton & Pierce, 1978; Enloe, 1983).

While often feeling lonely and isolated, the wives in the Gerstel and Gross (1984) study also cited that periodic separation increases their competence, especially with reference to particular gender-typed activities which would normally be assumed by the husband. In relation to this, these wives recognize a generalized sense of independence within themselves – sometimes even suggesting that they had become "too" independent (p.164).

The Merchant Marine wives in the Gerstel and Gross (1984) study also reported anxiety about their husbands' evaluations of the independence required of them in their spouses' absences. Wives involved in the commuter marriages did not express this anxiety to the same extent. For the sailing wives, much more so than for the commuter wives, this increased independence during separation often necessitated "adjustments" upon their husbands' return. These adjustments reflect the female partner's accommodation to her partner's desire to resume a controlling role in family affairs.

While there are apparent similarities between the deployment related experiences of female military partners and partners engaged in other careers where periodic separation is a fact of life, there may be additional complicating factors distinguishing military experiences from others. Martin and Ickovics (1987) assert that the continuous sequence of separations and reunions characterizing life for many military families may result in a level of stress for these families that surpasses that experienced by others undergoing periodic separation. Martin and Ickovics attribute this to the relative youth and inexperience of some military personnel and their partners which may make them more vulnerable to personal and family dysfunction. This is no doubt exacerbated by the fact

that the female partners are generally new to the area where they are living and are thereby at a distance from the support of an extended family and long-term friends (Chandler, 1989; Enloe, 1983). Presumably, merchant marine wives and wives involved in commuter marriages are more likely to have established systems of support readily available because they do not relocate as frequently.

Another factor which may exacerbate deployment difficulties for female military partners relates to problems encountered in attempting to communicate with their partner while he is away. Long-distance telephone calls are restricted to and from ships during naval deployments. This combined with a slow turn-around time for ship-to-shore mail means that military partners have little opportunity to maintain ongoing communication during deployment. This is probably not the case for other couples experiencing periodic separation.

Other realities pertinent to the military and its work exacerbate the effects of work-induced separations for military wives. Increasingly, military units are now deployed in combat zones. The Cold War preoccupation with preparedness has been supplanted by a commitment to service in war-torn areas of the globe.

This has implications for both serving members and their families. Since the Persian Gulf War in particular, the effects of combat-related duty on serving members have been scrutinized by various military researchers, including psychologists and social workers. This has resulted in a number of studies investigating such concerns as post-traumatic stress disorder.

While this research is valuable at this time when news magazines and television

documentaries are reporting on the "Gulf War Syndrome" - a complex of physiological

and psychological symptoms evident within military personnel who served in the Persian

Gulf during the war between Iraq and Kuwait - comparatively minimal attention has been

paid to what Figley (1993) refers to as "secondary traumatic stress". Secondary traumatic

stress is defined as the stress experienced by individuals in the process of living with or

providing direct assistance to traumatized family members (Figley, 1993). In addition,

stress reactions are visible among individuals at the time that their family members are

serving in combat zones (Black, 1993; Figley, 1993; Ford, Shaw, Sennhauser, Greaves,

Thacker, Chandler, Schwartz & McClain, 1993; Solomon, Waysman, Belkin, Levy,

Mikulincer & Enoch, 1992). As Figley notes:

...there is growing evidence that families endured considerable

war-related stress, perhaps more than the family members who were in

the combat zone...Yet military and DVA mental health programs focus

on the individual serviceperson or veteran, with little attention to family

members or their relationships. (p. 52)

Two studies attempt to address this issue by specifically focussing on patterns of

adaptation and coping noted within samples of military wives during the time that their

spouses were serving in the Gulf. Rosen, Westhuis & Teitelbaum (1994) report on the

basis of their work that younger wives, in particular, seemed to experience serious

difficulty when their husbands were deployed in the Gulf War. These military

psychiatrists claim that many of these women "failed to cope" (p. 43) despite efforts to help them. This study neglects to articulate what constitutes coping and it does leave the reader with the impression that this may be instance of "blaming the victim", but regardless, it does at least acknowledge that trauma in response to combat-related duty is not confined to the serving members alone.

The article written by Figley (1993) does make more of an effort to specify some of the particulars of secondary traumatic stress on the part of military wives. In this author's assessment, the wives of husbands deployed in the Gulf experienced stress attributable to thoughts of the danger faced by the combatants. Depression and anxiety also emerged in response to feelings of despair associated with the thought of permanent loss. These women were also aware of the potential for post-traumatic stress reactions on the part of their partners. They were worried about how they would handle these reactions and what kind of support would be available to them. Incessant media coverage of the war purportedly exacerbated these feeling and concerns.

Evidently, the reactions of military wives to service in combat zones constitute another layer of experience superimposed upon the cycle of responses associated with deployment in a non-combat zone. This, along with the other factors discussed in this section of this chapter, differentiates military wives' experience with work-induced separation as compared to the experiences of their non-military counterparts.

On a broader level, there are additional conditions and circumstances that distinguish the deployment experiences of military wives. The preceding discussion of secondary traumatic stress evolving from combat in war zones poses the possibility that the

phenomenon of "combat", which is increasingly becoming a reality for military institutions around the globe in contemporary times, may pattern the lives of military personnel and their families in a particular way. Harrison and Laliberte' (1993; 1994) contend that this patterning involves the relegation of female military partners to a subordinate position within their families and within the military institution. According to these authors, this subordination is contiguous with the conditioning experienced by serving members which compels them to develop and maintain their central bonds to each other and to the institution so that they can easily and readily disengage from the family in the event of a deployment. Disengagement is particularly important in the case of a *combat-induced* deployment because of the urgency involved. Conceivably, it is easier to leave if one believes that what one is leaving is less important than the institution. As a result, many military wives quickly learn that they are in second place.

The military is quite open about this institutional need for the subordination of military wives. For example, admonitions in this regard are offered to military wives in a recent publication (Collier, 1994) authored by the wife of a retired member of the Canadian Forces. This book is meant to serve as a guide to young military spouses helping them to understand what their lives will be like if their husbands choose to make a career out of the military.

Collier (1994) explicitly discusses the second ranked status of the military wife in a chapter entitled "Wives, Mistresses and Significant Others". She states:

Well, unfortunately, a military wife has to learn to take second place. You

are his mistress, sharing whatever time he can squeeze away from his "wife" -

that is, his job. Having your time together is possible only when his "wife"

is not making demands. You may have your plans changed at the last minute

because his "wife" needs him elsewhere. It is not easy taking second place in

your husband's life, but it does happen, and as with any man that has two

loves, he is often caught right in the middle, trying to please both at the same

time - often an impossible task! His wife comes first - although this is not

necessarily of his own choosing. This can be a hard lesson to learn, but the

sooner you accept it and deal with it, the easier it will be on everyone.

(Collier, 1994, p. 57)

In using this mistress-wife analogy, Collier (1994) reinforces the contentions

advanced by Harrison and Laliberte´ (1993) regarding the primacy granted to the

institutional bonds within the military. However, Harrison and Laliberte´ would conceive

of the military "mistress" as no more than a military "appendage" (1993) who is

positioned in a subordinate status as husbands' loyalties and energies are appropriated by

the institution in the interests of combat readiness.

While many wives who are "incorporated" within their husband's careers and who

also experience periodic separation may also be positioned as subordinate, it is this notion

of "combat" and the related and blatant subordination of female military partners that

separates the deployment-related experiences of these women from their civilian

counterparts. The urgency associated with combat intensifies the subordination of the

military wives to such an extent that an outside observer may well be appalled by the glaring evidence of misogyny that is typically less visible in other work organizations (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1993). Even Collier's (1994) use of the "mistress-wife" analogy conveys a particularly pejorative image of the military spouse. Conceptualizing the military spouse as a "mistress" implies a furtiveness or a clandestine relationship that can only be accommodated when convenient or possible. Furthermore, this term also intimates that the military spouse is someone only worthy of a weaker commitment, as compared to the bonds that tie the serving member to the institution.

The need to be constantly "combat ready" legitimizes this intense and highly visible subordination. In fact, combat readiness underpins numerous practices and processes characterizing the military institution and actually constitutes a central "ideology"of the institution (Harrison and Laliberte´ 1993; 1994). The ideology of combat readiness will be discussed at various points throughout this thesis, but at this point it is important to note that it is the phenomenon of combat that lends a particular intensity and legitmacy to the subordination of military wives which, it can be argued, can also exacerbate their experiences with periodic separation from their male partners, as compared to the experiences of their civilian counterparts.

Summary

This critical review of the literature related to female military partners in general and their experiences with deployment in particular has precipitated a number of questions about the ways in which female military partners experience their reality. Questions arise with regard to the practices they employ as they live out the cycle of deployment, the

meanings ascribed to those practices and whether or not those everyday practices can be articulated to the work of the military institution. The following chapter, Chapter Three, details conceptual perspectives which can function to frame these questions.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUALIZING THE MILITARY INSTITUTION AND THE EVERYDAY LIVES OF FEMALE MILITARY PARTNERS

The Military Institution as a Broad Complex of Relations

When one thinks of an "institution", one automatically thinks of a tangible and ordered entity. Some also might think of an institution as far removed from everyday life. However, while most probably do conceive of institutions in this way, they are actually not just distant, reified and separate "places". Rather, an institution may also be seen as a broad complex of social relations. These social relations are embedded within the everyday practices of individuals. This means then that institutions also embody everyday practice.

Within her book entitled The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology, Smith (1987) offers a compelling and comprehensive argument supporting this contention. A sample of this argument follows:

> Order arises in and is accomplished by the actual practices of
> actual individuals, including their practices of reasoning, interpreting,
> rendering what has happened accountable. The generalizable properties
> of social relations in the institutional mode are accomplished in people's
> actual practice. (p. 175)

With this understanding, it is possible to understand that the generalizable properties and relations of an institution take form, or rather, are "accomplished" within the

coordination and organization of practices in the everyday world. At the same time, these practices are ordered within the context of the institution. Therefore, it would appear that the everyday world and the institutions it embodies form a reciprocal complex of practices.

In working from these assumptions, that is, that daily practices embody the social relations comprising institutions and that these practices are implicated in the "accomplishment" of an institution, Smith (1987) and other feminist scholars who employ her perspective (DeVault, 1990a; Walker, 1990) are able to argue that institutions take their form and achieve their objectives in the context of daily life. However, the work of ruling is also integral to this process.

The Ruling Apparatus and the Institution

Smith (1987) contends that the work of ruling is implicated in, even integral to, the practices that produce broad institutional complexes such as "the military". Indeed, she asserts that ruling is accomplished through and by an apparatus which functions in such a way that particular "relevances", or meaningful and purposive perspectives on the world, are absorbed within local settings and are thereby present within the daily practices of individuals (Smith, 1987, p.109). In effect, these relevances serve as the criteria for the organization and coordination of these practices. Essentially, it is through everyday practice that the work of ruling is accomplished.

Any network of institutional practices, including those relating to the professions, government, state administration, business and industry, which exerts power so as to regulate and control aspects of society is referred to as a " ruling apparatus" (Smith, 1987,

p.3). This definition could imply that the ruling apparatus is an entity that is "out there" exercising power as a separate and reified structure. However, the ruling apparatus or the relations of ruling are woven within the fabric of everyday life. For example, the choices available with respect to the social activities of a military officer's wife are constrained by such factors as the rank of her husband and her perceived "suitability". Suitability is generally determined on the basis of compliance with military rules and regulations. In relation to this, an invitation to a morning coffee party implies an acceptable level of compliance with the rules of the institution. However, an invitation to and participation in a craft party means that there is a more-than-acceptable "fit" between the activities and behavior of the military spouse and the relevances of the institution as enforced through ruling. Further to this, the ultimate sign that the relevances conveyed through ruling are *thoroughly* embodied within the everyday life of the military wife comes in the form of an invitation to a bridge party (Personal communication with M. Marsden, Program Coordinator, Military Family Resource Centre, CFB Halifax).

Evidently, the offering of particular invitations proceeds in accordance with a hegemonic system. The *type* (coffee party, craft party or bridge party) of invitation received is an indication of perceptions of compliance with military relevances. As female military partners participate in this system, they are simultaneously helping to reinforce the relations of ruling within the military institution.

Other everyday manifestations of institutional relevances implicated in the relations of ruling are the "PMQ's" or "private married quarters". As mentioned in Chapter One, collections of PMQ's form small, self-contained communities consisting not only of

housing units, but also military churches, schools, women's activity centres, recreational

facilities, military police and military department stores (that is, the "CANEX"). As

discussed in Chapter Two, the female military partner who lives within the boundaries of

a PMQ community can find herself drawn in or "incorporated" within the military

institution in an explicit and detailed way. The fact that the military can provide almost

all the goods and services required for daily life means that individuals living in this

setting have the opportunity to develop close ties to the institution. This effect is

reinforced in settings where military bases are geographically isolated or located in

foreign countries.

The relations of ruling are present as practices organizing and coordinating the PMQ

communities in the same way that they organize and coordinate the social activities of

officers' wives. For example, the practice of assigning base housing is directly related to

the rank structure and to the relations of ruling implied therein. Better quality or more

aesthetically attractive accommodation is usually bequeathed to higher ranking personnel

and their families. As a case in point, one has only to consider housing allocation

practices at a local naval air force base where PMQ units with a water view are assigned

to officers while units offered to enlisted personnel are a significant distance from the

water. Moreover, detached units are generally available only to officers and their families.

On the other hand, semi-detached PMQ units and apartments are allotted to enlisted

personnel (The In-Dependent's Book: A Handbook for Naval Wives, 1992).

Interestingly, these various housing types are usually clustered together within a PMQ

community, which means that serving members of different ranks and their families

cannot easily fraternize even when off-duty.

From these examples of the stratification of social activities and the hegemonic organization of PMQ communities, it is possible to see that as those who participate in the relations of ruling live out their daily practices in compliance with the associated relevances, they are simultaneously reinforcing the relations of ruling. These are examples of how ruling relations are embodied in the everyday practices of those "being ruled".

These examples should also underscore the point advanced previously in this chapter regarding the character of the "ruling apparatus". As discussed earlier, the ruling apparatus is not a separate and reified structure and is not necessarily present in the everyday world in an overt way. Rather, as the examples illustrate, ruling and the form that it takes is often subtle, covert and perhaps taken-for-granted. Indeed, ruling "goes beyond formal government and the notably coercive apparatus of law and order" (Walker, 1990, p.8). "Going beyond" means that ruling is inextricably bound up with the everyday practices of individuals. As such, ruling is not always immediately visible within the web of social relations characterizing institutions.

One of the reasons why ruling is not always visible within institutions is because the practices of ruling are often many-layered and multi-levelled (Smith, 1987; Walker, 1990). Even though the military institution is organized around a distinctive function, a multiplicity of groups, departments and individuals are involved in the ongoing coordination that constitute the "practices" of this institution. This means that this institution intersects, as well as coordinates, various relational modes.

For example, the Women's Activity Centres located within many base housing communities are associated with the Family Resource Centres which in turn have ties to the chaplaincy and social work departments - and of course, all of these support services are linked to the individuals and families who use the services. These sites are linked through particular practices. As a case in point, a military chaplain or social worker may develop and implement a program for the local Military Family Resource Centre. Or, the child care coordinator at the Military Family Resource Centre may arrange and\or supervise child care for women attending a ceramics class at the Women's Activity Centre. Essentially, all of these departments and individuals "coordinate multiple strands of action into a functional complex" (Walker, 1990, p. 13).

With this understanding, I am able to see that the military institution, as with all institutions, is not a monolithic structure. Rather, it is a total complex of practices, differentiated into many spheres, by which the military is ruled, managed and administered. This ongoing practical organization and the concomitant intersection of various relational modes constitute some of the practices which embody the military institution.

Furthermore, as the examples provided in this chapter imply, the practical organization and coordination of the military institution have the potential to circumscribe the personal and public identities of female military partners. In relation to this, it is possible to argue that these women actually embody the institution through the homes that they live in, the social activities that they engage in and the communities within which they live out their everyday lives. As a consequence, the material and social

relations characterizing the military institution can be constantly present to these women.

These understandings facilitate the development of a characterization of "the military" as an institution. The broad complex of relations, including the relations of ruling, that constitute the military institution can be discovered in routine practices shaping the everyday lives of female military partners. Ideologies and discourses help coordinate these practices.

Ideology, Discourse and Everyday Practice

Ideology

Code (1991, p.196) conceptualizes ideology as a set of beliefs, values and representations that carry meaning for individuals in their everyday lives and which typically embody the interests and position, or the relevances, of a ruling group. Lather (1991) adds to this understanding when she describes ideology as "the stories a culture tells itself about itself" (p. 2).

Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) provide a cogent analysis of the "stories" the military institution tells itself about itself. These authors pull out from their extensive study first described in Chapter Two, five ideologies or "stories" relevant to the military. These ideologies will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters, but a brief outline of what they comprise will be useful at this point.

The first of these ideologies is described as the ultimate imperative of the military institution (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994, p.19). This is the ideology of combat readiness first referred to in Chapter Two. The military claims that all of its activities and energies are directed toward ensuring that it is prepared to enter combat. One of the ways that this

is purportedly guaranteed is through unit cohesion.

Unit cohesion is also implicated in the second military ideology as defined by Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994, p.40). This is an ideology that idealizes male bonding to the extent that women are sometimes denigrated and devalued, even those women whose daily work is also integral to the sustenance of the military institution.

The third ideology centres on those women. Despite their marginal status within the institution, military wives are also integral to its functioning, particularly in relation to combat readiness. This means that a "good" military spouse is one who is self-reliant (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994, p.83) and capable of handling the realities of the military lifestyle.

The ideology of self-reliance is associated with the fourth military ideology - the cover-up principle (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994, p.229). This ideology is all about appearances and maintaining proper images both within and outside of the institution. Essentially, this ideology serves to contain potential or actual issues and problems within the boundaries of the institution.

The fifth and final ideology as conceptualized by Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994, p.229) is one which they describe as "the military as happy family" ideology. This ideology is also associated with containment. Through this ideology, the military institution maintains that it will always be there to take care of its own. While this ideology probably does reflect a certain amount of genuine caring, Harrison and Laliberte´ contend that it also works to ensure that problems remain within the institution wherein they are removed from public scrutiny.

These five ideologies do indeed constitute the beliefs, values and representations embodying the relevances of the military institution. However, this depiction of ideology does not capture its entire essence. Ideology comprises more than just the "stories" a culture "tells itself about itself" (Lather, 1991). Rather, ideologies also encompass actual *practices* which construct the everyday world in particular ways (Smith, 1987, p.54). In other words, the "stories" or the beliefs, values and representations constituting ideologies are not merely used by individuals in their everyday worlds as external reference points that guide their actions. Nor is ideology a "neutral, floating thing called culture" (Smith, 1987, p.54). These views of ideology imply a separateness which does not address the ways in which ideologies are actually *present* as practices in the everyday world. Thinking in this way enables one to see that ideologies such as self-reliance and the cover-up principle may be embodied within the everyday lives of female military partners through their work and activity. Moreover, when ideologies are conceptualized as everyday practices and not just as beliefs or representations, it is possible to see how they are implicated in the ways that the everyday world is constructed and organized and in the way that it works.

Ideologies are mediated through discourses. Discourses consist of concepts and categories which organize and coordinate the connections between ideologies, the work enacted by professionals and the everyday practices of individuals (Campbell & Manicom, 1995).

Discourses

Discourses and ideologies are inextricably connected. Discursive concepts and

categories derive their power from particular ideologies, and at the same time, they reinforce particular ideologies. Moreover, ideologies are discursively organized. This means that the concepts and categories actually embody the relevances inherent in particular ideologies.

Discourses and ideologies are linked in another significant way. Like ideologies, discourses are not mere abstractions. Rather, they are embedded within the actual practices of individuals, but they also draw these practices into the relations of ruling on a broader, institutional level (Smith, 1987, p. 211).

Walker's (1990) and DeVault's (1990a) studies of family violence and feeding families respectively, provide useful analyses of the way that discourses become embodied both within the everyday world and institutional relations of ruling. In particular, Walker's explication of "family violence" demonstrates that a concept can be seen to do more than name a phenomenon present within the everyday world. Rather, from her perspective, a discursive concept such as "family violence" actually embodies practices of thinking and ordering which locate a phenomenon as part of the ruling apparatus (p. 101). When a person is labelled a victim of family violence, the use of that concept not only "names" their experience, but also enters "the actual experience into a set of conceptual practices and bureaucratic processes that do a particular kind of work" (Walker, 1990, p.11). Often, these conceptual practices and bureaucratic processes are implicated in ordering and ruling. Therefore, it is through discursive concepts and categories such as "family violence" that everyday practices pass from the local to the governing or ruling order.

Similarly, the use of a discursive category such as "dependent wife" or "DW" discussed earlier in this thesis also "names" the experience of military wives and enters it into sets of institutional practices and processes. Essentially, the DW designation engenders a way of ordering and thinking about female military partners that coordinates administrative responses and also reinforces the relations of ruling. For example, military wives require this official designation (even though it is not stamped on their identification cards any more) in order to access military services and benefits (Collier, 1994). This encourages dependency upon the institution which further entrenches the relations of ruling. Moreover, the very label, "dependent wife", is an example of the blatant subordination of military wives discussed in Chapter Two. "Dependency" implies servility and compliance, as well as subservience to the institution. It could also be argued that this conceptual category connotes a denigration of military wives. Support for this contention can be gained by considering that the military slang for the designation DW is "dumb women" (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994). Presumably, it is easier to "rule" those who are positioned in a particular location within the institution through use of such denigrating and devaluing discursive categories.

The "dependent wife" example also illuminates the reality that such discursive categories are often organized from a place outside of local and particular standpoints (Smith, 1995). As the examples illustrate, it is from this place that they are imposed on the everyday world in the interests of ruling. Indeed, ruling relies on the development and imposition of concepts and categories that order the everyday world in a particular way. Essentially, discourses are implicated in and integral to ruling practices (Campbell &

Manicom, 1995).

In the context of this study, it is also important to emphasize that discourses coordinate the intersection of various components of an institution. For example, the Logan (1987) model which details the emotional cycle of deployment and which is used both directly and indirectly in planning and implementing services and programs for military spouses experiencing deployment, contains a number of discursive concepts. One of these, "recovery and stabilization", provides an example of how discourse organizes the connections between particular ideologies (in this case the ideology of self-reliance), the work that transpires in professional sites (that is, Military Family Resource Centres, Women's Activity Centres, social work settings and\or chaplaincy departments), and the everyday lives of female military partners. A hypothetical illustration may be useful in illustrating just how a discursive concept does link these components of an institution.

A military spouse whose husband is engaged in an overseas deployment participates in an educational program at the Military Family Resource Centre located on base. She is motivated to attend this program because she is endeavouring to understand her experiences with deployment. The program facilitator uses the Logan (1987) model as an educational guide. Accordingly, the military spouse learns that "recovery and stabilization" are predominant at this phase of the cycle of deployment. As the woman learns this, she is prompted to evaluate her everyday experience with deployment as well as the experiences of her peers. As far as her own experience is concerned, she may ascertain that her daily life is congruent with the expectations embedded within this discursive category. If such is the case, she will continue to enact practices embodying

this discursive category. On the other hand, she may feel that her everyday practices do not embody "recovery and stabilization". In response to this, she may, either of her volition or on the recommendation of a professional, seek assistance from other components of the institution such as a military social worker or a chaplain or "padre".

Throughout this process, the discursive concept of "recovery and stabilization" is constantly present. It is visible within the work ongoing at the Resource Centre and if contact is made with other institutional services, that discursive concept is the link which intersects activities in the various sites. Furthermore, the discursive concept has the potential to become embedded within the everyday world of the female military partner and rendered visible as particular practices. Inherent within this discursively coordinated web of relations is the military ideology of self-reliance. This ideology, as well as others which will be discussed subsequently in this thesis, is implicated within the relations of ruling.

Evidently, the work of certain sociological scholars such as Dorothy Smith, Marjorie DeVault and Gillian Walker have been instrumental in helping me to conceptualize this research study. However, I am also aware that perspectives drawn from psychology can also be useful in framing this research. While building this study upon these two often disparate disciplines may result in an inadvertent dichotomizing, that is not my intent. Rather, I believe that in order to fully comprehend the deployment-related experiences of female military partners, it is necessary to focus on social relations *and* intra-psychic issues. Indeed, both are embodied within everyday practice.

The following section of this chapter details conceptualizations of gender which can

complement the previous sociological discussion. Although this section of the chapter will, to an extent, focus on gender as an intra-psychic force, gender will also be discussed as an ideology which is contiguous with the military ideologies delineated previously in this chapter. Through this, it will be possible to see that sociological and psychological conceptualizations are both implicated in developing an understanding of ideology, discourse and everyday practice in relation to the cycle of deployment.

Theorizing about Gender

The writings of Miller (1986), Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986), Kaschak (1992) and Gilligan (1982) are useful in terms of understanding gender both as an intra-psychic process and as an ideology. For example, Miller's conceptualization of inequality captures both of these facets of gender and both are useful in comprehending the experiences of female military partners with the institution.

In discussing inequality, Miller (1986, p.6) argues that the individual considered to be "lesser" is unequal by means of ascription through race, class or gender. The inequality is experienced by those so subordinated in a direct way and is manifest in terms of diminished status and power in relation to the dominant group. Inequality is sustained when subordinates internalize the dominant beliefs. Concomitantly, subordinates are encouraged to develop personal psychological characteristics that are "pleasing" to the dominant group.

Conceivably, some female military partners may attempt to develop "pleasing" psychological characteristics. In so doing, they may internalize and thereby accommodate dominant beliefs constituting both military and gender ideologies. According to Miller

(1986, p.9) this process of internalization originates from their position of gendered inequality and usually transpires with subordinates who consciously or subconsciously choose to avoid conflict. Moreover, the emotional and material survival of these individuals may depend on this psychological compliance.

The work of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) is useful in reflecting upon the psychological compliance implied within the internalization of dominant beliefs by military partners. These researchers participated in intensive interviews with many women and in so doing are able to describe different perspectives from which women view reality and form perceptions of authority. Two of these perspectives are particularly useful in building an understanding of the gendered experiences of female military partners. First, these authors refer to "silence" (p.24) as a "way of knowing". This is a position where individuals experience themselves as mindless and voiceless and subject to the whims of external authority. Another perspective discussed by these authors is labelled "received knowledge" (p. 35). From this perspective, individuals conceive of themselves as only capable of receiving and reproducing knowledge but not capable of creating knowledge of their own.

Conceivably, military partners' "ways of knowing" may proceed from either a position of "silence" and/or "received knowledge". In accommodating the expectations of the military, women's voices may be silenced as they internalize the received knowledge conveyed through military and gender ideologies. Moreover, Miller's (1986) contentions enable one to see that this process would be reinforced by military partners' positions of inequality within the institution. The inequality or subordination of military wives was

discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis.

These understandings do run the risk of perpetuating a passive characterization of

women's experience. As such, these conceptualizations may create an image of women as

victims. However, it is conceivable that some women may not perceive these positions to

be victimizing given that particular aspects of women's socialization and the gender

ideologies embedded therein reinforce such positions. As a result, some women may

believe that "silence" and "received knowledge" are fitting "ways of knowing" for them.

Examples of some of the particulars of women's gendered socialization follow.

<u>Responsibility, Care and Connection</u>

Some authors contend that women are socialized to serve and to place the needs of

others before their own (Gilligan, 1982; Kaschak, 1992; Miller, 1986). This is

particularly the case when women perceive that significant others (that is, military men)

are doing the "important work". In fact, Miller states that many women cannot tolerate or

allow themselves to feel that their life activities are just for themselves.

Gilligan (1982) supports this through her work which traces the development of

morality in women. Through her work, Gilligan suggests that morality in women may be

organized around notions of responsibility and care for others (p.35). In contrast, she

claims that men's moral development is generally organized around a "rights morality"

whereby abstract laws and universal rules are employed as guiding principles. Gilligan's

work supports the idea that the "rights morality" is more common to those who define

themselves in terms of separation and autonomy. The idea that men commonly define

themselves in this way while women commonly define themselves in relation to

responsibility and care as well as relationships and connections to others is supported through the work of Miller (1986).

Moreover, Miller (1986), Gilligan (1982) and Kaschak (1992) maintain that women's propensity to "serve others" "cuts very deep". Indeed, these authors claim that this concern for attachment and care is tied to women's experiences of self. In other words, it appears that, from the perspective of these authors, women's sense of self becomes organized around being able to make and then maintain connections to others. For many women, the potential loss of these connections is perceived to be a threat - not just in terms of the loss of a relationship, but as something "closer to a total loss of self" (Miller, 1986, p.83).

Gilligan (1982) supports the position of Miller (1986) through her analysis of women's experience with intimacy in relation to identity formation. In reference to the psychosocial developmental framework conceptualized by Erikson, Gilligan asserts that Erikson's sequential ordering of identity and intimacy as separate and divergent processes of formation is more true to the experience of men than women. Gilligan states that for women "intimacy goes along with identity as the female comes to know herself as she is known" (p.12). In other words, according to her, there can be a fusion between intimacy and identity within the developmental cycle of women.

These purported particularities of women's psychological development and the gender ideologies of responsibility, care and connection implicated in this development may also be connected with female military partners' experience with deployment. The need to maintain a sense of self could be at the heart of military partners' compliance with both

military and gender ideologies, where that occurs. However, one needs to be careful in making these claims. Maintaining that women possess unique qualities or propensities runs the risk of essentializing their experience. Essentialism is a risk because if women are considered to be "different", it is quite possible that their experiences will be devalued and denigrated. Furthermore, in affirming the feminine characteristics that society generally devalues, Gilligan's theory appeals to the supporters of the status quo. As Gould (1988) asserts, Gilligan's work may simply amount to "putting old wine in new bottles".

There are other problems associated with the work of Gilligan (1982), Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) and Miller (1986). Their dualistic interpretations of male and female personality structures reflect the complementary bipolar view of the relationship between work and family or the private and public realms discussed previously in this thesis. Once again, it is possible to see how these sex-specific formulations are closely tied to gender-based models of thinking, or ideologies, which may be responsible for relegating women to an inferior status within society (Gould, 1988). So although this literature on gender may be useful in terms of understanding women's experience with the military, caution needs to be exercised at the same time.

Regardless, the reality of gender as an organizing principle in the everyday lives of female military partners may mean that their lives mediate a particular "line of fault".

The "Line of Fault"

The "line of fault" is a geological metaphor (Smith, 1974) depicting a point of rupture between ideology, discourse and the everyday worlds that those deemed to be subordinated through the social relations of race, class, gender or sexual orientation

experience directly. A number of feminist scholars (DeVault, 1990a; Harding, 1991) who employ this metaphor to inform their work, assume that this rupture opens up a space in women's lives between their experiences and dominant ideological and discursive schemes. Moreover, these scholars claim that the line of fault can be experienced as a "bifurcated consciousness" (Smith, 1987).

The experience of a bifurcated consciousness means that a woman's view of her life may combine two separate, dichotomous, sometimes conflicting, perspectives. One of these is framed in the discursive concepts and categories which embody institutional relevances and the other is informed by the more immediate realities of her everyday life. When her experience does not fit within the concepts and categories, alternate concepts may not be readily available. As a consequence, women may, sometimes subconsciously, mute their own thoughts and feelings when they try to fit their lives into a prevailing ideological scheme. This could well be implicated in the "ways of knowing" discussed previously in this chapter, that is, "silence" and "received knowledge" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986).

Women socialized in this way may even believe that their discursively assigned position is their "rightful place". Such acquiescence could be construed to result from false consciousness, but it may also be linked to material and psychological survival. Regardless, when women experience a bifurcated consciousness, their everyday worlds sometimes "...break away along a line of fault" (Smith, 1987, p. 54).

The line of fault argument has methodological and epistemological implications for this research. Assuming that women's lived actualities are indeed muted, and that their

experience does "break away along a line of fault", it is reasonable to conclude that, as a result, little would be known about what really happens in their everyday worlds. In prevailing ideologies and discourse categories, features of their lives and the practices engaged in would be rendered invisible. As a consequence, women and their experiences would not be accounted for within processes responsible for the production of official knowledge. The discursive practices of thinking and writing would be implicated in this invisibility by transposing individuals' experiences from the everyday world into forms of knowledge which fit particular conceptual categories. In referring to this, some feminist scholars assert that it is relatively easy for those in dominant groups, "...whose life patterns and ways of thinking fit all too closely the dominant institutions and conceptual schemes" (Harding, 1991, p. 124) to generate epistemic claims about women's lives.

Summary

Within this chapter, I have detailed both sociological and psychological conceptualizations of women's experience which have assisted me in proceeding with this research. These conceptualizations provide a way of thinking about the lives of female military partners which have helped me to make sense of what I discovered as I participated in this study. The theoretical reflections within this chapter have also provided me with a starting point within which I began the research and analysis. This starting point is the everyday lives or the standpoints of the seven female military partners who participated in this study. Chapter Four outlines and discusses the methodology and method I employed in this study which was grounded in the local and particular standpoints of the women involved.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

Qualitative Research as Dance

In a thought-provoking essay on strategies of inquiry within the domain of qualitative research, Janesick (1994) invites the reader to embrace the metaphor of dance as a way of understanding and organizing qualitative research designs. Using this metaphor, she captures the essence of qualitative research as a process that is both artful and precise. Moreover, she conceptualizes qualitative research design as consisting of three stages. Specifically, Janesick refers to the first stage as the "warm-up" period which involves the design decisions made at the beginning of the study. The second stage, or the "total work-out" phase of the design comprises the concerns, considerations and procedures associated with the actual implementation of the study and the formative analysis of data. The third and final stage is referred to as the "cool-down" stage which entails easing out of the research setting, the final analysis of data as well as a number of other safeguards and procedures relevant to this phase of the research process.

This chapter employs Janesick's (1994) dance metaphor as it articulates how this particular qualitative research project with female military partners was "choreographed". This discussion will, of necessity, be partially procedural, but it will also endeavour to reflect upon the issues which emerged throughout the research process and how those issues were dealt with.

Before moving to the articulation of the three phases of this research design, it is necessary to position the related methodology underpinning the design in relation to other methodologies. In so doing, a rationale for this research design that supports the

conceptual focus and scope of the overall study which was discussed in Chapter Three will be provided. In other words, I will indicate how the research design evolves from the conceptualization or methodology. This approach is consistent with the idea that method (research techniques), methodology (the way in which the research is conceptualized) and epistemology (knowledge gleaned through the research) are interdependent (Stanley & Wise, 1990). Indeed, this first section of Chapter Four serves as a bridge between the conceptualization (methodology) for the study advanced in Chapter Three and the discussion of method to follow at a later point in this chapter.

Methodology

Feminist Qualitative Research

Inspired by the writing of Dorothy Smith, Lorraine Code, Sandra Harding and other feminist scholars whose work I cite in Chapter Three, I designed this qualitative research study with female military partners in accordance with feminist principles. It is important to note at this point that while some feminist researchers do follow the general tenets of qualitative research, not all qualitative research is feminist. However, this particular research project is both qualitative and feminist.

There are a number of feminist qualitative research methodologies. In fact, at least three models are generally identified within the literature; that is, feminist standpoint, feminist empiricism and postmodernism (Oleson, 1994; Thompson, 1992). These models usually adhere to one or both of the general tenets of qualitative research.

These tenets are usually referred to within the literature as "hypotheses". The first hypothesis, known as the naturalistic-ecological hypothesis, (Owens, 1982; Wilson, 1977) advances the idea that human behaviour cannot be adequately understood outside

of the context in which it occurs. This notion that human behaviour is shaped in the context of a socio-cultural milieu (Shimahara, 1988) is related to the second hypothesis known as the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis. This set of concepts supports the contention that there is usually more depth and meaning underlying human behaviour than that which is observable as "fact" (Wilson, 1977). Correspondingly, Owens (1982) maintains that one cannot fully understand human behaviour without delving into the ways in which humans shape and interpret their environments. In relation to this, Owens holds that it is important to understand the meanings and perceptions underpinning human action and which often embody overarching "frameworks" or ideologies.

While feminist researchers do use a variety of qualitative models, these fundamental tenets or "hypotheses" are usually traceable within their work. In addition, there are other specific, yet prevailing features of feminist qualitative research which I will now discuss.

Values and Politics

In keeping with the general tenets or hypotheses of qualitative research, feminist researchers believe that research is a social activity embedded in a socio-historical context and shaped by personal concerns and commitments (Code, 1995; Thompson, 1992). Indeed, feminists assert that "all research sustains beliefs and politics whether or not they are acknowledged" (Thompson, 1992, p. 9). This point is a departure from the assumptions of traditional research which reinforce the idea of the researcher as a faceless, valueless, autonomous and objective arbiter of knowledge claims (Code, 1991; 1995; Harding, 1991). Indeed, from the perspective of traditional researchers, values and politics are thought to clutter and confuse the research process to the point where "pure" knowledge claims cannot be generated (Code, 1991).

Some feminist researchers struggle with the dilemma of reconciling political or value-laden inquiry with conventional notions of research (Code, 1995; Thompson, 1992). Feminist empiricists are familiar with this struggle. These researchers attempt to mediate the traditional and feminist paradigms. They may pursue research questions of interest or relevance to women but in doing so, they endeavour to preserve the useful aspects of the "objectivity" associated with traditional research and abandon what they consider to be the offending aspects. From their point of view, the useful aspects include the use of empirical methods, the consideration of contrary evidence and the notion of reliability, or basing judgments of credibility on cumulative knowledge. The aspects of objectivity that feminist empiricists wish to abandon are the disregard for socio-political context, the idea that research should not be shaped by the personal concerns and commitments of the researcher and the notion that objectivity necessitates a distant relationship between the researcher and research participants (Thompson, 1992).

It would seem that feminist empiricists are walking a tightrope as they attempt to establish middle ground between traditional and feminist research. For example, in acknowledging the "useful" aspects of feminist research, feminist empiricists are supporting the assertion that value-free research is an illusion. Essentially, feminist empiricists, like other feminist researchers, claim that values do not clutter and confuse the research process nor confound the findings. They seem to affirm the inevitability of all research as inherently value-laden. On the other hand though, unlike other feminist researchers, they do not maintain that research requires the presence of personal values and politics and connection between the researcher and the researched.

<u>Intersubjectivity: The Relationship between the Researcher and the Researched</u>

Other feminist researchers who do not label themselves as "feminist empiricists" generally advocate close connections between the researcher and the research participants and believe that such a connection is not only inevitable, but indeed is essential to the research process. They justify this stance by claiming that a relationship between the researcher and the researched ensures that the knowledge generated through the research will be closer to social reality, given that the research subject will be closer to the research process (Oleson, 1994; Thompson, 1992).

This particular feature of feminist research has certain implications insofar as practice is concerned. For example, feminist researchers are generally open about the intent of the research project and may involve the participants in generating research questions and setting the agenda (Kirby & McKenna, 1989; Maguire, 1987; Oleson, 1994). Similarly, feminist researchers are concerned with the effect of the research process on the participants and often undertake this kind of work in an attempt to benefit the researched as well as the researcher (Kirby & McKenna, 1989).

Inherent within the relationship between the researcher and the researched is the dynamic of intersubjectivity (Code, 1991; Stanley & Wise, 1990). Intersubjectivity refers to the commonality between researchers and research participants. In relation to this, Stanley and Wise (1990) claim that despite the apparent ontological distinctness between the researcher and the researched, that both actually share experiences. The acknowledgment of this as well as the commitment to manage the perceptions arising from the commonalties and any differences that might also be present can lend vitality to a feminist research project (Code, 1991; Stanley & Wise, 1990). Plausibly, such vitality

and the reciprocity that would emanate from the exchange between the researcher and the researched could induce the development of understandings about experience and social relations that lie beyond and beneath the superficial (Jaggar, 1989). Therefore, intersubjectivity can be viewed as not just an endorsement of overlap or similarity of experience between the researcher and research participants which conceivably works to deconstruct the seemingly normal and expected dichotomous relationship between the two, but it also can be considered to be a dynamic that has the potential to enable the development of knowledge claims that resonate with meaning and substance. Obviously, feminist researchers believe that intersubjectivity has epistemic value.

<u>Reflexivity</u>

Feminist researchers also recognize the reflexive character of social research. Moreover, as with intersubjectivity, they claim that reflexivity in the research process also has epistemic value.

In recognizing reflexivity in research, feminist researchers acknowledge that the researcher is actually part of the social world that he or she is studying. In support of this contention, Stanley and Wise (1990) note that "researchers' understandings are necessarily temporally, intellectually, politically and emotionally grounded and are thus as contextually specific as those of the 'researched' " (p. 23). From this, it is possible to understand that the researcher brings to a research site all the taken-for-granted assumptions and preconceptions garnered through the course of personal and scholarly experience. Stanley and Wise (1990) refer to this as the "intellectual autobiography" of the researcher.

Traditional researchers consider intellectual autobiography as evidence of the inherent

bias that they presume lies at the heart of non-mainstream approaches to research. Feminist researchers counter this through their claim that all research is inherently biased (Code, 1991; Harding,1991). They maintain that it is impossible for researchers to transcend that "trail of experience" embedded within all choices pertaining to the research process, from the choice of a topic to decisions regarding the selection of variables deemed worthy of study.

It is not my intention to engage in a laborious discussion of the charges and counter-charges lobed back and forth between traditional and feminist researchers. Such a preoccupation has the unfortunate effect of polarizing the two methodologies. Moreover, that kind of debate lies outside of the scope of this thesis. However, I do believe that it is important to note (primarily because this point is significant in terms of both method and analytical procedures followed in this study) that feminist researchers maintain that the preoccupation with bias is misplaced. Rather than futilely attempting to eliminate or transcend the inevitable bias emanating from intellectual autobiography, feminist researchers recommend that we seek to understand how the researcher affects the research process (Harding, 1991; Stanley & Wise, 1990). They also suggest that experience, or to use the pejorative term, bias, can be used as a resource. These researchers endorse the power of experience by propounding that it be used as a guide for data-gathering or for understanding behaviors and interpretations that emerge through the research process (Code, 1995; Oleson, 1994).

Although these recommendations represent a radical departure from the views of many traditional researchers, feminist researchers do concede that using experience as a resource does call for a certain amount of rigour. This rigour is variously identified within

the literature as either "conscious subjectivity" (Duelli-Klein, 1983), "disciplined

subjectivity" (Wilson, 1977) or "strong objectivity" (Harding, 1991).

Although Denzin and Lincoln (1994) are not specifically feminist researchers, they do

address the "rigour issue" in qualitative research. In so doing, they deepen our

understanding of what rigour means in qualitative research when they argue for a

reflexive and reflective demeanor on the part of researchers engaging in non-traditional

research. Small (1995) supports this when he states that reflexivity calls for a process

which involves "reflecting upon, critically examining, and exploring the nature of the

research process" (p. 947). Through the writing of these researchers, I understand that

qualitative researchers, including feminist qualitative researchers, should be consistently

and meaningfully attentive to deep-seated views on issues central to the research.

Reflexivity and reflectiveness also mean that researchers need to provide an account of

their views, the origin of the views in relation to their intellectual autobiographies and all

issues and concerns relevant to conduct throughout the research process. So, rather than

engage in the elusive task of ridding research designs of the offending reflexivity or

tacitly "allowing" it to be present, qualitative researchers in general and feminist

researchers in particular, recommend that it be acknowledged and subjected to the rigour

of accounting. In this way, reflexivity, like intersubjectivity, can be a springboard to

validity in research, rather than an impediment.

As stated previously in this chapter, not all qualitative research is feminist. However,

this particular research project has been designed in accordance with principles derived

from the understandings of general qualitative researchers and those who consider

themselves to be *feminist* qualitative researchers. Like other feminist qualitative

researchers, I too have considered and incorporated the general principles related to values and politics, intersubjectivity and reflexivity in this research design. However, other qualitative researchers also account for these issues in their work. What makes this particular qualitative research study *feminist* though, is the fact that it has used women's experience as a starting point for the research and it has been "for, by and about" women. These two particularly feminist facets of the research will now be discussed.

<u>Using Women's Experience as a Starting Point for Research</u>

The dynamics of intersubjectivity and reflexivity enable feminist researchers to fulfill an agenda that many consider to be important. A number of feminist researchers endeavor to make "the everyday experience and language of women - including themselves - the source and justification of truth" (Thompson, 1992, p. 11). Accordingly, feminist research is often located within and proceeds from the local and particular world that women experience directly.

In relation to this, Smith's (1987) depiction of the "line of fault" or point of rupture discussed previously within this thesis is used by a number of other authors (Code, 1991; DeVault, 1990a; Harding, 1991) to justify the need for research which begins from the experience of women. Smith (1987) claims that women's experience breaks away along a line of fault that exists between institutional relations and the everyday world. In breaking away, Smith (1987) states that women's forms of thought and means of expression are rendered silent. The reason given for this rupture is that traditional researchers tend to enter a research situation with particular concepts and categories derived from the discourse of their disciplines. These concepts and categories are built in to such research tools as interview schedules and questionnaires (DeVault, 1990b). Women as research

subjects are expected to fit their experiences within these concepts and categories. However, the everyday lives of these women, their daily experiences and the meanings they ascribe to those experiences may have little or nothing to do with those concepts and categories (Code, 1995; Duelli-Klein, 1983). As a consequence, women's experience is not captured adequately through these theoretical schemas and what women know and think and do is hidden.

Smith (1987) elaborates further on these "absent voices" and "absent experiences" of women within traditional research. She claims that the relations of ruling are implicated in the rupture between the everyday world and ideology. She states: "...it seems women as a social category lack proper title to membership in the circle of those who count for one another in the making of ideological forms" (p. 31). This lack of "proper title" appears to result from women's particular location within the world. Accordingly, Smith again argues that through the power of the relations of ruling conveyed through and by institutional practices, women's voices are often silenced and excluded. This contention corroborates Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1986) notion of "silence" as a way of knowing for women. "Silence" means that the patterns of women's daily lives and the meanings associated with those patterns never reach epistemological status.

"For, By and About Women"

Some critics of feminist research point out, quite accurately, that there is an abundance of research conducted on women. This is certainly true, but the key issue here is that it is indeed research *on* women. The research conducted on women is usually concerned with comparing women's experience to men's (Code, 1991; 1995; Harding, 1991). Inherent within these gender comparative studies is the assumption that men's

experience is the norm (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Sanford & Donovan, 1978), and that women's experience must be measured against it. In reaction to this, feminist researchers assert that it is unacceptable for knowledge about women to be constructed on men's terms. So, from their point of view, while there may be many published studies on women, there is very little that is *for, by and about* women, particularly within mainstream journals.

Because feminist research is indeed designed to be for, by and about women, it is also thought to be valuable because it provides women with the opportunity to clarify their own self-knowledge as well as knowledge about the ideological and discursive practices within which their experience is embedded. To this end, many feminist studies are open-ended which allows participants to speak from their own experience and to convey meanings and perspectives as *they* conceive of them. This constitutes the "by and about" of feminist research. The "for" component enters into these research processes when understandings gained through the research are used to benefit the research participants in some way, either on the individual level or through social change.

As I designed this research project, I followed these two principles and thereby did indeed start from the experience of the women involved and I did endeavour to design it in such a way that it would be "for, by and about" the women. Adherence to these two principles contributed to the particularly feminist character of this qualitative research project.

The methodology and method associated with feminist standpoint provided the means by which these two principles could be incorporated within the design of the study. The general characteristics of feminist standpoint will now be discussed.

Feminist Standpoint Research

Feminist standpoint researchers aim to recover lost patterns and meanings. These researchers believe that starting from the standpoint of women, or any other marginalized group (Smith, 1992), creates a space for understanding and validating the themes and relevances of these individuals' lives, rather than the relevances of the ruling apparatus thereby generating knowledge about these lives that is less partial and distorted than that obtained through conventional research.

As far as women's lives are concerned, Smith (1987) contends that standpoint methodology and method can illuminate that which is considered to be invisible - "women's work". Smith (p.83) argues that women take up the kind of work which men in the ruling groups do not want to do. This purportedly enables men to immerse themselves in what they consider to be important, that is, the relations of ruling and work with abstract concepts. Smith contends that men could not do this "important" work without the support of women working behind the scenes. Furthermore, Smith points out that the more successfully women perform "women's work", the more invisible it becomes. What is worse is that some men assume that women's supportive work is a natural activity or a type of instinctual labor.

It is important to emphasize that there are actually "standpoints" among women or among individuals of any other group. As far as women are concerned, their experiences do differ by virtue of race, class and culture (hooks, 1984; Peplau & Conrad, 1989). As a consequence, there are multiple "standpoints" among women (Smith, 1992). As Stanley and Wise (1990) remind us, "the experience of 'women' is ontologically fractured and complex because we do not all share one single and unseamed material reality" (p. 22).

From the point of view of Smith (1987) and other standpoint researchers (DeVault, 1990a; 1990b; Walker, 1990), starting from the multiple standpoints of women can render visible that which is considered to be invisible. By encouraging women to speak from their experience, the local and particular aspects of their daily work and the meanings associated with this work can be recovered and acknowledged. In so doing, a "problematic" emerges.

The problematic is a property of the social organization of the everyday world and is latent in the actualities of that world (Smith, 1987, p. 91). However, because standpoint research begins from women's everyday experiences and the ideologies and discourses they embody, the problematic, or the invisible practices characterizing women's work, can be revealed.

Harding (1991) also argues that in illuminating the problematic of women's work, standpoint research mediates the disjuncture or "line of fault" between the everyday world and ideology. Working from the standpoints of women can enable the researcher to see that ideology and discourse are embodied within the local settings comprising everyday life. By beginning in daily life, the feminist standpoint researcher can look for ideological and discursive processes and practices organizing the everyday experiences of women. As a consequence, women's work, ideology and discourse can be seen to be inextricably connected, rather than as separate entities. In other words, through standpoint research, it is possible to see that ideology and discourse are not simply "out there" and acting upon the individual in the everyday world, but are actually present in that world and rendered visible through the explication of particular processes and practices.

<u>Methodology to Method</u>

Having positioned feminist research methodology in relation to other methodologies through the articulation of its scope and focus, it is now important to indicate how I have translated this methodology into a "method" for this study. The method followed in this study is consistent with one of the general tenets of qualitative research discussed previously in this chapter, that is, the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis. In keeping with this hypothesis, research techniques such as the interview guides, the support group meetings as well as my own demeanor as a research "instrument" were all designed to elicit the meanings that underpin action. I will elaborate upon this at a later point in the chapter.

Throughout the study, I also endeavored to acknowledge the values of both myself as the researcher as well as those of the research participants. Through note-taking, I maintained an account of differences and similarities between myself and the research participants in terms of our values in an effort to ameliorate the impact of any incongruity on the research process. This will be discussed in more depth subsequently in this chapter.

Similarly, intersubjectivity and reflexivity are inherent within this research design. In designing the study, I recognized that these forces are inescapable, yet non-threatening and perhaps empowering facets of research processes and I attempted to use them to best advantage within this study. I will discuss how this transpired at a later point in this chapter.

Finally, in designing this study, I derived the methods from feminist standpoint methodology. Accordingly, this research comprises a method which proceeds from and is

located within the everyday lives of participating female military partners. By immersing myself in the accounts of daily lives of the women, I was able to work with them in such a way that I could tease out from their "talk" ideologies and discursive concepts and categories embodied therein. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters in this thesis, insight gained from this work enabled me to make analytical judgments about bifurcation or a possible "line of fault" separating the everyday worlds that the women inhabited directly and broader ideologies and discourses. Standpoint as a method facilitated this process which, in turn, will be elucidated within this chapter.

As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, Janesick's (1994) dance metaphor will be used as a way of organizing the specific articulation of methods employed in this study. This is not only an appealing and relevant metaphor for anyone who has experience with dance or any other physical endeavour that comprises both artfulness and precision (Janesick is herself a dancer and choreographer), but it also captures the essence of qualitative research. As Janesick (1994) contends, dance both mirrors and creates life. Correspondingly, as has been discussed previously in this chapter, research designs mold and change the very phenomena they are intended to examine. Furthermore, the metaphor of dance provides a framework which parallels the unfolding processes inherent within qualitative research designs.

Method: "Warming Up" - Gaining Entry and Sample Development

Gaining Entry

Through engaging in this research, I quickly learned that gaining access or entry to a research site is not a discrete event occurring at the outset of a project. Although entry issues at the beginning of a research study need to be managed with forethought and care,

access or entry actually comprises a protracted and continuous process of negotiation that spans the entire life of the research project (Dobbert, 1982; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993; Janesick, 1994). I will outline the particulars of my experience with access or entry in the context of this research study highlighting key issues which arose as entry was gained and maintained.

As mentioned in Chapter One, I have been developing a connection with the military institution for a number of years through my involvement in planning and implementing educational programs for military parents and then military wives at a Military Family Resource Centre. Moreover, in my capacity as departmental faculty coordinator for the cooperative education program in place at the university where I teach, by the time I was ready to embark on this study, I had supervised a number of cooperative education placements as well as practicum placements at the Military Family Resource Centre. As a consequence, I was a known entity to the Resource Centre staff. We had enjoyed a mutually productive and satisfying relationship for a number of years by the time I began the study.

Although I do believe that "gaining entry" was eased for me because of the pre-existing relationships that I had developed with Resource Centre staff, I do not wish to imply that this phase of the research process was devoid of any concern or anxiety. Despite my prior relationship with the Centre, I still had to tread very carefully through the complex tangle of rules and relationships that characterize the military institution.

The first challenge I encountered concerned the choice of a ship to work with. It was necessary to do so because deployments are organized by ship in the Navy. As a civilian, I was not in a position to investigate the options directly. I could not simply "pick a ship"

with a departure date that fit within the schedule for this study. Rather, I had to rely on the efforts of staff at the Military Family Resource Centre to mediate between me, the researcher, and personnel working with the various ships.

This was the first, but not the last time I confronted the military institution's preoccupation with control. At a later point in this research process when I began to analyze all of the data gathered throughout the study, I identified my account of this aspect of gaining entry as an embodiment of the need for control that is actually an ideological imperative of the military, but at the time I merely regarded this experience as a bureaucratic bother.

Nevertheless, I did know at the time that this reliance on mediators would be an inevitability as far as this research was concerned and that I would have to acquiesce with the related system of relevances in order to make any progress. As a result, I worked very closely with two staff members at the Resource Centre who were able to access documents outlining the ships' schedules.

I grew to think of these staff members as "sponsors" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). I had worked with these individuals in the past at the Military Family Resource Centre and had developed a working relationship with them characterized by trust and openness. As a result, these staff members were aware of the focus and intent of the study. In fact, over the course of my involvement with the Centre, I had often discussed with them my growing curiosity about the experiences of military wives with deployment. This meant that, as I worked with my "sponsors" as part of a "team", we were able to readily evaluate the suitability of the various ships on the schedule. The staff members appreciated that it would be important for me to work with a ship that would be

deployed for a significant period of time so that I would be able to spend sufficient time with participating women at each of the phases of the deployment cycle. Therefore, as we scrutinized the ships' schedule, we quickly eliminated the "fish pats" (fish patrols) and the "caribops" (Caribbean Operations) and looked instead for a six-month NATO deployment. These staff members were also sensitive to my needs as an individual leading the "double life" of doctoral student and university faculty member. However, while considerations relating to the balancing act central to my life at the time were not uppermost on our list of criteria for the choice of the ship, they were a factor.

After a couple of meetings with the staff members, we were able to select a ship that would be deployed for a sufficient period of time. This deployment cycle of this particular ship also fit within the time parameters for this research project. At this point, I prepared a straightforward, thorough, yet concise account of the proposed research which I included within a letter (see Appendix A) that was eventually sent to the commanding officer of the ship. My effort in this regard was prompted through my reading of Lofland and Lofland (1984) and Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) who recommend that all stakeholders in a research study be apprised of its scope and intent.

After waiting for a couple of weeks, I received a verbal reply through the Resource Centre from the commanding officer of the ship, the *Illustrious* (this is a pseudonym). Interestingly, the reply from the officer did not actually endorse the research project, but the officer did convey that he did not "see a problem" (journal) with the study. He also advised me, indirectly, to work with the staff member at the Centre assigned to the ship.

At the time I received the reply, the *Illustrious* was due to leave port in approximately two months for a six-month NATO deployment in the North Sea. With this time frame in

mind, I began to think about sample selection and developing interview guides. In the midst of this process, I was informed by the ship's contact at the Military Family Resource Centre that both the time and the nature of the upcoming deployment of the *Illustrious* had been changed. The ship would now be leaving four months later than originally intended and rather than engaging in exercises in the North Sea designed to enhance preparedness for war, the *Illustrious* would now be deployed in an actual war zone.

At this time, the Canadian military was beginning to comply with the requests of the United Nations for continued participation, along with other NATO countries, in peace-keeping or "peace-enforcement" engagements in war-torn countries such as Bosnia, Rwanda, Haiti and Somalia. As a result of this international pressure, the *Illustrious* was now going to be deployed for six months with the NATO fleet off the coast of the former Yugoslavia as part of the United Nations Arms Embargo enforced at that time within that war-torn area. Given that another Canadian ship was currently deployed with that fleet in the Adriatic Sea, there was no need for the *Illustrious* to leave port until the other ship completed its tour of duty and a replacement was required.

Since so much effort had already been expended by both myself and Resource Centre staff in developing a relationship with this ship, I decided to wait out the time and continue with my plan to work with this ship. However, the time frame for the study was now changed and more importantly, now the realities posed by the war zone would need to be considered. I consoled myself in this regard by acknowledging that my study might now have more relevance given that an increasing number of future deployments of the Canadian military would involve troubled areas of the globe. However, despite these

assurances to myself, I was temporarily disheartened by the change in my research plan. I certainly learned first-hand about the unpredictability of qualitative research.

The next step in this ongoing process of gaining entry involved obtaining a sample of military wives whose husbands would be deployed on the *Illustrious*. With this objective in mind, I met with the ship's representative at the Military Family Resource Centre for the purpose of discussing how I could access the women involved. During our meeting, I posed the possibility of posting notices within the base newspaper for Navy personnel and their families. I also indicated that I would like to place notices on bulletin boards within the Resource Centre, the Women's Activity Centre and the Canex - the base department store.

I was interested in pursuing this broad approach in accessing participants because I was trying to circumvent the gatekeepers that typically surround those settings where boundaries are clearly marked and which are not easily penetrated (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Given my previous experience with the military institution, I knew very well that it would be policed by any number of gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are generally concerned about the picture that researchers will paint about their organization and are therefore prompted to direct the research in such a way that the organization is presented in the most favorable light (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). However, as a researcher, I was not interested in working with hand-picked research participants. For once, I wanted to access a pool of potential participants without working through the institutional layers between myself and the women. I wanted the research participants to come forth of their own accord. This was my plan, but I met with a number of obstacles in attempting to implement it.

When I introduced my plan to the ship's representative regarding the posting of notices, I received a noncommittal response. He informed me that he would "call me" (field notes). I awaited the call and when I received it I was told that it would not be appropriate to post notices.

Yet again, I came face-to-face with the unpredictability of qualitative research. I was left with a problem. How was I going to obtain a sample without relying on the influence of gatekeepers?

The ship's representative was somewhat sympathetic to my plight. He assured me that I "didn't need to worry" (journal) because I would be invited to the pre-deployment briefing to be held two weeks before the departure of the ship. The briefing would involve both serving personnel and their "dependents". When I asked him how my attendance at a briefing would help me obtain a sample, I again received vague reassurances that I would be able to "find the women" (journal) at this meeting. He did not tell me through what means this would take place, but despite my anxiety about this, I knew the military institution well enough by this time to know that it would not be appropriate for me to push the issue any further. I knew full well that if I did, the door which was now open to me, albeit tentatively, would be firmly shut in my face. I would have to proceed on blind faith.

This experience supports the idea that "gaining entry" is not simply a practical problem (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Although an element of practicality does pervade the process, this phase of the research design is also highly ideological, or at least it was for me. I realize this now, but at the time I wasn't able to frame this experience as anything beyond practical. I was vaguely uneasy about what was "behind all of this"

(journal), but I was not sure about what that was. However, I now know that the barriers I encountered were not erected for me because of pragmatic concerns about cluttering bulletin boards or accessing military publications. Rather, I believe that the barriers were actually manifestations of the ideological imperative regarding control that pervades the military institution.

I do not wish to imply that this need for control meant that I was met with overt suspicion. On the contrary, my exchanges with various representatives of the institution were friendly, cordial and sometimes even jocular. Indeed, on more than one occasion, my sponsors at the Military Family Resource Centre would jokingly pass on comments to me such as "you're a civilian, but you're OK" (journal) or when I would seek confirmation of a particular hunch or judgment, they would typically respond by saying something like "well, that's not bad for a civilian" (journal). However, while I did benefit from this pre-existing relationship of trust and acceptance with the staff members and while these "sponsors" did mediate between me with other elements of the institution, I always felt as if there were undercurrents flowing beneath the surface of our communication.

Eventually, I realized that these undercurrents were ideological. Evidently, the institution was prepared to tacitly support my research, but at the same time, there were controls imposed on who would know about it. The refusal regarding the widespread posting of notices was actually an effort to contain my work. The military was prepared to support a deployment study, but at the same time the institution was obviously wary and reluctant to risk catalyzing a torrent of concerns and problems that might damage its reputation. Later in this research process, I would realize that this series of events was actually evocative of the ideological concern for control, particularly with respect to

image and appearance. Further evidence of this need for control emerged repeatedly throughout the rest of the study (and will be discussed in more depth in subsequent chapters), but this was one of my first experiences with it.

Sample Development

The realization that access problems can serve as a source of analytic insight (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) was further supported as I embarked on the next phase of this process. As mentioned previously, the only alternative to posting notices offered to me regarding sample selection was the opportunity to attend the pre-deployment briefing. I assumed that I was going to be permitted to publicly describe the study at the briefing and ask for volunteers. However, when I sought to confirm this assumption with the ship's representative at the Centre, I was dismissed with the wave of a hand and further assurances such as "Don't worry, it will happen" (journal). I put aside my feelings of annoyance about being treated in such a patronizing fashion, and acquiesced with the rest of this process. As I stated in my journal, "What choice do I have"?

As the date for the pre-deployment briefing grew nearer, I received a telephone call from the ship's representative regarding the briefing. He informed me that the commanding officer and the executive officer of the ship as well as an high-ranking officer from Maritime Command would be in attendance and were also aware that I would be there. Upon hearing this, I felt somewhat relieved, believing this to be yet another indication of the subtle sanctioning of this work from the institution. However, my apprehensions reared again when I heard the ship's representative convey to me that "it probably would be best" (journal) if I didn't go to the briefing alone. He explained this by telling me that I would experience difficulty clearing the gates at the base and that it

was "kind of confusing down there" (journal). I was quite perplexed because I knew that this individual knew that I had often cleared the base gates using a guest pass from the Military Family Resource Centre and that I was quite familiar with the base lay-out. However, I refrained from pointing this out to him at this time and once again "went along".

I was instructed to meet the ship's representative at a coffee shop, leave my car there and travel with him to the base. Despite feeling that I was participating in some kind of subterfuge, I did so. We arrived at the base, parked the car and proceeded to the building where the briefing was to be held. As we walked to the building, I clung to the vain hope that now perhaps I would be left alone, knowing that the ship's representative was partially responsible for organizing the briefing. As I subsequently noted in my journal, "I thought he would be too busy to baby-sit me". However that was not the case.

When we entered the briefing room, the ship's representative introduced me to the commanding and executive officers and the officer from Maritime Command. I was also introduced to three padres, all of whom greeted me with the usual cordiality. I was then shown where I was supposed to sit. I dutifully did so and was immediately surrounded by a phalanx consisting of the ship's representative and the three padres. While we waited for the briefing to begin, I was approached by another officer from the ship and told that I would be permitted to "find some dependents to work with during the coffee break". I quickly realized that this meant that I would not be given the opportunity to publicly describe my study at the briefing and subsequently ask for interested participants. The ship's representative, who was sitting to my immediate left, confirmed this with a nod of his head when I looked at him with an expression which must have been a combination of

shock and dismay.

In the midst of this, the briefing began. The commanding officer spoke first. His speech largely referred to the "mission" of this deployment. He also devoted considerable time referring to a large map projected onto a wall. The map was marked by red dots that marked where the ship was scheduled to be on certain dates. As the commanding officer traced the proposed path of the ship, he intermittently implied that this was information that hitherto would never be disclosed to a group that included dependents. The officer from Maritime Command picked up on this theme by, in my view, condescendingly reassuring the "dependents" that they "would always know what was going on" (journal). Moreover, he indicated that "the military" would "always be there for them to provide support" (journal). At one point, he even offered that any one of the women present could personally telephone him "at any hour of the day or night if they had a question or problem" (journal).

Not surprisingly, as the briefing proceeded, I was anxious to capture both the content and tone of the discussion. To do this, I retrieved a small note-pad and pen from my purse and began to take a few cursory notes. Before long however, the ship's representative, sitting beside me, grasped the top of my pen in order to gain my attention and when he did, smiled and shook his head. Evidently, I was not supposed to take notes.

The coffee break that was supposedly going to be the answer to all my sampling problems followed the presentation by the officer from Maritime Command. The coffee break began with the ship's representative introducing me to a staff member from a Military Family Resource Centre located at another base. While I chatted with her, I noted one woman standing in a group not far way periodically glancing in my direction as

if waiting for me to finish my conversation with the other individual. When I did, this other woman approached me and introduced herself as Jane (all of the names used to identify research participants in this thesis are pseudonyms). Jane informed me that "someone had told her" (journal) that I was embarking on a deployment study and that she wanted to be involved. She indicated that she "had a lot of trouble" with a previous deployment and "really wanted to talk with someone" (journal) as this one proceeded. We conversed for a short while and actually ended our conversation with discussion of a time for the first interview.

During the remainder of the coffee break, I was approached by seven other women, all expressing an interest in participating in the study. I have yet to learn how this actually transpired. I can only surmise that somehow word of the study began with Jane and spread through the group. Regardless of how it happened, I was relieved to go back to my seat with eight telephone numbers.

The rest of the briefing consisted of a question and answer session largely dealing with questions concerning routine and procedures. One woman bravely asked a question regarding a rumor about the proposed length of the deployment. She was readily reassured that the deployment would span six months and not longer. Another woman asked about other rumors concerning the possibility for danger in boarding the foreign ships in the Adriatic as part of the arms embargo. These fears were also quickly dismissed by the officer from Maritime Command. Not surprisingly, the briefing ended with a few rousing statements from all of the officials present regarding the "mission" and the special character of the military community. I later grew to understand these comments as embodiments of the military ideologies of combat readiness and "the military as a happy

family" (to be discussed more fully in subsequent chapters), but at the time I simply conceived of these messages as bolstering reassurances.

At the very end of the briefing, the military wives and girlfriends were handed a packet containing information about the Military Family Resource Centre, the Wives' Network, the information telephone line and other similar material. Also included in the packet was a copy of an article detailing the Logan model (discussed in Chapter Two) depicting the cycle of deployment. As the packets were distributed by Resource Centre staff, the Logan model received special attention. One of the staff members pulled a copy out of one of the packets during distribution, held it aloft, and indicated that it would be very helpful to the women as the deployment proceeded.

This signified the end of the pre-deployment briefing. I was driven back to the coffee shop by the ship's representative where I retrieved my car and drove home. Before I did so though, I decided to take advantage of the coffee shop by sitting within and making the notes that I was forbidden to record during the actual briefing. This enabled me to begin to make sense of the whole briefing. Regardless, I still had more questions than answers at this time. I was still puzzled by the perceived need to contain me and my work as evidenced by driving me to the base, escorting me to the briefing room, seating me in a particular location surrounded by padres and not allowing me to take notes. The biggest question mark in my mind though at this time concerned why I was not permitted to speak about my research publicly or even have someone else do it on my behalf.

Over time, particularly as I began to work with the women who agreed to participate in the study, some of the answers to these questions began to emerge. I grew to realize that as noted previously in this chapter in relation to the selection of the ship and the

refusal regarding the posting of notices, as-yet-unnamed undercurrents existed beneath the surface of my experience -undercurrents that lay at the heart of this curious unfolding of events known as "gaining entry". I eventually learned to name the undercurrents as ideologies and I also eventually realized that they contained the answers to my questions.

These realizations provide further support for the idea that, as discussed previously in this chapter, issues associated with access can serve as a springboard for the development of analytic insight (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). In relation to this, what I learned was that the containment of my work was ideologically relevant to the military. Interestingly though, I now understand that ideology was simultaneously pulling the military in two directions in relation to the study. On the one hand, the institution was anxious to appear to be supportive of the study. This supposed interest in the needs and concerns of military wives during deployment is a legacy of the Persian Gulf War when the military received a lot of positive feedback in response to their efforts in setting up wives' networks and other support services. So, from the military's point of view, it would be appropriate to support the study, because as noted previously, image and appearance are ideologically relevant to the military institution. However, all the controls placed on me in relation to the briefing led me to believe that while the study was certainly supported, it was a guarded form of support. Evidently, there was a concern that this study, if too widely publicized, could potentially release a flood of negativity that could possibly be deleterious to the "mission" at hand and thereby threatening the ideology of unit cohesion. Therefore, there were boundaries placed around the study.

In the midst of this paradoxical set of circumstances, I was able to obtain a sample of female military partners who worked with me for the next year. However, as I mentioned

at the outset of this chapter, I did not so much "select" this sample as "develop" it through the complex and periodically perplexing process of gaining entry just described. Regardless, I did leave the pre-deployment briefing that evening with the names of eight women who were all interested in working with me. A few days after the briefing, I received a telephone call from one of the women indicating that she would not be able to participate because she had decided to spend the deployment period with her parents in another province. However, the seven remaining women were still keenly interested when I contacted them a few days after the briefing. At this point in this chapter, it is appropriate to provide profiles of the seven participants.

<u>Participant Profiles</u>

<u>Jane.</u> As noted previously in this chapter, Jane was the first person to approach me at the pre-deployment briefing to express an interest in this study. Jane is in her late twenties and has one child, Samantha, who at the time of the study was three years old. Jane's husband, Danny, is a master seaman which is a mid-ranking position among enlisted personnel. Jane works part-time from her own home as a cosmetics consultant. She and her family reside in a suburban neighborhood and own their own home.

This is the second major deployment that Jane has experienced since her marriage. She approached this deployment with a great deal of apprehension, primarily because during the first one she was hospitalized for depression. She was also pregnant with Samantha at this time. In fact, Samantha was born during this hospitalization period and remained with her there during the rest of Jane's treatment and recovery - a period of time spanning three months. Jane credits Samantha as an integral component of her recovery and as a result, mother and child enjoy a particularly close bond which was evident to me

on the occasions when I visited her home.

Jane is still taking anti-depressants at the time of this study. Occasionally, her doctor (a military psychiatrist) endeavors to reduce the dosage or change the medication, but always, according to Jane, with disastrous results. Jane claims that when the dosage or type of medication is changed in any way that she easily sinks into a state of despair and excessive anxiety which sometimes results in panic attacks. Jane believes that she will be taking medication for these problems for the rest of her life.

Jane holds that these problems "run in her family". In particular, she notes that an uncle, whom she was very close to, committed suicide when she was a child. However, she does admit that her problems did not actually emerge in an identifiable way until that first long deployment three years ago.

Jane 's parents and brothers and sisters all live in another province. She visits them periodically, but does not appear to be especially close to her family of origin. In fact, she admits that her relationships with some family members, such as her mother, are usually strained.

Chris. Chris is an effervescent, happy-go-lucky individual in her mid-thirties. She too has one child, a five year old daughter named Megan. Chris' husband, Alan, is a Petty Officer First Class which designates another relatively high-ranking position among enlisted personnel.

At the time of the study, Chris and Alan had been married for thirteen years. During that time, Chris has experienced four deployments of at least four months duration. Alan has been in the military for twenty years. He is the son of a military member. For that matter, Chris is also the child of a retired member of the Armed Forces. As she notes, she

has been "military all her life".

Chris is a person who appears to be in a constant state of motion. She always has some major household project in progress and takes great delight in gardening, crafts and repairing small appliances. She and her family also reside in a suburban neighborhood and own their own home. Chris volunteers as a secretary at the church which she and her family attend on a regular basis. Chris was also very active in the *Illustrious* Wives' Network throughout the course of this deployment.

Darlene. Darlene is a soft-spoken and timid young woman in her mid-twenties. Darlene married her husband Darryl only seven months before the departure of the ship. She has two children from a previous marriage, a five-year-old boy and a four-year-old girl.

Darryl is an Able Seaman, an enlisted rank, serving on the *Illustrious*. He has been in the Navy for ten years. He too was married before, but his former wife lives in another province. He met Darlene in a local bar three months before they married. Darlene, Darryl and Darlene's children lived in a small apartment at the outset of the deployment, but Darlene and the children later moved to a "PMQ" (private married quarters) community -a complex of apartments and townhouses owned and managed by the military.

Darlene works sporadically outside the home at odd jobs. Her main preoccupation when I first met her, however, involved the attainment of her Grade Twelve equivalency - the GED. Knowing me to be a "teacher", she would proudly show me her tests and textbooks, apparently for my approval, every time we met.

Sara. Sara, like Darlene, was also a newlywed at the beginning of the deployment

period. However, Sara married her husband, Ron, only two months prior to the departure of the ship. Sara is in her early thirties and was married to her first husband for fifteen years. She married this man before finishing high school and lived with him in her home town which is located in a rural part of the province. Sara was the victim of physical and psychological abuse throughout this relationship. Sara has two children from this relationship - a fifteen-year-old son and a thirteen-year-old daughter. These children seem to spend as much time with their father in the rural community as they do with Sara.

Sara also met her husband in a local bar about a year before she married him. Prior to the wedding, she lived with Ron for about eight months. Sara, Ron and the two children, when they are in town, also live in a local PMQ community.

Ron is also an Able Seaman and has been in the Navy for about ten years. According to Sara, his progress through the ranks has been hampered by alcoholism and financial problems. She claims that Ron is known as a "trouble-maker" on board ship and that his actions are constantly scrutinized by superior officers. For example, Ron has been instructed to show his commanding officer receipts noting the payment of household bills every month. In addition, the commanding officer has repeatedly referred Ron to the Military Family Resource Centre for treatment for his alcohol addiction. Apparently, this treatment has never resulted in long-lasting change.

Ron is not the only person in this family with an addiction to alcohol. Sara is also an alcoholic, and like Ron, has only sought treatment when this has been mandated by someone else. Sara also believes that she is "addicted to downtown". What she means by this is that she seeks solace and refuge from her problems in downtown bars and nightclubs. She maintains that Ron is also "addicted to downtown" and she admits that

both of them have participated in extramarital affairs.

Sara has tried, on a number of occasions, to change the direction of her life. She believes that leaving her abusive husband was one such step. Moreover, at the outset of this study she was engaged in a valiant effort to begin university. However, near the end of the deployment, she dropped out of university because of personal and relationship issues and financial pressure.

Sara is a warm, engaging person and a vibrant conversationalist. Underneath the surface though, one can sense a restlessness and a tendency toward despair. As the deployment proceeded and as Sara's problems escalated, this aspect of her personality seemed to dominate. In fact, at one point she claimed that she was suicidal. On this occasion, she was referred to the Military Family Resource Centre for counselling.

Marie. Marie is in her early forties and is married to Marty, an officer with the rank of Lieutenant Commander serving on the *Illustrious*. She and Marty have been married for thirteen years and have three children - nine-year-old Jason, seven-year-old Cindy and three-year-old Nicholas. The family lives in an upscale suburban neighborhood and they own their own home.

Marie is a registered nurse and works part-time in a local doctor's office. Although she claims that this work is invaluable because it "gets her out of the house and away from the kids", she seems to be perpetually stressed by the demands associated with arranging child care and managing household routines.

Marie is a very nervous and emotional individual. Indeed, she cried throughout most of our first interview together. Near the end of the deployment, Marie felt she had reached the "breaking point" and sought treatment from her family doctor who prescribed an anti-

depressant medication.

Charlotte. Charlotte is an attractive and pleasant individual in her mid-twenties. She and Matthew, her husband of three years, have a young son named Benjamin who is eighteen months old. Matthew has been an officer in the Navy for ten years and has achieved the rank of Lieutenant. Charlotte and her family live in a townhouse in a suburban neighborhood.

Like Jane, Charlotte works part-time from her own home as a consultant for a cosmetics company. She admits that she doesn't invest much effort in this job, primarily because of Benjamin and her involvement with her church - the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Indeed, church activities take up a large portion of Charlotte's available time. She facilitates bible study classes, play groups for younger children as well as a group for young adolescent women where she is supposed to act as a mentor or role model. Charlotte even met Matthew, who is also active in the same denomination, at a volley-ball game organized by her church.

Holly. Holly is a boisterous and lively woman in her late forties. She is the wife of Johnny, a senior officer serving on the *Illustrious*. Johnny is the son of a former military officer and has been in the Navy for over twenty years. Holly and Johnny have also been married for over twenty years and have two adolescent children - seventeen-year old Jesse and fifteen-year-old Sally.

Holly and her family live in the same suburban neighborhood as Marie and her family and they also own their own home. Holly is very involved with the *Illustrious* Wives' Network. In her role with the network, Holly oversees the planning and coordinating of

social activities and support services for the wives of serving members on board the *Illustrious*. This work also entails trouble-shooting in relation to problems which emerge with the wives throughout the course of a deployment and being available almost twenty-four hours a day to listen to and talk with any of the women who may need her help. Evidently, Holly's position with the network is very intensive and extensive, necessitating many hours of work with a core group of other military wives.

This concludes the description of participant profiles. This group of seven women is balanced in terms of age, rank of husband, and experience with the military institution. Specifically, three of the women are officer's wives (Holly, Marie and Charlotte). Of the remaining four, two are the spouses of higher ranking enlisted members (Jane and Chris) and two are married to relatively low ranking enlisted personnel (Darlene and Sara). Moreover, the women range in age from early twenties to late forties. The range of experience within the group with the military institution spans a period of time comprising a number of months to over twenty years. In addition, two of the women reside in PMQ communities (Darlene and Sara).

At this point, I move to the articulation of the next phase of the research design. Janesick (1994) would refer to this phase as the "total work-out", or rather, that intense point in the process where I interacted directly with the seven participants for close to a year in the context of one-to-one interviews and support group meetings.

Method: "The Total Workout" - Conducting the Study

The "total work-out" phase of this study consisted of overlapping activities carried out over the course of many months. For clarity in this regard, these activities are sketched in a table which should serve as a guide for this section of the chapter (see

Appendix B).

The Context for the Interviews

The pre-deployment interviews took place during a two-week period immediately prior to the departure of the *Illustrious* to the Adriatic. The time frame for this set of interviews was shaped by the particulars associated with "gaining entry" previously described in this chapter.

Upon establishing contact with each of the seven women in the days immediately following the pre-deployment briefing, we agreed to a meeting time. I met individually with each woman in her home and each of the visits lasted approximately four hours. One hour of that time was typically spent in general conversation and the procurement of refreshments. This time was useful in terms of "breaking the ice" and establishing rapport with the women. It was at this time that the consent forms (see Appendix C) were discussed and signed. About two-and-one-half hours of the total time was spent on the actual interview and approximately one-half hour was again devoted to general conversation after the tape recorder was turned off.

In three instances, children were present during the interviews. The women usually made an effort to distract the children through the use of toys and coloring books. In one case, the woman actually rented a video for the child to watch during the interview. Older children were either at school, playing on sports teams or watching television in other rooms during my visit. Therefore, the presence of children was usually not a distraction during the interview time.

One male partner, Marty, the husband of Marie, was present in the family home during the pre-deployment interview. Marty generally remained in another room in the

house, but he occasionally passed through the kitchen area where the interview was taking place to obtain snacks or drinks. However, he did not intrude on the interview in any way. In fact, he appeared to be oblivious to not only my presence in his home but to his wife's obvious emotional distress throughout most of the interview.

The last of the seven interviews was completed three days before the ship left for the Adriatic. Ten days after the departure of the ship, I contacted each of the women by telephone. The purpose of these telephone calls was to maintain contact with the women during the first difficult days of the deployment and to organize a time for the first group meeting.

The deployment interviews took place within a two-month period in the middle of this phase of the overall cycle. Although this interview period represents the formal contact with individual women participating in the study during this phase of the deployment cycle, regular contact was maintained with the women by telephone both before and after the scheduled interviews. In addition, we met as a group eight times during the deployment period. This group became known as the "support group".

The deployment interviews were also conducted in the homes of the women. The total time spent with each woman was typically four hours. The first half-hour of that time was usually taken up with general conversation that helped to re-establish the one-to-one connection between myself and the individual participant. The actual interview time expanded from the typical two-and-one-half hour time period for the pre-deployment interviews to approximately three hours. Again, about one-half hour at the end of the "visit" after the tape recorder was turned off was devoted to general conversation designed to bring some sense of closure to the whole experience.

In contrast to the pre-deployment interviews, children were present during only one interview. Older children were either out of the home or occupied in a different part of the house or apartment. However, younger children were usually not present either. Of their own volition, some women with younger children made alternate arrangements for their care during the time of the interview. This helped to ensure that we would not be distracted or interrupted during the interview.

After obtaining their permission, I telephoned the women at regular intervals during the deployment. The purpose of these calls was ostensibly to say "hello", but also to ensure that all was well, particularly with those individuals experiencing difficulties with the deployment. The women were also invited to call me within particular time intervals and many did so throughout the course of the deployment.

At the last support group meeting before the return of the ship, the women indicated that they would prefer that the post-deployment interviews take place approximately six weeks after the return. They felt that this would allow for re-integration of the returning male partner within the family. Moreover, many of the women had planned vacations for the weeks immediately following the return of the ship. As Chris noted at that support group meeting, "We'll have more to tell you after all that" (field notes).

I willingly complied with the request to delay the post-deployment interviews for six weeks. I had no wish to intrude in the lives of the women at this time. Besides, throughout the period of time that we worked together, I had always encouraged these women to participate in directing the research on their own terms.

Accordingly, we began the post-deployment interviews at the agreed-upon time. These interviews were long, longer than any of the previous sets of interviews. Typically,

the tape recorder was turned on for three-and-one-half hours for each interview. In addition, as with the other interviews, approximately one-half hour was spent at either end of the interview in settling in and then bringing a sense of closure to the experience.

In three instances, husbands were present as the interviews were conducted. I was quite concerned about this, hoping that the presence of the men would not change the character of the interaction between myself and the women. In reflecting upon this though, I believe that the presence of the men in two of the cases was not a problem at all. Actually, in those instances, the men were helpful in diverting and occupying the small children. I still remember Danny, the husband of Jane, telling Samantha, his small daughter, that they had to "go outside and leave Mommy alone because she was talking to the 'research lady' " (field notes).

The situation was somewhat different in the third instance where a husband was present. When I visited Holly's home for the interview, I was greeted at the door by her husband Johnny. As Holly and I settled into the living room, Johnny "hovered" (field notes) as he commented on the thunder and lightening storm in progress at the time and fussed with chairs and books on the coffee table. He then proceeded to act as a solicitous host offering me tea or a cold drink. I accepted a glass of juice, hoping then that he would "go away" (field notes). He did, for a while, but would reappear periodically to retrieve something from the kitchen usually to the accompaniment of loud clattering of dishes or glasses.

As this was going on, I tried very hard to keep my anxiety and annoyance in control. I was helped in this regard when I realized that the hovering presence of Johnny was really only a problem for me and not for anyone else. Holly appeared to be oblivious to his

presence and talked with me just as openly as she had throughout the previous interviews.

There was a marked difference in the tone of the post-deployment interviews as compared with the previous sets of interviews that had nothing to do with the presence or absence of husbands. As noted previously, these interviews were longer than the others, but they also lacked the spirit of the previous interviews. In relation to this, I comment in my field notes that the women seemed "flat" in terms of their mood. An anti-climactic atmosphere seemed to pervade our interaction this time. When I asked some of the women about this during the interviews they too acknowledged the difference. They attributed this difference to some of the adjustment issues they were experiencing at the time (to be discussed in Chapter Seven) as well as to the realization that, even though they knew that there would be further support group meetings, that this was the last interview. Therefore, some of the "flatness" so visible in these interviews was probably associated with the need to disengage from the research study.

This discussion of the contextual character of the interviews reveals the discernible aspects (that is, where the interviews took place, who was present, the perceived impact of those present, length of the interviews) of my interaction with the seven women participating in the study. However, less discernible features were also part of the interview process. As Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) note, an interview is a "conversation with a purpose" (p. 85). As far as this research was concerned, the "intangibles" or the less discernible aspects of the interview process were instrumental in terms of fulfilling the purposes of the study. The following section of this chapter outlines and discusses some of the intangible features of the interviews conducted as part of this study.

The Interviews: Some Commentary

As Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) contend, an interview is not necessarily a linear exchange whereby the researcher asks questions and the subject responds. Rather, interviews in qualitative research are commonly fluid and bi-directional involving a give-and-take, a movement back and forth between researcher and respondent that is dialogical and interactive.

In writing about the feminist practice of oral history, Anderson and Jack (1991) concur when they note that the interview involves a shift "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" (p. 23). It is this interactive nature of the interview that enables the exploration of meaning that underlies overt action. Pauses, inflections, laughter, tears, what is said and often what is left unsaid are usually cues signifying meaning and are more likely to emerge through a dialogical approach to the interview. Anderson and Jack (1991) encourage the feminist qualitative researcher to be sensitive to these cues and to unobtrusively follow and trace them through the interview. According to these researchers, as well as others such as Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), Marshall and Rossman (1989), Spradley (1979), Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) and Fontana and Frey (1994), such an approach can prompt the development of in-depth understandings of human phenomena. Moreover, through related analytical processes, these understandings of meaning can be placed within broader ideological and discursive contexts. Seemingly, the access to meaning affords an approach that is consistent with the basic tenets of qualitative research, particularly the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis and the features of standpoint research referred

to previously in this chapter.

Obvious questions arise at this point in this discussion, that is, how is the dialogical approach to interviewing operationalized? What factors need to be taken into consideration? How can the intersubjective relationship between the researcher and the researched be shaped so as to draw out the underlying meanings?

The Interview Guide

The backbone of the interview process employed as a method in this study was the interview guide (see Appendix D). This guide was key in terms of developing and then maintaining the dialogical and interactive character of the interviews. I designed this guide prior to embarking on the pre-deployment interviews and I used it as an extemporaneous tool as I participated in this initial set of interviews. Following the questions included in this guide ensured that I was covering key issues, but at the same time, the guide was flexible to the point where I could pursue unexplored areas if I felt this was necessary.

Patton (1980) supports this approach when he states that a guide can keep an interview focused, but will also allow individual experiences and perspectives to emerge. Patton (1980) also provides specific guidelines for the design of interview guides that will accommodate this blending of both structure and flexibility. I endeavored to follow these guidelines as well as those articulated by Spradley (1979) as I designed the interview guides used in this study.

As Spradley (1979) writes about ethnographic interviewing, he provides an interesting and useful typology of questions that can be incorporated within an interview guide. He identifies one category of questions as "grand tour" questions which are

designed to prompt the verbal description of significant features related to either space, time, events, people, activities, objects or any combination thereof. Although grand tour questions are often useful at the beginning of an interview, Spradley does concede that these questions can encourage respondents to ramble. However, an astute interviewer can usually extricate from a long-running account meaningful depictions and understandings of the phenomena in question.

I incorporated grand tour questions within the interview guides used in this study. For example, I typically began each interview with a question such as "Can you tell me about what the last few weeks have been like for you?" or something to that effect. This form of questioning directed the interview to a certain extent, but the open-endedness also allowed for a personal and individual response.

Spradley (1979) also recommends the use of "mini-tour" questions. Just as the label implies, mini-tour questions can often be picked out from the rich descriptions elicited from the broader grand tour questions. In the context of this study, this often meant that I waited for a natural break in the flow of description to ask for further clarification or elaboration on a particular point. For example, I often found myself asking mini-tour questions which began with the same six words, that is, "Can you tell me more about...?"

Both Spradley (1979) and Patton (1980) advise the use of "experience" questions after the grand tour and mini-tour questions have been asked. Experience questions direct the respondent toward an even greater level of specificity, given that they prompt the respondent to provide descriptions of experiences, actions or activities that are observable. These questions focus on concrete, everyday practices. I can recall asking a number of experience questions throughout all three phases of this study. For example, in

the post-deployment phase, I was able to obtain rich descriptions of the women's experience with being at the jetty for the return of the ship by asking the appropriate experience questions.

Patton (1980) also includes "opinion\value" and "feeling" questions as part of his typology of questions that can potentially be included in interview guides. These types of questions are designed to reveal the cognitive and emotive processes of individuals participating in a study.

Throughout this study, I asked numerous opinion\value questions. I regularly asked the women to tell me about what they thought of the particulars of their experience with deployment. I encouraged them to make their own judgments and derive their own conclusions in this regard. Relatedly, I frequently asked the participating women to articulate their emotional responses to their experiences. Indeed, I commonly asked the question "How did you feel about that...?"

Spradley (1979) also recommends constructing an interview in such a way that the researcher slowly introduces new elements to the process. According to Spradley, introducing new elements too quickly will mean that the interview will soon resemble an interrogation rather than a conversation. Where this is the case, rapport may evaporate and the participants may discontinue their cooperation. Therefore, the sequencing and timing of questions within an interview guide is very important.

I attempted to follow Spradley's (1979) advice in this regard as I designed the initial interview guide. This pre-deployment interview guide begins with such innocuous questions as "How long have you been married?", "How many postings have you had?", "Is this your first major deployment?" and the like. Typically, this line of questioning

helped to "break the ice" with the participants and opened the door for the subsequent

grand tour, mini-tour, experience, opinion\value and feeling questions. During the

deployment and post-deployment interviews, sequencing and timing were not as

important given that I knew the participating women very well at those points in the

cycle.

It is important to note that a uniform guide was only developed and used for the pre-

deployment interviews. However, individual guides for each participant were prepared

for the subsequent sets of interviews. At these points in the research process, interviewing

and analysis were proceeding simultaneously - a common practice in qualitative research

(Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Harris, 1993; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Marshall &

Rossman, 1989). As a consequence, I analyzed each woman's transcripts after each

interview and formulated an idiosyncratic set of questions that allowed me to focus on

particular themes that emerged in the first interview.

The use of interview guides in this study facilitated systematic and comprehensive

interviewing by delimiting the issues to be discussed. However, while the guides did help

to focus the interviews, they were also designed in such a way that individual experiences

and perspectives could also emerge. Maintaining this balance between structure and

flexibility was instrumental in terms of developing and then preserving the dialogical and

interactive character of the interviews. As mentioned previously in this chapter, this

approach, as opposed to the notion of the interview as an information exchange, is

consistent with the tenets of qualitative research in general and feminist standpoint

research in particular. However, as important as the interview guides are in this respect,

there are other factors that need to be taken into consideration as a qualitative, feminist

standpoint research project is designed and implemented.

<u>Rapport</u>

Oakley (1981) claims that the goal of finding out about people and the meanings they ascribe to their experience is best achieved when the relationship between the researcher and the researched is non-hierarchical. This means that the researcher makes a conscious effort to diminish the power relations that so often permeate the research process (Code, 1991, 1995; Harding, 1991; Smith, 1987).

Various qualitative researchers offer some practical advice in this regard. For example, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) recommend that the researcher refrain from acting as either a "critic" or "expert". In relation to this research study, I made an effort to eschew both of these roles. It would have been fairly easy for me to criticize some of the military practices as they were revealed to me by the participants throughout the course of the study, especially when the women themselves often offered very strident critiques of these practices. As tempting as it may have been to join in, while I was interacting directly with the women, I suspended all judgment. I held to the view that it would be extremely presumptuous for me to offer criticism in this regard. Similarly, given my previous experience with the military institution, I could possibly have presumed some kind of expertise in my interaction with the women. However, I knew that such a claim, even if never consciously expressed, would prove to be counter-productive in terms of my effort to diminish power relations between myself and the research participants. In fact, on many occasions throughout the study, I reinforced with the women that I was there to learn from them and certainly not to criticize the realities of their lives.

While stepping around the roles of either critic or expert may have contributed to the

development of a non-hierarchical relationship between myself and the research participants, I would have to say that other factors related to the "presentation of self" (Fontana & Frey, 1994) played a more significant role in this respect. I found that presenting myself, and in particular, approaching each interview as a woman-to-woman discussion did more to break down any barriers between myself and the participants than anything else. While acknowledging this, I also have to admit that this approach was not a planned facet of the research process. On the contrary, I seemed to instinctively assume this stance with the women. In retrospect, I now realize that this was indeed a very natural and fitting way to approach this research.

In adopting a woman-to-woman stance with the participants, I was able to experience the intersubjectivity so vital to feminist qualitative research. As discussed previously in this chapter, intersubjectivity refers to the commonality that exists between the researcher and the researched. In recognizing that the researcher and the researched are not as ontologically distinct as it might appear (Stanley & Wise, 1990), it is possible to break down barriers that can potentially impede the development of epistemological understandings relative to the research. When intersubjectivity is used to its best advantage, a level of trust and openness in the relationship between the researcher and the researched evolves that can, in turn, foster in-depth understandings of the phenomena under study.

The "woman-to-woman" approach that I followed helped to break down any barriers that may have existed between myself and the research participants thereby strengthening the egalitarian character of our interaction. This meant that the women were often very open and candid, even when it must have been very difficult for them to be so. I felt

privileged that they trusted me to the extent that they were willing to grant me such access to their lives.

Working with the women in such a way meant that this aspect of my relationship with them was rich and rewarding on a personal level. Although I often felt drained and depleted at the end of an interview or support group meeting, I enjoyed the intensity and vibrancy that typically characterized our work together. As time moved on though, I also began to understand that the intensity and vibrancy had implications beyond the personal. I eventually realized that we were immersed in a repository of previously untapped insight that had epistemological significance. This became apparent to me when I heard women convey in the context of an interview or support group meeting such statements as: "Well, I've never thought of it this way before..." or "What this really means to me is..." or "When I do this I think I am...". Throughout our interaction, I would endeavour to detect these threads of insight and encourage the women to develop them further. Because of our relationship of trust and openness, the women were usually willing to do this. Indeed, it was gratifying to witness their concerted efforts to "dig deeply" (field notes) and work with me so as to reveal the meanings that lay underneath the surface of their experience. As they did so, unacknowledged and unexplored facets of their experience began to emerge. From all of this, I learned that intersubjectivity has the potential to generate levels of trust and openness between the researcher and the researched that can contribute to the development of in-depth epistemological understandings.

As valuable as this is, intersubjectivity imparts more than a sense of trust and openness to the research process. Actually, an intersubjective relationship between the

researcher and the researched has the potential to induce other forces which can also contribute to the development of epistemological understandings.

As discussed in Chapter Three, women often experience a bifurcated consciousness. One aspect of that consciousness is framed within the concepts and categories that embody dominant ideologies and discourses, while the other is informed by the more immediate realities of everyday life. The disjuncture or bifurcation evolves when the everyday experiences do not fit within the ideological and discursive concepts and categories and alternatives are not readily available. To use Dorothy Smith's (1987) useful geological metaphor yet again, this can mean that the daily experiences break way along a "line of fault".

Some researchers are sensitive to the potential for bifurcation. In the context of a research project, they are aware that women may "mute their own thoughts and feelings when they try to describe their lives in the familiar and publicly acceptable terms of prevailing concepts and conventions" (Anderson & Jack, 1991, p. 11). When this happens, what is often missing from accounts generated through research are respondents' own interpretations, perspectives and meanings related to their experience. In an effort to retrieve and reveal these aspects of women's subjective understandings of their lives, some researchers learn to "listen in stereo" (Anderson & Jack, 1991), tuning in simultaneously to both the dominant channel of prevailing ideologies and discourses and the often muted channel of women's subjectivity.

Listening "in stereo" means that the researcher is compelled to listen in a new way. This involves holding in abeyance taken-for-granted assumptions or theories that may tell the researcher what to hear and how to interpret what is heard. This also means that the

researcher must be mindful of the times, particularly in interviewing, when they may anticipate in advance what he or she thinks the respondent is going to say, rather than listening to what the respondent is really saying. When researchers anticipate, perhaps even mentally completing the sentences uttered by respondents, what they are really doing is appropriating what is being said to an existing theoretical schema (Anderson & Jack, 1991).

Obviously, this appropriation can serve to reinforce any sense of bifurcation that may exist within the lives of the respondents. To pull away from existing frameworks, to recover the muted experiences from the rupture created by the "line of fault" requires particular skills on the part of the researcher. Researchers who write about "starting from experience", or "beginning in the everyday world" or using "women's standpoint as a starting point" (Anderson & Jack, 1991; Code, 19ᶜ ı; 1995; DeVault, 1990; Harding, 1991; Smith, 1987) articulate these specific skills. As I conducted the interviews and participated in the support group meetings, I attempted to utilize these skills which I will subsequently detail in this chapter. As I employed these skills, I learned to realize that my efforts in this regard were aided through and by intersubjective processes.

The trust and openness characterizing the intersubjective relationship between myself and the research participants created a "safe place" within which it was possible to pull away from existing frameworks and preconceived understandings. It also created a space for myself as the researcher to practise the skills referred to previously and which are suggested by feminist standpoint researchers and other researchers who "start with experience". One of these skills involved listening for self-evaluative statements. As I interacted with the women participating in the study, I made an effort to detect the ways

in which they judged themselves. As I did this, it was possible to detect the standards which they accepted and then used to judge the self, those which they rejected as well as those which they thought represented impossible ideals. This allowed for an examination of the relationship between self-concept and cultural norms (Anderson & Jack, 1991).

For example, as will be discussed in Chapter Six, the ideology of self-reliance was used by many of the women as a benchmark against which they measured their performance as military spouses. However, in the context of the interviews, I encouraged the women to describe their own unique experience with this ideology. In this way, it was possible to gain a sense of how they practised (or did not practise) self-reliance in their everyday lives and how they felt about themselves when they could not or did not want to act self-reliantly. I was able to understand some of the conditions that affected their ability to behave in a self-reliant fashion. Through this, the idea of self-reliance was transformed from a monolithic concept relevant and applicable to all military wives to one which was variously practised and interpreted in accordance with the particulars of their individual lives.

Another skill recommended by feminist standpoint researchers is associated with attentiveness to meta-statements (Anderson & Jack, 1991; DeVault, 1990). This involves sensitivity to apparent contradictions or incongruities within interviews. Examples of meta-statements are visible within one portion of an interview conducted with Sara. In the following excerpt, Sara and I are discussing the *Illustrious* Wives' Network. She states:

> Well, the network is important. It brings all the girls together...helps to
> pass those lonely weekends and evenings. Its good for morale too, both
> for ourselves and the guys. Yeah, the girls get together...but then they talk

about everything...you know...the rumor mill...like I told you before, I

have been shunned by the network because of the mess I've made of

everything. I guess I'm not good for morale...yeah...I guess there's the

network and then the *other* kind of network.

This passage contains an obvious contradiction. Sara begins by referring to the

ideological significance of the network (to be discussed in subsequent chapters) by noting

how networks help to alleviate loneliness and boost morale, but almost in the same

breath, she illuminates the negative side of the network as she has experienced it.

Evidently, Sara has absorbed the ideological meaning of the network from the

institution's point of view, but her experiences with it are not positive. Her comments in

this regard, that is, "they talk about everything", "the rumor mill", "shunned by the

network" and "the *other* kind of network", are actually meta-statements signifying her

perceptions and experiences that obviously depart from the standard ideological meaning

of the network.

At those times when I detected such contradictions, I usually brought it to the

attention of the women involved and asked for clarification. Some women had difficulty

responding to this. Although I empathized with these women as they struggled to convey

their meaning, their difficulties with expression were epistemologically significant to the

extent that they reflected their efforts to communicate ideas and perceptions as *they*

conceived of them. In relation to this, the previously detected inconsistencies were

usually manifestations of some kind of subconscious dissonance between what they

thought they were *supposed* to think, feel or do and what they *actually* thought, felt or

did. So, any meta-statements which emerged in their "talk" were usually cues signifying

some kind of dissonance or lack of fit between ideological or discursive notions of "proper" behavior, feelings or thoughts and those which were actually part of their everyday lives.

Similarly, DeVault (1990b) advises that researchers pay attention to the *way* that research participants convey their meaning. This constitutes a further skill practised in the context of this research study. Hesitancy, halting responses, the ubiquitous "uuhms" and "you knows" and certainly the phrases such as "this is difficult to explain, but..." are not incidental features of conversation, but are sometimes actual indications that respondents are endeavoring to think and speak on their own terms, rather than from pre-conceived categories. As DeVault notes, phrases such as "you know" are not necessarily reflections of "stumbling inarticulateness, but appear to signal a request for understanding" (p. 103). In comparison, ideological or discursive understandings would likely roll easily off the tongue because they are often so completely internalized (DeVault, 1990b). However, in those instances where research participants are speaking from their own experience, it is quite likely that they would find their standard linguistic forms of expression to be inadequate.

Transcripts of the interviews conducted in this study are rife with "you knows" and "uhmms" and other such indicators of the women's efforts to reflect upon their experience from their standpoints. As such, these linguistic phrases often proved to be important focal points as analysis proceeded.

Anderson and Jack (1991) also provide other recommendations designed to assist the researcher in pulling away from existing frameworks and recovering muted expressions of subjectivity. In particular, they offer a number of practical suggestions regarding the

demeanor of the researcher which I made an effort to follow throughout the course of this study.

Although as discussed previously in this chapter, the interview guide is an invaluable tool when conducting an interview, the researcher should resist the tendency to follow it to the point where it is an impediment to free expression on the part of the research participants. Accordingly, throughout this research process I was conscious of my tendency to be task-oriented, knowing that this orientation might prompt me to interrupt the women's narrative drawing them back to what was important *to me* (that is, on the interview guide) when that may or may not have been important to them.

Another practical suggestion articulated by Anderson and Jack (1991) which was extremely relevant for me involved an awareness of those times in the dialogue between myself and the participants when I seemed too certain about what a participant was saying. The need to be aware of certainty was a revelation for me. I began this research study with the idea that a researcher need only probe or ask for clarification when *uncertainty* or confusion prevailed, but not when certainty predominated. However, I soon realized that those instances where I readily and easily concurred with what I was hearing, may have actually signified that I was not really listening to *the women*, but rather listening to how their words fitted into or corroborated what I thought I already knew. At those times when I believed that I was agreeing with what I was hearing too readily, I learned to interrupt the interview process and ask for clarification. What I learned from this was that certainty requires as much careful clarification as uncertainty. Otherwise, the researcher runs the risk of inadvertently slotting respondents' words within preconceived categories.

Evidently, rapport was a significant consideration within the context of this research study. Indeed, rapport was important in terms of both the process and the product of this work. Building and then maintaining rapport between myself and the research participants involved the development of a non-hierarchical, egalitarian relationship. Intersubjectivity was key in this regard, also helping to foster trust and openness in the research process. Moreover, rapport was implicated as I attempted to "listen in stereo" throughout this study. Given that I employed many of the principles of feminist standpoint research, it was important to tune in simultaneously to both the dominant channel of prevailing ideologies and discourses as well as the muted channel of the women's subjectivity. Doing so meant that I tried to listen in a new way in the context of the interviews. Specifically, this involved the awareness of self-evaluative statements, attention to meta-statements and the way that meaning was conveyed, avoiding steering the respondent to the concerns of the researcher, and using certainty as well as uncertainty as a springboard to clarification.

The Support Group

The support group was initially established solely as an ethical safeguard (see the end of this chapter). Having worked with military spouses in the past, I was aware that our interaction in the context of the interviews could well be intense. I also anticipated that our work together could stimulate new understandings of self, daily experiences and the military institution. While such new understandings have the potential to be empowering, I was concerned about any discomfort, pain or anxiety that might also evolve as new discoveries emerged. I eventually learned to conceive of these ethical concerns as risks associated with "self-exposure".

As a researcher, I felt I had an ethical responsibility to do what I could to ameliorate any unintended, negative consequences associated with the risk of self-exposure as far as this study was concerned. Accordingly, following the advice of my thesis supervisor, I suggested to participating women at each of the pre-deployment interviews that we meet as a group. This suggestion was advanced to each of the women *individually*, so as to ensure that any one individual would not be pressured to attend by a collective commitment to the idea. Moreover, as I discussed the possibility of a support group with each woman, I did not indicate whether or not others participating in the study were interested. In so doing, I was also trying to avoid even subtle persuasion to attend. Ethically, it was important that each woman's participation in the support group be wholly voluntary.

I intended that this group would provide a safety net for the women. I hoped that it would provide a forum through which the women could process any new discoveries and deal with any emotional "fall-out" ensuing from the interviews. I had previous experience facilitating support groups, including groups of female military partners, so I was quite confident that I would be able to work with this group in such a way that it would function effectively and meet its objectives.

The women participating in the study eagerly and independently embraced the idea of a support group. They all expressed a willingness to commit the time to meet on a regular basis. I must admit, however, that their initial enthusiasm was probably more of a reflection of their perceived need to "get out of the house" (field notes) than a recognition of the possible concerns emanating from the research process we were all about to embark upon. I became somewhat concerned that my plan for this group would fall by the

wayside when some of the women suggested that we bring desserts to every meeting. While I respected their need to be social, I was initially uneasy about the direction that the group might take.

Regardless, we first met as a group two weeks after the departure of the ship. We met in the Women's Activity Centre located within a local PMQ community. The Centre actually comprises a block of converted PMQ apartments. The section where we first met still contained the original apartment lay-out, which meant that we were able to sit in a comfortable "living room" area with a kitchen nearby.

This first meeting consisted mostly of introductions and ice-breaking activities. I then allowed some time for the discussion of experiences with regard to the first weeks of deployment. The women were open and candid and spoke freely about their experiences. They readily prompted and supported one another which resulted in the expression of interesting insights and perceptions. It was this discussion that first alerted me to the possibility that the group meetings could serve an epistemological as well as ethical and social purposes. I was reassured that these meetings would not just be dessert parties.

During the deployment phase of the study, we met a total of eight times. We also met twice after the ship returned to port. Initially, we convened in locations such as the Women's Activity Centre or the Military Family Resource Centre. However, as time moved on, we began to meet in the homes of various women, with the exception of the two post-deployment meetings, which were held in the Women's Activity Centre.

The movement of meeting place from an institutional locale to actual family homes corresponded with the increase in comfort within the group. In relation to comfort, rank did not seem to interfere with group process in any appreciable way. There were times

when the wives of lower ranking personnel would act deferentially toward the wives of the officers and conversely, a somewhat patronizing and authoritarian tone would occasionally creep into the conversational style and tone of the senior officers' wives, but overall, rank was not an issue.

I had previous experience working with mixed-rank groups of military wives. On those occasions, I always made a conscious effort to ignore or transcend rank. This is relatively easy for a civilian facilitator to do, particularly since group members, knowing that you are after all, a civilian, and thereby not part of their culture, really do not expect the acknowledgment of rank.

This strategy of ignoring the ranking structure appeared to work again as far as this study was concerned. I consistently referred to the women by their first names and endeavored to interact with them all in the same way. This is not to say that the reality of rank did not ever seep into our interaction as a group. On the contrary, it did quite frequently. For example, participating women would sometimes compare and contrast differing views and standpoints that were directly related to rank. In relation to this, a senior officer's wife might say "well, for *us,* we have to do things this way...." (field notes) or the wife of a lower ranking serving member might comment "we don't get those benefits because..." (field notes). However, when these kinds of comments were uttered, I made an effort to frame the statements as opportunities to learn from one another, rather than permitting such statements to divide the group hegemonically.

In my role as facilitator, I ensured that the group stayed on topic, I occasionally probed for deeper meaning, I helped them to sort out areas of confusion or incongruity and I pulled out of their discussion general statements that served to summarize their

understandings. In other words, I acted like a typical facilitator. However, the women themselves set the agenda for every meeting. They played a significant role in defining the direction and focus for every discussion.

This participant-centered approach was appropriate for two reasons. First, it helped to ensure that we were dealing with the unintended consequences of the individual interviews. For example, participants commonly started off a discussion with statements such as "After Debbie and I met the last time I kept thinking about..." or "Did anyone else feel...?" (field notes). These types of conversation starters were quite reassuring for me. To my mind, they meant that the group was functioning as an ethical safeguard.

Second, the participant-centered approach was consistent with the overall idea that this research should start from the lives of the women, rather than from pre-conceived categories. Accordingly, the women were encouraged to speak from their standpoints and initiate discussion in this regard. That is not to say that I did not periodically ask a question that moved the discussion in another direction. As I realized that this support group had epistemological as well as ethical value, I did, on occasion, introduce topics for discussion. However, this was only done to confirm or verify themes and impressions gleaned through the one-to-one interviews. So, even when I did play a role in directing the discussion, it always arose from the words of the women in the context of the interviews.

It is important to note that the participating women were aware that the support group was epistemologically as well as ethically significant. They, like me, grew to realize that insight gained through interaction in the support group often clarified certain issues discussed in the one-to-one interviews and vice versa. In fact, the women would usually

comment on the reciprocal relationship between the interviews and the support group in the context of subsequent interviews.

After each support group meeting, I wrote about the content or focus, the atmosphere or tone as well as any impressions I had about the meeting. The women were also aware that I recorded this information as data.

In preparing these field notes, I endeavored to follow Spradley's (1980) principles for ethnographic recording. Specifically, I usually made an effort to identify the language used for each field note entry. In the margins, I would note whether or not my "jottings" represented the actual words of the women, the discursive concepts and categories relevant to the military institution or the language typically used in my discipline. These appended notations assisted me in sorting out and distinguishing between the various ways that experience relevant to the military can be framed. Forcing myself to sort and distinguish the linguistic forms present within my field notes ensured that the "frame" that was intended to serve as the starting point for this research - the local and particular worlds that the women experienced directly - was always visible and accessible to me through the field notes.

I also attempted to record as many verbatim comments as I could remember from each support group meeting. Spradley (1980) recommends verbatim recording as a means of avoiding the distortion of meaning. This was sometimes difficult to achieve because of the overlapping style of dialogue characterizing the support group meetings and because of the limitations of my own memory (the group did not choose to tape record the meetings). In an effort to compensate for these difficulties, at the beginning of the study I frequently found myself sitting in my car at the end of a meeting scribbling down as

many direct quotes as I could recall on the backs of envelopes or the fronts of file folders or whatever I could find. When I realized that this practice was going to be a part of this research process, I learned to bring along a small notebook expressly for this purpose.

Within the verbatim accounts, I also endeavored to use concrete language. Spradley (1980) notes that this is often difficult for a researcher to accomplish, given that many of us are trained to summarize, abbreviate and generalize in an effort to avoid being too wordy. However, together with the other principles of ethnographic recording, specific and concrete accounts of occurrences also help to ensure that discursive jargon does not obscure the "dailiness" (Anderson & Jack, 1991) of the record.

Spradley (1980) also advises that researchers maintain a personal journal which records the reactions, ideas, fears, confusions and breakthroughs that inevitably arise in the context of a study. Having long been a journal writer, this seemed like a natural and appropriate recommendation to me. So, I obtained yet another notebook which served as a repository for my feelings and reactions in relation to this study.

I believe that a journal has personal benefit for the researcher in that it constitutes a much-needed outlet for the expression of the emotional or psychological consequences related to this kind of intense work. However, as Spradley (1980) contends, the personal journal can also become an important source of data, reminding the researcher of the particulars of the project. The journal can also prompt the researcher to follow up on specific themes with research participants. My journal was invaluable in this regard. Writing has always been a sense-making activity for me, so when I wrote about my personal reaction to the research process, I often found that previously undetected questions or insights would emerge that I would follow up on in subsequent interviews or

support group meetings. Moreover, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the journal was instrumental in terms of enhancing the "trustworthiness" of the data. As I wrote, I often sorted out and recorded my reactions to the research participants and the feelings I had in relation to each of them. As Spradley states, this introspective character of a personal journal helps the researcher to account for biases and the ways that he or she might be influencing both the process and the product of the research. As such, journal-writing is a reflexive process and thereby useful in terms of enhancing the trustworthiness of findings generated through the study.

The initial analysis of data was also a highly reflexive process involving ongoing reflection, dialogue and "constant comparison" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). These initial analytical procedures were formative and thereby relevant to this "total work-out" phase of the research process. As such, this phase of the analysis was distinct from the summative analysis of all research materials which transpired at the end of the study.

Formative Analysis of Transcripts and Field Notes

The interviews were taped using a small, pocket-sized tape recorder. I deliberately chose this type of tape recorder in an effort to minimize the presence of technology in my interaction with the participants. Although the women readily complied with my suggestion that the interviews be taped, a number of them were initially anxious about the prospect of their voices being recorded. Because of this, I made a conscious decision to use a relatively unobtrusive form of technology.

Upon completion of each interview, the tapes were transcribed. I myself did not transcribe the tapes. However, I did listen to each of the tapes while simultaneously reading the written transcripts. This allowed me to re-live each interview while also

checking the transcripts for accuracy. Actually, this effort to compare the transcripts to the tapes also constituted the first level of analysis of the data.

This last statement is evocative of the character of analysis in qualitative research. The term "data analysis" is generally used to refer to processes whereby order, structure and meaning is brought to a mass of collected data (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Similarly, Wolcott (1994) discusses analysis in qualitative research as involving systematic procedures followed to "transform data" from running accounts of experience to interpretive inferences. As such, it is often a "messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 112). Added to this interesting and paradoxical composite of qualities is the reality that qualitative data analysis is not a discrete and separate stage of the research, but is actually a progression, "an ongoing process, not a one-time event" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993, p. 111).

What this means is that data analysis proceeds simultaneously with data collection in qualitative research (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Morse, 1994; Wolcott, 1994). Inherent in this practice is the assumption that the researcher acts as an "instrument" continually revising and fine-tuning (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). Accordingly, as data are gathered, they are also analyzed. Specifically, this entails the researcher responding to data as they become available and forming "tentative meanings" (Creswell, 1994) which then precipitate changes in subsequent interview questions and other data collection techniques. As new data are collected, they are compared to the original tentative meanings and interpretations drawn in this regard are then used to refine and re-shape any

ensuing data collection procedures. This process proceeds on and on in a characteristically circular fashion through to the final report-writing stage (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993).

Although it may appear this way to the outside observer, this process does not transpire intuitively or magically. Rather, as Morse (1994) contends:

> ...it is a process of piecing together data, of making the invisible obvious,
> of recognizing the significant from the insignificant, of linking seemingly
> unrelated facts logically, of fitting categories one with another, and
> attributing consequences to antecedents. It is a process of conjecture
> and verification, of correction and modification, of suggestion and defence.
> It is a creative process of organizing data so that the analytic scheme will
> appear obvious. (p. 25)

The name that is commonly ascribed to the processes articulated by Morse (1994) in the preceding passage is the "constant comparative method" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In analyzing the data collected throughout this study, I employed this method and I also followed specific steps outlined by Creswell (1994) and Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993).

As mentioned previously, comparing the tapes to the transcriptions constituted the first step in data analysis. Beyond checking for accuracy, this procedure also enabled me to "gain a sense of the whole" (Creswell, 1994). As I listened and checked, I would periodically jot down notes on the margins of the transcripts. I then found it useful to "write out" my reaction to each transcript. Particular questions guided this writing. For example, as I wrote, I would ask such questions as: "What is this woman saying?", "What

am I learning from her that will shape my questions for the next research participant? or for my next interview with her?", "What is the underlying meaning of this woman's words?", "Do I have other data which might challenge or support what this woman is saying?", "If so, how does it affect what I understand right now?". I followed a similar process as I initially analyzed segments of the field notes collected in response to the support group meetings.

Throughout these formative processes of analysis, concerns related to my subjectivity as a researcher, the veracity of the accounts generated through the study as well as the congruity between the data and analytical explanations arose. These concerns can be conceptualized as matters of trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness

The impact of the researcher's subjectivity is a persistent concern within qualitative research. Peshkin (1988) refers to subjectivity as "the amalgam of the persuasions that stem from the circumstances of one's class, statuses and values interacting with the particulars of one's objects of investigation" (p. 17). Essentially, Peshkin (1988) is reinforcing the idea that researchers bring to research settings taken-for-granted assumptions as well as concepts and categories acquired through training. These assumptions, concepts and categories inevitably enter into research inquiries, often in unseen ways, and comprise, as noted previously in this chapter, the "intellectual autobiography" (Stanley & Wise, 1990) of the researcher.

Acknowledgment of the intellectual autobiography runs counter to the orientation of traditional, prevailing research methodologies. As Code (1991) states, from a traditional perspective, subjectivity is thought to clutter, confuse and confound both the process and

product of research. Similarly, traditional researchers are preoccupied with the "trinity" (Janesick, 1994) of validity, reliability and generalizability and often transpose their specific and particular understandings of these concerns to the domain of alternate or qualitative research. As Janesick (1994) contends in writing about validity, for example, "...the term validity, which is over specified in one domain, has become confusing because it is reassigned to another" (p. 216). In relation to this, a number of qualitative researchers advance compelling and convincing arguments supporting the contention that validity, reliability and generalizability need to be interpreted and incorporated within qualitative research designs in different ways than those relevant to traditional research.

Qualitative researchers have been patiently responding to the questions which arise about their methods. While this has value, this may mean that qualitative researchers indulge in "methodolatry", which Janesick (1994) describes as a slavish attachment and devotion to method or a constant obsession with the trinity of validity, reliability and generalizability. Janesick implies that methodolatry arises as a consequence of the perceived inadequacy of methods employed in qualitative research. In other words, because most researchers are commonly socialized to esteem traditional methods, it is almost as if those who attempt to follow qualitative methods are endeavoring to compensate for what they may inherently believe to be a lack of rigour. As a result, these researchers may become over-involved with method, selecting and defending them to such an extent that they lose the actual substance of the story being told through their work.

The obvious point that needs to be addressed in relation to Janesick's (1994) contentions is the presumed inadequacy as far as qualitative research methods are

concerned. Janesick (1994) and a number of other qualitative researchers (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Morse, 1994; Wolcott, 1994) assert that these concerns are misplaced. They suggest that methods employed in qualitative research can and should be just as rigorous as other methods, but that rigour will, of necessity, be interpreted in a different way. The words that are used to describe this "different way" are, as mentioned previously in this chapter, "conscious subjectivity" (Duelli-Klein, 1983), "disciplined subjectivity" (Wilson, 1977) or "strong objectivity" (Harding, 1991).

In this research study I tried to incorporate the appropriate rigour within this research design while also maintaining a "faithfulness" to the philosophical and methodological underpinnings of qualitative research. I wanted the "thick descriptions" (Wolcott, 1994), but I also realized that I would have to be meaningfully attentive to method. Therefore, I have attempted to devise a method that strikes a balance between "methodolatry" and substance.

One of the ways that I have approached this challenge is by re-conceptualizing my previously-acquired understandings of validity, reliability and generalizability as "trustworthiness". Trustworthiness in qualitative research has to do with description and explanation. There are various means by which the researcher can ensure that the descriptions generated through the research represent the practices and meanings that the original respondents intended to convey. Moreover, trustworthiness is also about whether or not analytical explanations fit the descriptions. Essentially, in devising assessments of trustworthiness, the researcher must answer the questions: "do the descriptions match the actual lived experiences of the research participants"? and " are the analytical

explanations of the descriptions credible"?

The literature which discusses method in qualitative research is replete with ways and means by which the trustworthiness of qualitative data can be enhanced. I endeavored to follow a number of these recommendations in this study. For example, Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993) indicate that "prolonged engagement" is important in this respect. They claim that the researcher must spend enough time in the research setting to overcome any distortions that arise in response to the presence of the researcher in the setting as well as any biases that may prevail. Furthermore, the researcher must spend sufficient time in the setting if he or she is intent upon understanding the particulars of the context.

As far as this study was concerned, I spent nearly a year "in the context". This period of time spanned the entire cycle of a major deployment. However, not only was my engagement with the setting prolonged, it was also persistent. The interviews were long and often intense and we met as a support group on a regular basis (a total of ten times) throughout the cycle.

Qualitative researchers also advise member checks as a way of verifying the trustworthiness of the data. This involves providing an opportunity for research participants to review transcripts and any other material collected through the research process (Creswell, 1994; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Janesick, 1994).

As I worked with the women participating in this study, I would, from time to time, mention that at some point I would offer them the opportunity to read their transcripts for the purpose of checking for authenticity. When I did so, many of them would look at me

with perplexed and puzzled expressions. When I actually invited them to read their transcripts, most of them flatly refused to do so. This both surprised and alarmed me. I was surprised because I assumed that they would have a natural curiosity about "what they said" and I was alarmed because I would now not be able to address the issue of trustworthiness through member checks.

The women responded to my invitation in a characteristically blunt fashion. They could not understand why I thought this step was important. They could not conceive why I would think that their accounts of experiences or meanings could potentially differ from reality. As Marie conveyed to the support group when this issue of member checks arose "If I said it, I meant it" (field notes). Chris also conveyed to me that she thought reading her transcript would be "a waste of time, and she would rather talk" (field notes).

Other women rejected the member check on the grounds that reading the transcripts would be too painful. Sara, for one, was quite firm in her resolve not to read the transcripts. She emphatically stated that there was "no way that she could handle reading all of that stuff" (field notes). Evidently, a member check for Sara would entail revisiting many of the difficulties she experienced throughout the deployment. Needless to say, for ethical reasons, it was important for me to respect these wishes.

Only two women, Holly and Darlene, actually read their transcripts. However, these readings must have been cursory at best because each woman spent less than an hour reviewing the records of their words. I remember Holly laughingly handing a transcript back to me and saying "Oh yeah, its all true...that's for sure" (field notes).

In dismissing my concerns regarding trustworthiness or in claiming that the member check would bring back pain associated with earlier phases of the deployment cycle, I

was inadvertently compelled by the women to abandon my plan for the member checks. However, I was able to use the "audit trail" in an effort to gain a sense of the trustworthiness of the data.

The audit trail proved to be invaluable in terms of enhancing the trustworthiness of the data. Typically, audit trails comprise a record of the research process and context (Creswell, 1994; Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). I organized an audit trail for this study using four categories. The first category or "file" contains the raw data (transcripts, field notes) as well as the tapes and the computer disks. The second file or the "data reduction" file holds copies of transcripts and field notes containing penciled and colored notations signifying my earliest attempts at analysis. The index cards and large pieces of flip-chart paper which display diagrammatic attempts at analysis are also contained in this file. The third file holds other copies of research materials which represent later efforts at analysis. Essentially, these three files carry all the materials associated with the research process.

The personal journal referred to previously in this chapter is a significant component of the audit trail. The journal contains matter-of-fact information such as participants' names, telephone numbers, addresses, directions to their homes, demographic information and their informed consent forms. However, as discussed previously, the journal also comprises a record of my experiences with the research process - my thoughts, feelings and insights which evolved throughout the experience. The journal is also the place where I am meaningfully attentive to my influence on the research. Within the journal, I reflect upon the potential or actual biases I brought to the study and those which emerged throughout the process and in doing so, I think about how I can resolve or

transcend such influences. As such, the journal served as a reflexive tool and proved to be an important facet of this research.

Throughout the personal journal I often reflected upon the apparent intrusiveness of feminist qualitative research. I felt privileged to be granted access to the lives of the women participating in the study, but I always tried to be sensitive in relation to their rights, needs and values. As a result, the ethical implications of this work were never far from my mind.

Ethical Concerns and Safeguards

The standard ethical safeguards were employed in the context of this study. For example, all of the women were informed about the conceptual framework and the methods to be employed before finally agreeing to participate. This information was contained within the informed consent form (see Appendix C) which was signed by both myself and the participant.

The purpose of informed consent in this research was to ensure that the participants were aware of what it meant for them to be a part of the study. I attempted to give them enough information about both the risks and the benefits, the expectations as well as the purpose of the study. With a few of the women I found it necessary to be attentive to the language I used in describing the study. It was a challenge to convey the essence of this work without resorting to patronizing or condescending explanations. I was also alert to the potential that some women might agree to participate in an effort to "please" me, the researcher.

The women participating in the study were also guaranteed confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms. In fact, I offered the women the opportunity to choose the

pseudonyms themselves which proved to be an effective ice-breaker in each initial meeting. Moreover, the names of husbands and children were changed as were any other references arising through the interviews which had even the remote potential to identify the women.

The participating women were sometimes very anxious about confidentiality. They frequently asked such questions as "No one else is going to listen to these tapes are they?" (journal). I was constantly reassuring them that only myself and the transcriber would ever hear the tapes. In fact, at the outset of the study, I found it necessary to change transcribers when I learned that the person who had initially agreed to do this work had a close friend who was serving in the military. The individual who eventually did the transcriptions has no connections to the military.

This concern with confidentiality is understandable. Members of the military community believe that all familial or personal information filters back to those in authority within the institution and thereby has the potential to affect the career of the serving member. I am not sure if this contention is real or imagined. Regardless, I respected the women's concerns in this regard and did all that I could to maintain confidentiality.

As mentioned previously, the interviews were taped and transcribed. Participating women were informed though at the beginning of every interview that they had the right to stop the tape recorder at any time and\or to ask that specific material not be transcribed. This was also noted on the informed consent form (see Appendix C).

Throughout the course of the study deeper ethical issues emerged. In retrospect, I believe that these issues did arise by virtue of the fact that this was a feminist research

project. Certain attributes associated with the process of feminist research both enriched the work as well as contributed to a few ethical dilemmas.

For example, as I interacted with the women I was constantly aware that I was more than a researcher as far as our relationships were concerned. Indeed, emotion was a significant component of this research project. This is common in studies where intersubjectivity prevails (Jaggar, 1989; Kleinman & Copp, 1993). The fact that I serendipitously fell into a "woman-to-woman" relationship with each participant exacerbated the emotional character of this work.

I made an effort to process my emotional reaction to the study itself as well as to the entire group of participants and individual participants through writing in the personal journal. For example, I often found it necessary to work out my emotional response to Sara within the journal. Although I always tried to be sensitive to her acute vulnerability, I periodically would become frustrated or angry by her apparent proclivity for self-destruction. However, I tried to suspend my emotional responses in the context of our direct interaction and deal with them later on within the pages of my journal. From an ethical perspective, I found this to be an effective way to avoid transmitting perhaps inaccurate or unfair judgments about her behaviour.

There are other ethical concerns associated with the emotional character of feminist qualitative research. The nature of this research is such that the researcher can readily assume multiple roles simultaneously. In the case of this study, I was not just a researcher, but a support group facilitator and perhaps a friend all at the same time. Juggling these multiple roles periodically posed demands felt by myself, but the potential for role confusion in this study also had ethical implications. In recognition of this, I

worked toward establishing and then maintaining reasonable boundaries between myself and the participants without compromising the empowering aspects of our interaction.

As discussed previously in this chapter, the intersubjectivity inherent in this work meant that participants ran the risk of "self-exposure". Feminist qualitative research can yield rich and meaningful insight, but some of that insight may not actually be acknowledged in a conscious way by the participants. Ethical issues arise when the acknowledgment is painful.

The support group was included in this research design in an effort to ameliorate any pain or emotional consequences emanating from our work together. The functioning of the support group has been discussed previously in this chapter in reference to the epistemological usefulness of the group. However, this group was initially devised as an ethical safeguard and I do believe that it functioned as intended.

Regardless, there was a certain amount of incongruity associated with the functioning of the support group. Paradoxically, although it was included as part of the research design for ethical reasons associated with the risk of self-exposure, its very presence created other ethical concerns. For example, for these women participation in this group meant that their involvement in the study would not be anonymous as far as the *group* was concerned. Some of the women did know each other in a casual or social sense, but none of the women had established a deeper level of familiarity or trust prior to the study. Consequently, the support group represented a risk for these women as far as confidentiality and anonymity was concerned. In my initial and individual conversation with each woman wherein the idea of a support group was first raised, this anonymity issue was discussed. Therefore, the women were apprised of this risk, but decided to

participate anyway. Furthermore, when we discussed how the group would function at the first meeting, we agreed that "nothing would leave the group" (field notes). This emphasis on group confidentiality is encouraged for all support groups, including others which I facilitate with various individuals.

While on the subject of anonymity, the eventual dissemination of this study as a thesis and perhaps as an article published in an academic journal was also discussed with participating women. The women were aware that their words would necessarily become part of the "academic mode of production" (Stanley & Wise, 1990), but they did not seem to be concerned about this. Nevertheless, as indicated previously in this chapter, efforts were made to change references within the data which could reveal their identities. Their names, the names of their husbands and children, the names used to identify their neighborhoods or places of residence within the community, even the names of the places where they visited during the post-deployment vacations were changed. In addition, the reader will note that the table included within this thesis as "Appendix B" which details the research schedule does not identify the months of the deployment by their given names, but rather as "month one", "month two" and so on. This, as well as the other changes that were made, diminishes the likelihood that the women could be identified.

Another apparent ethical incongruity associated with the support group component of the research design arises from the reality that it could have been responsible for the development of a "group effect" which could have either silenced individual perspectives deviating from the collective consensus within the group or affected disclosures in subsequent individual interviews. Again, we see how despite the fact that the support group was included as part of the research design in an effort to ameliorate ethical risks

associated with self-exposure, it at the same time posed other ethical concerns.

It would be impossible for me to state that the group effect did not infiltrate this research process. I am aware of this possibility in all such groups and have encountered it before. I know that on occasion the group did appear to approach some issues with a collective mind, which did create possibilities for co-optation of individual perspectives. However, upon reflection I realize that this was not always the case. For example, in Chapter Six I refer to one support group meeting where the ideology of self-reliance was on the agenda. I note that a number of the participating women did not discuss, as did others, the ways in which they believed they practised self-reliance. This means that they either could not or chose not to practise self-reliance in the context of this deployment, despite the relevance of this ideology to the military institution. The women did not discuss their varying experiences with self-reliance with the group, but they did raise the reality of their "difference" with me in subsequent interviews or telephone conversations. So, at least to some extent, the "group effect" did not necessarily preclude disclosure from an individual standpoint within this study.

I am also aware that my presence within the support group as a facilitator might have been an impediment to full disclosure as well. Although I did develop a level of trust with these women both individually and collectively, I was still an "outsider" by virtue of my civilian status and my ties to other institutions such as the university.

It is difficult for me to determine whether or not *my* difference had an impact on the group or whether or not it would have been more valuable to the women to debrief in my absence because I did not raise this issue with the women. Despite my uncertainty in this regard, this consideration points to an ethical dilemma inherent within feminist research

designs where support groups have epistemological as well as ethical significance.

It was important for me as a researcher to use the support group meetings to trace threads of insight first detected in individual interviews and the meetings also served to direct the focus of many subsequent interviews. The meetings and the interviews were indeed mutually reinforcing, something which was acknowledged not just by myself but also by the participating women. However, from an ethical perspective, it probably would have been worthwhile to offer the women the opportunity to meet alone periodically. This opportunity could have afforded the women the chance to debrief in a different way about the impact of the study on their deployment experience as well as on the impact of myself as a researcher on that experience. I know that some of the women, particularly those actively involved with the *Illustrious* Wives' Network did meet outside of the support group and it is possible that these issues were discussed in the context of that interaction, but the group as a whole did not meet unless I was present as a facilitator.

It is also worth noting at this point that in a few instances, I found it necessary to refer a couple of the women to psychologists for therapeutic intervention. Although I believe that it would have been ethically irresponsible not to do so in those instances, the very fact that it was necessary to do so also posed ethical concerns.

The question arises as to my qualifications to intervene in this way. I am a Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE), an internationally recognized designation accredited through the National Council on Family Relations based in the United States. Certified Family Life Educators are not qualified to intervene in crisis situations - our work in developing and implementing educational programs and counselling services is more preventative in nature, but we are trained to recognize the need for therapeutic

intervention and refer accordingly.

In the context of this study, the nature of my "referrals" usually took the form of recommending that additional help be sought. However, with the more serious cases, with the permission of the individuals involved, I called counsellors to set up appointments.

Method: "Cooling Down" - Closing the Circle

At this point in the chapter, I follow through with Janesick's (1994) dance metaphor to articulate the procedures and issues involved at the end of the study. As discussed previously, processes involved in qualitative research are not linear, but rather circular and overlapping. However, the cool-down period of the overall process is a place where the circle is closed. Just as the dancer needs to gradually wind down a dance routine, so too must the feminist qualitative researcher ease out of relationships with participants. Moreover, "cooling down" also entails the summative data analysis which enables the researcher to make sense of the entire body of data as a whole.

Easing Out of Relationships with Research Participants

Given the intensity of this research process, easing out of the intersubjective relationships at the end of the study represented a challenge. Janesick (1994) recommends gradually reducing contact near the end of the study to help in this regard.

This suggestion was easy to accomplish in the context of this study because the post-deployment phase of the overall cycle of deployment represented a period of time when it was necessary and appropriate to gradually reduce contact between myself and the participants. For example, we conducted the post-deployment interviews and the final support group meetings nearly two months after the return of the ship. The women requested this delay because many of them were planning vacations for their families

after the long seven-month deployment. We did not meet at all during this two-month period. This was a significant change from the regularity and intensity of our meetings during the deployment phase.

While the gradual reduction in meeting times helped, to some extent, in easing out of the research relationships, other processes also contributed to this. I noted previously in this chapter that the mood of the women during the post-deployment interviews was rather "flat". I attribute this, in part, to some of the realities of the post-deployment period, but also to some kind of intuitive sense on the part of the women that they needed to disengage from the research process.

Regardless, the last support group meeting was difficult for all. There was no "agenda" for this meeting. We simply met and discussed experiences with the deployment. The group also indulged in the usual round of gossip, some complaining about "husbands" and "the military" and reflections on the research process - all of which precipitated a broad range of emotional responses. And then, as ever, we ate dessert.

I would like to add at this point that I have maintained contact with a number of the women since the completion of the study. At the last support group meeting, I let it be known that I would be available to the women in the aftermath of the study. With varying degrees of regularity, I do hear from all of them who are still posted in this area. I hear about the pregnancies, the births, other family news and of course, the ongoing experiences with the military institution. In relation to this, I recall one of the women commenting to me when I met her by chance in a grocery store: "My husband has been in Haiti for the past four months...I wish you were doing another study *now*".

Interestingly, these seven women told other women about the study. As a result, I

sometimes receive phone calls or electronic mail messages from friends and acquaintances of the original seven women. Like their counterparts in the study, these women also want to talk about their experiences with deployment.

The cool-down phase of the research process also involves the summative analysis of data. This is the place in the research process where sense is made of all the materials collected throughout the study.

Summative Analysis of Interview and Support Group Data

As discussed previously in this chapter, Glaser and Strauss (1967) delineate a method for analysis that I found helpful as I analyzed larger masses of data at the end of the study. One aspect of their constant comparative method involves coding various segments of the data into as many categories of analysis as possible. In relation to this, as I scrutinized the transcripts and field notes yet again, I formulated what I referred to as "hunches" or tentative ideas about what the data were saying to me. I would make note of these hunches in pencil in the margins of the transcripts or field notes. I was not parsimonious with my hunches. Every time I had one, I made note of it.

Subsequent to this, I reviewed my itemization of hunches. While doing so, I used colored pencils to highlight and group what I thought were similar hunches. In the process of doing this, I followed Glaser and Strauss' (1967) recommendation in this regard and constantly compared the segments of data corresponding with a hunch of a particular color to all other data marked by the same color. I then compared data marked by different colored hunches to check whether or not the different segments of data were indeed different from each other.

At this point, I stopped and "recorded a memo" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) for each

hunch that I had previously identified. Memo writing involved the articulation of my deepening thoughts regarding the various hunches. I then tried to describe what these hunches comprised. This sometimes necessitated re-visiting and again comparing the segments of data originally identified as corresponding to a particularly "colored" hunch. The result of this was that I reduced the total list of "hunches" by grouping those that I thought were related.

Index cards and sometimes large pieces of flip-chart paper were helpful in this regard. I would shuffle cards or paper into the groups using a floor or desk-top to see, if indeed, my assessment of the inter-relationships made sense pictorially. My computer was also of great assistance at this time. Using a file management system, I was able to open and close files very easily and "cut and paste" using the "edit" function of my software program to move around segments of text in order to ascertain if they did indeed relate to the same hunch or tentative coding category. At this point, the hunches became less tentative. I could then begin to think of them as coding categories. Specifically, the coding categories which emerged through this process were those which related to "everyday practices", "meanings", "contexts", "strategies", "resources" and "relationships".

The constant comparative method also necessitated moving from the comparison of segments of data with other segments corresponding with a particular hunch or code to comparing segments with specific themes relative to the coding categories. For example, in the deployment phase of this study, the themes of "accommodation", "coordination" and "problem-solving" evolved out of the initial hunches as "everyday practice" codes. These specific themes were then compared to corresponding segments of data and

checked against other segments which appeared to be different.

Summary

Janesick's (1994) dance metaphor has proven to be an evocative means by which the detailed and unfolding procedures followed in this study can be articulated. As stated at the outset of the chapter, Janesick conceptualizes qualitative research as consisting of stages that she refers to as the "warm-up" period, the "total work-out", and the "cool down" stage.

In relation to the "warm-up" phase, the protracted period of negotiation and mediation I experienced as I attempted to gain entry to the "site" or those components of the military institution which intersected with the scope and purpose of this research was described at length within this chapter. Through this discussion, it is possible to see that gaining entry was not just a practical problem for me. Rather, my experiences in this regard have served as an important source of analytic insight as far as this study is concerned. Although I initially experienced the access difficulties as relating to purely pragmatic concerns of the military institution, later analysis of this aspect of the study allowed me to understand that the apparent containment of my work was ideologically relevant to the military.

Interestingly, it appears that the ideologies associated with control, image and appearance were simultaneously pulling the military institution in two different directions in relation to this study. On the one hand, it was institutionally relevant for the military to appear to be supportive of a deployment study, given the public relations benefits accrued by the institution during the Persian Gulf War when the Wives' Networks and other deployment-related initiatives were put in place. However, on the other hand, the support I received for this study was guarded. As the discussion pertaining to gaining entry to the

site indicated, conscious efforts were made to control both me and my work. Boundaries were placed around the study and those boundaries were put in place by the institution. Evidently, those individuals within the institution with whom I interacted were concerned that without the boundaries and the control, this study would precipitate a catharsis of negativity deleterious to the mission at hand, thereby threatening the ideology of unit cohesion.

Discussion and analysis of this aspect of the study is lengthy and detailed, although purposively so. It is through this analysis of "gaining entry" that the paradoxical and contradictory character of military ideologies first became apparent to me. This epistemological conclusion re-emerged in the context of subsequent analysis (which will be discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven), but my analysis of procedures and issues associated with access was the first time this facet of military ideologies became apparent to me. Therefore, this section of Chapter Four has warranted comprehensive discussion.

As far as the "total work-out" phase is concerned, the actual techniques or methods employed in the study were also outlined in this chapter. These methods were discussed as dialogical and interactive experiences, an approach that is consistent with both the qualitative-phenomenological hypothesis and the features of standpoint method.

The articulation of the skills utilized as this study was conducted is another significant aspect of this chapter. Specifically, I describe how and why attention was paid to self-evaluative statements within the "talk" of the participating women. Listening for meta-statements, noting hesitancy and being aware of certainty as well as uncertainty in the context of my interaction with the women were also detailed.

I did not intend for this deliberate detailing of method to be merely procedural.

Rather, I endeavoured to point out the epistemological and methodological significance of such "skills". Within the chapter, I argue that approaching the interviews and support group meetings with these skills in mind was important in terms of "listening in stereo" (Anderson and Jack, 1991), or rather, tuning in simultaneously to the dominant channel of ideologies and discourses and the often muted channel of women's subjectivity. Listening in such a way meant that I, as a researcher, was attempting to transcend the perpetuation of the bifurcation characterizing the lives of those who believe their lives span a "line of fault".

"Listening in stereo" through use of the skills described in Chapter Four meant that efforts were made to pull away from existing frameworks and pre-conceived understandings that support and reinforce institutionally relevant ideologies and discourses. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, this was of central importance as far as this study was concerned. Therefore, as with discussion of access issues, the articulation of skills warranted lengthy consideration in this chapter.

This section of Chapter Four led to a discussion of the processes and procedures involved in the formative analysis of interview and fieldwork data. In relation to this, I indicated how and why data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection at this phase. The measures designed to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data were also described.

In reflecting upon the "cool-down" stage of this research design within Chapter Four, I referred to the ways in which I eased out of the relationships developed with research participants. The summative analysis of the data was also discussed.

Throughout Chapter Four, the intersubjective and reflexive character of the research

design and the implications of this in terms of the findings was considered. Moreover, I discussed the ethical concerns which emerged throughout the research process and safeguards employed to minimize risk for the participants.

The focus on ethics represents another significant aspect of this chapter. Many researchers are attracted to feminist qualitative research because they are looking for an alternative to traditional paradigms which sometimes pose ethical risks for human subjects. Those who work with human subjects who are somehow disempowered or marginalized makes this attraction to an alternative particularly comprehensible. Feminist qualitative research, with its emphasis on values and politics, breaking down power relations between the researcher and the researched, reflexivity and intersubjectivity, has provided a viable alternative.

However, as the discussion on ethical concerns and safeguards within this chapter indicates, the methods employed in feminist qualitative research pose ethical risks of their own. In this study, although the support group was devised as a means of dealing with the ethical risk of self-exposure, its centrality within this research design meant that ethical risks associated with the co-optation of individual perspectives had the potential to emerge. Therefore, it appears that despite best intentions, there are ethical trade-offs that must be carefully considered by feminist qualitative researchers in the conduct of their work. Moreover, it is incumbent upon these researchers to apprise potential or actual research participants of the trade-offs in advance. This is particularly important in studies involving vulnerable individuals who may eagerly grasp an opportunity to interact with a caring and concerned researcher who, by virtue of their interest and efforts to equalize power relations, is granting a level of respect to their lives and their experiences that may

be long overdue.

As mentioned previously, Janesick's dance metaphor has proven to be a useful organizational tool in terms of describing the methods employed in this study. However, use of this metaphor has not only enabled me to map out the research process, but also to highlight how facets of the process are related to the epistemological purposes of the study. From this, it has been possible to discuss issues and implications associated with the research design.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE

My examination of the pre-deployment phase in the cycle of deployment begins with accounts of everyday experience. This is consistent with Smith's (1987) contention that women's experience should not be used as a mere resource in research, but as a starting point. Accordingly, the analysis in this chapter draws on detailed accounts of everyday routines in the households of the women in the study so as to explicate the concrete practices associated with this stage of the deployment process. After describing the concrete practices, I discuss the meanings the women ascribe to these everyday practices as well as the psychological resources and coping strategies they employ as they experience this aspect of the cycle of deployment.

Ideology and Everyday Practice

The fundamental purpose of this research was to uncover the lived experiences of female military partners in relation to the cycle of deployment and to make these experiences the starting point for the research. I was also interested in obtaining the "thick description" characteristic of qualitative work. I believe that I have obtained "thick" descriptions of the women's experiences. I have reflected on the range of experiences that I was privileged to learn about through the words of the women and have clustered those that I believe are expressions of actual concrete practices enacted by the women as they lived through the pre-deployment phase of the deployment process. I now display those concrete practices and will subsequently discuss how the ideologies that sustain military relations of ruling are embedded in the wives' everyday practices.

Using the descriptions in the accounts of pre-deployment, my analysis led me to

cluster the following as categories of practice: maintenance of family cohesion, uniform preparation, coordination of household tasks and networking. Correspondingly, certain emotional processes emerged, specifically, anger, despair, resentment and fear, which relate to the practices.

Maintenance of Family Cohesion

A variety of practices emerged from the words of the seven women participating in the study. Some of the practices were individual in nature, while others involved other people. For example, some women assumed responsibility for planning "family time" in the days immediately preceding the departure of the ship. In the following passage Holly comments on her effort to organize a recreational activity for the family.

Um, we try to spend as much time together as we can, do something special. By the weekend, this coming weekend, I think we are going to go play mini-golf, something like that for the kids. But it's real difficult now because they're older and they don't always want to do things ...

Yeah, when they were little, we could do something special, even if it was a walk in the park, just to spend time together, or play a board game or something like that. But I think the golf game will do it this time.

Darlene is also planning a special activity for the purpose of drawing together the family before the departure of the ship.

Well, I'm planning a little trip. I want to take the kids somewhere together,

like playgrounds, take them to the wildlife park, something like that.

The emphasis on doing "something special" is also echoed through the words of Jane, who at the time of this interview had one young child.

Next week, and those days we're going to try and spend as

much time together...but I also have my job and I have a little one that

I'll be looking after, apart from Haley, but I'll be trying to cram as much

time in together in those last couple of days and I probably won't go to

Reserves or do the Mary Kay next week just so that I'll have those few days

with him because it will only be one week... I think it's important that we

do that and another thing that I'd like to do too is if I can get a hold of

a video camera, borrow it and tape it (the picnic) then make a copy of it so

that he can have a copy to watch in his Mess and we can have a copy to

watch here, because ah...Haley's birthday is next month and he's not going

to be here for it. I mean we celebrated it last week, you know, I don't know if

she'll know the difference or not. But, it'd be nice if she misses Daddy, she

can pop the tape in the VCR and she can watch some of the things that

we did together before he left.

Jane's sense of responsibility for planning special family times is so strong that she

decided not to work at either of her two part-time jobs in the week leading up to the

deployment. As a result, she can devote the entire time to organizing the family picnic

and other activities designed to help maintain family cohesion at this time. Jane is also concerned that her small daughter will forget her father and is taking steps to prevent this from happening. Consequently, this is another responsibility that Jane is assuming.

Um...I talk about him a lot, like last night we went to the park because the three of us had gone to the park last week and we had some good times there, so we went back yesterday, so that we could remember the time Daddy took us here and we did that, to help her remember, because I don't want her to forget and I want her to know that he's not leaving because of anything that she's done. See, I don't know what she understands. I don't know a lot about child psychology, but ah...

Chris' daily life at this time is also partially taken up with preparing her small daughter for the imminent leave-taking of her father.

Well, I just tell her that Daddy's going to be gone for a long time and I just let her ask whatever questions she wants. She's spending a lot of extra time with her Dad, almost surgically attached herself to his leg... This is the longest deployment that he's ever been on since she's been born and she's beginning to get the conception of time so she knows it's going to be...the school year is going to be almost done when he gets back. Yeah, she's acting out a bit. I expect more at Christmas time.

The everyday experiences of the women at this pre-deployment phase of the deployment process embody practices associated with the maintenance of family ties. The women quoted to this point are actively planning special trips and activities both as a means of spending "quality time" together before the deployment and to reinforce connections within the family. The reinforcement of connections is thought to be particularly important for children. There is a concern among the women that children will forget their fathers during their absence from the family.

These practices associated with the maintenance of family cohesion and the reinforcement of connections can be understood in more depth through the writing of Gilligan (1982) and Miller (1986). Gilligan's (1982) research traces the development of morality in women. Through her work, she suggests that morality in women may be organized around notions of responsibility and care for others. Similarly, Miller (1986) claims that women commonly define themselves through responsibility, caring and connections to others. Both Miller (1986) and Gilligan (1982) maintain that women's purported propensities in this regard represent very deep needs. Indeed, both of these authors posit that, through socialization, women's sense of self becomes organized around being able to make and then maintain connections to others. In their view, the potential loss of these connections is perceived to be a threat - not just in terms of the loss of a relationship, but as something "closer to a total loss of self" (Miller, 1986, p.83).

As discussed in Chapter Three, the claims advanced by Gilligan (1982), Miller (1986) and other researchers (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule, 1986) have been criticized on the grounds that they run the risk of essentializing women's experience. The critics (Code, 1991; Harding, 1991) remind us that essentialism can be a risk because if

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women can be thought to possess an essential "difference" and if that difference is associated with the feminine characteristics that society generally devalues, it is quite possible that their lived experiences and daily practices which embody those "feminine" characteristics will also be denigrated and devalued. Moreover, the critics maintain that in affirming the purportedly feminine qualities that society generally devalues, the work of Gilligan (1982) and Miller (1986) appeals to the supporters of the status quo.

While mindful of these cogent criticisms of the work of those who theorize about gender, I must note that the words of the women in this study support the contentions of Gilligan (1982) and Miller (1986). During the interviews, I sought confirmation of my growing sense that the maintenance of family cohesion and the reinforcement of family connections were important to these women. All of the women queried confirmed my impression that the planning and organizing of special activities receives top priority during the time of pre-deployment. This is evident through Jane's decision to refrain from working at either her part-time position with the Naval Reserves or working at her home-based business with Mary Kay Cosmetics during the week leading up to the departure of the ship. Other women explicitly state, that in addition to being a central focus during the time of pre-deployment, these activities are also a responsibility. For example, Holly refers to these practices as part of "her job".

(D.N. - How important is this mini-golf game to you?)

Well, it's very important. I've always done that sort of thing before he goes away. It's harder now that the kids are older, but I still try. I wrack my brain trying to figure out something that will interest everybody and that's tough,

let me tell you, with two teenagers. But it's important, you know, I want

my husband to have good memories of the kids to take with him and I want

the kids to have a good time with their dad. I think it's my job to take care

of those things.

Jane's words also reinforce Gilligan's (1982) and Miller's (1986) contentions that

women's concern for caring and connection is tied to their experiences of self. She seems

to have convinced herself that her daughter is in danger of forgetting her father and she is

relating this perceived possibility to feelings about herself as a mother.

I am so afraid that Haley won't recognize her father when he comes back.

After all, it's going to be a long time... It would also be terrible if she's

distant from him or whatever. I would feel just awful about that...

What kind of a mother would I be...? I wouldn't feel very good about

that at all.

Sara's words also allow us to see the relationship between the maintenance of

responsibility for family cohesion and women's sense of self. She is fearful that the hard-

won trust that is just beginning to develop between her children and their new step-father

will disappear through the period of the deployment. Moreover, she believes that, if this

were to happen, that she would be affected to such an extent that she would no longer

have the confidence to continue with her education.

You know...everything could just fall apart when he gets back. I mean we're pretty fragile now. But, everybody is trying. The kids are just learning to trust him... which is good to see. But, I don't know what's going to happen...All I know is that I'll fall apart if we go off the rails again. I don't think I'd be able to keep on with school.

The women in this study feel responsible for family cohesion as they face a protracted period of separation from their male partners. This responsibility is manifest in the particular practices of planning special family activities and taking steps to ensure that young children maintain a memory of their fathers during the deployment. The words of the women tell us that they feel a strident sense of responsibility in this regard. Furthermore, it appears that assuming the responsibility for family cohesion through the enactment of daily practices is linked to their sense of self. Their voices inform us that their perceptions of self either in relation to their roles as mother or student would be affected by the failure or inability to maintain this responsibility.

The women in the study also assumed other responsibilities. Just as the assumption of the responsibility for family cohesion embodied specific practices, so too do these additional responsibilities embody local and particular practices characterizing the daily lives of these women at this stage of the deployment process.

Uniform Preparation

A number of the women in the study indicated that they are responsible for preparing uniforms and other items that their partners will take with them. Holly refers to her responsibilities in this regard.

Yeah, the other hard part too is trying to get all his clothing and all that sort of thing ready. I told him the other day to go through and put aside everything he plans to take with him so I can check it over, make sure its been through the laundry and all that sort of stuff because it's not going to be left until the last minute.

Jane is more specific as she discusses similar responsibilities.

I try to get things ready for Danny to go, like ironing, sewing name tags on things...like the other night, I took all his shirts and put all his name tags on his shirts so that they're all ready to go. I'm trying to get as much done as possible. I think that's one of the reasons why I feel busy and rushed because I'm trying to get everything done before they leave.

When Holly and Jane are asked about how they feel about the work of preparing uniforms for departure, both indicate that while they do not enjoy this work, it is an inevitable part of their "job". For example, Jane states:

It's a real drag...but someone's got to do it. Danny sure couldn't take care of that stuff (laughter). It's just something else I have to do.

Holly adds:

> Well, I guess that's part of my job too (laughter). Gee, we should write
>
> up a job description!

Through this account of preparing uniforms, it is possible to see that the everyday lives of women in the study comprise practices associated with the conditions of military organization. While seemingly trivial, this practice of preparing uniforms is extremely important to the military. The reality in the Navy is that "quarters" on board ship do not allow for a lot of personal space. Naval members live, eat, sleep and perform their work-related duties (that is "trades") in very confined quarters while serving at sea. Space to store uniforms and other personal items is also limited. Therefore, the ability to quickly and easily identify the items of clothing that make up "the uniform" is of real importance. Obviously, name tags assist with this identification. The women's work is thus organized in relation to conditions at their partners' workplace.

Officers' wives have other work to do in relation to uniform preparation. Officers possess not only working uniforms but also a number of dress uniforms for ceremonial occasions. The officers' wives in the study assumed responsibility for the preparation of these uniforms as well. This work generally involved dry-cleaning as well as sewing and reinforcing the insignia which adorn the military officer's uniform. In our first support group meeting, Holly (the wife of a senior officer) indicated that the work was "worth it" given her husband's role. As Holly related this to the group, she appeared to be proud of her contribution.

Pride is evidently manifest as women discuss this practice of uniform preparation. Some women even refer to this practice as part of their "job". However, it is interesting to note that it is the women who enact the particular practice of uniform preparation. It is also apparent that the military depends upon the enactment of this practice in order to function in an optimal fashion.

The work of uniform preparation constitutes a practice which mediates the local and particular world which female military partners experience directly and the military institution. As women enact this practice in their daily lives, they are ensuring that their male partners will be able to function within the institution in a way that supports and sustains the interests, aims and perspectives of the institution.

The writing of Dorothy Smith (1987) supports this claim. As discussed in Chapter Three, women take up the kind of work that their male counterparts do not want to do or perhaps do not even think about doing. Smith also asserts that as women take care of this work, thereby freeing men from the responsibility, men are better able to function in their work in a way deemed to be institutionally desirable. In other words, military relevances are reinforced and upheld through such everyday practices as uniform preparation.

Coordination of Household Tasks

Other practices emerged as I analyzed the pre-deployment interviews. For example, the women coordinated major household tasks prior to the departure of the ship. In many instances, these were tasks that needed to be carried out with the assistance of the male partner. In the following passage, Jane discusses her need to enlist the help of her husband in "getting things done" before the deployment.

I try to get as many things done that need to be done that I can't

do on my own, like putting up the clothesline, climbing up ladders,

fix the eaves trough, things that you need another person around for.

Um...Danny just painted the basement floor and the garage floor

last week because... I'm trying to get everything done so that after

he goes I can do the smaller things around the house.

Chris also refers to the work of coordinating major household tasks and chores.

I told Allan this morning...that he's supposed to do some more stuff to

the house that he hasn't finished yet... but yeah...we've got our wood in

for the winter, as you can see, we've got a wood stove. We have a

snow-blower, so I don't have to shovel. Um...the car has been looked

after, you know, just the normal stuff that you do to get ready for winter.

I just made sure that it was done a couple of months early.

Chris' words are also useful in illuminating a psychological shift ongoing at this time.
Inherent within the practice of coordinating household tasks is a shift in authority within
these households. Chris refer to this in the following passage:

It's getting yourself in a mind set to do things on your own...like I have

to tell myself that I have to do everything myself now...I have to do it to

keep this family working while he's gone.

Charlotte refers to her experiences with the process of shifting authority which underlies the activity associated with the practice of coordinating household tasks and chores.

> You know...Matt likes to take care of things around here...you know... the budget and the house and everything....and I'm busy with the baby and everything. But it has to be different from now on. I think he was surprised last night when I asked him questions about the budget. He really focuses on the budget...I mean...he has this house almost paid for. So when I asked him about the insurance, the mortgage...and oh yeah... the taxes, he seemed a bit taken aback. He likes to take care of all that stuff himself. He always has. Anyway...he gave me the book...finally. (laughter).

Chris and Charlotte's words are significant in terms of understanding an important aspect of the pre-deployment process. Not only are these women involved in the often frenetic activity associated with the practice of coordinating household tasks but as they do so, they are also subtly instigating a shift in authority from their husbands to themselves. It seems as if the very act of assuming responsibility for the coordination of household tasks while their husbands are still present prepares the way for their subsequent "take-over" of all responsibilities during the deployment. Concomitantly, the women are becoming increasingly more self-reliant.

This aspect of the deployment process is not identified or explored within other

research dealing with the cycle of deployment. For example, as stated previously in this thesis, Logan's (1987) depiction of the cycle of deployment is often cited in other literature related to the military family as well as within program documents at Military Family Resource Centres. However, her work does indeed focus on the *emotional* reactions of women as deployments unfold. She does not discuss other psychological processes associated with this aspect of deployment. The shift in authority relative to the management of household tasks from husband to wife is not explicitly addressed.

The fact that these shifts in authority are not revealed through the Logan (1987) model is significant. As Chris states, such a shift is necessary in order to keep military families working. If female military partners such as Chris were unwilling or unable to assume the responsibility associated with this authority and act self-reliantly, then military families could not function in the absence of the male partner. Women in this study openly acknowledge this, thereby illuminating an aspect of pre-deployment that does not emerge from the work of Logan.

However, at this point in the study, the women do not make the connection between optimal functioning at the familial level and at the level of the military as an institution. The women refer to keeping the family working, but do not consciously acknowledge how these efforts also embody military relevances. This is in spite of the reality that the military as an institution would not be able to function without the shift in authority at the household level during a deployment period. Indeed, the military depends upon smooth and effective management of households (Enloe, 1983; Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994; Wertsch, 1991). The perceived disruption caused by a female military partner at home who is experiencing difficulty handling the separation or the responsibilities associated

with it is a real threat to the military institution. Combat readiness is dependent upon smooth functioning on the home front (Enloe, 1983; Harrison & Laliberte´, 1993; 1994). Therefore, these shifts in authority serve an important purpose for the military.

Women participating in this study also acknowledged that they felt quite emotionally vulnerable and volatile during the pre-deployment period. The following section of this chapter details these emotional processes which are related to the practices previously described. As the emotional processes are displayed, it will be possible to see that these too embody particular military ideologies.

Anger, Despair, Resentment and Fear

The women in the study did relate emotional responses at this stage of the deployment process. Indeed, the words of the women in this study convey a particular emotional intensity that is not captured or explicated through other studies. Because this research uses as its starting point the actual experiences of women living in their everyday realities and because the research process transpired in an atmosphere of mutual trust and openness, it is possible to extricate from the words of the women the depth of emotionality characterizing their lives at this time.

Emotional vulnerability and volatility certainly were evident at this phase of the deployment cycle. Uncharacteristic and unanticipated bouts of crying seemed to be prevalent. Indeed, a number of these pre-deployment interviews were punctuated by tearful breakdowns. As Holly relates:

It seems like I'm crying at the drop of a hat - just like I am now.

He just has to look at me the wrong way and I'm in tears. I usually

end up downstairs doing laundry, but I had to put a Kleenex box

down there, you know (laughter).

(D.N. - So what do you think this means?)

I think probably that I'm very upset that we have to be separated for

so long.

(D.N. - Um hum)

I think of all the different things that we should be doing as a family,

but that we won't be doing...because ah...and I'm angry too because

our time is being taken away. I said to him the other day...nobody can

ever give us back that time...that we're going to miss. They just can't.

So, I think there's a bit of anger there...and we had a party about a month

ago, no about two weeks ago, I guess, yes, two weekends ago. Our group

got together and the fellas were all talking and joking about going and stuff...

um hum...and the ladies were sitting there...we were all very quiet...

a real hush all of a sudden came over the women because each one of us

were thinking all at the same time...well, they don't have to sound so

happy (laughter)...and finally, I had to say "I'm sorry guys...I'm getting a

little ticked off at this joviality...you're sounding a little too happy about

this, so just knock it off". And so...all of a sudden...they realized...oh yeah,

girls in the room...better not talk like this (laughter). So, the subject was

changed. I'm so sorry to be blubbering like this...

Underpinning the "blubbering" or the emotional volatility associated with this stage

of the deployment process are intense feelings of anger, despair and resentment. This matrix of feeling - anger, despair and resentment - is also evident within the words of Jane, although her emotional response also seems to be permeated with a sense of fear. This fear is associated with the memory of her perceived inability to cope with her infant daughter during a previous deployment. Jane experienced an emotional breakdown requiring hospitalization at this time and has been treated for depression by a military physician ever since. Through her words, it is possible to see that she still carries with her the anger and resentment associated with the previous deployment. She appears to be angry at him for leaving the last time and angry at him for leaving again. She is also afraid that something catastrophic will happen again. She states:

I think that I am angry right now... angry at him for leaving me responsible for everything in the house and him not being able to be here for me. Um...that's a very strong feeling...anger...um...but my emotional support is gone and I mean telephone calls at night is not the same as him being here. And I'm afraid too...because if anything were to happen to me, if I broke my leg, for instance, I couldn't get groceries...I wouldn't be able to do anything. I mean this happened to me the last time he went away...I broke my foot...so here I was with a six or seven month old baby crawling around and me trying to do diapers and things and he wasn't here to help...I didn't have anyone to help me so it was very difficult...to go get groceries...I can't drive a standard. If I was pregnant right now, I would be *very* angry.

Yeah and there's lots of women that feel this way. I know that, for

instance, there's this one fellow who is not going on the deployment

because his wife threatened to leave him if he did...she doesn't want

him to be gone for six months. She wants him to get out of the service.

I know how she feels. I understand the need, you know...your

commitment to your job, but...like when he went before...he left me

here with this tiny baby and I didn't know what to do with it...it didn't

come with any instruction booklet. So here I had to learn about being

a mom and how to look after an infant child and I had no one to share

it with. I don't know if he understands what I've been through. I don't think

he really understands what happened the last time ...you know...when

I like totally broke down and had to go in the hospital... I didn't even

understand at the time. All I knew was that I was in this depression

for two and a half years and the doctor had told me that, that I may

be taking medication for the rest of my life, so we were going to have

to take steps and watch out, and when I get tired I have to sleep, I

can't be pushing myself, you know, running on adrenalin anymore.

I hate thinking about it...and I don't want to have to deal with it...I...

(sobbing).

This is a powerful account of one woman's anger, despair, resentment and fear as she

faces another deployment. The imminent isolation, loneliness and lack of support that

Jane associates with deployment are inducing these feelings. However, the memory of

"what happened last time" elicits the most profound feeling of fear. The fact that she gives voice to this fear in one long unbroken passage and the overall tone of her words convey the intensity of this emotion.

The intensity of Jane's fear is also evident in the following passage as she discusses the arrangements she and her husband have made with neighbours in relation to the potential for the occurrence of emergencies during the deployment.

> And I've asked them, these people next door, they're senior citizens and they're wonderful people, and I even asked them myself if I could leave my parent's telephone number with them, because if there was an accident or something and I was unconscious and couldn't speak, then they would know who to contact. Like I've taken all these preparations too, because if...if anything happened to me while he was gone, I mean no one would know. I mean if the door was locked and Haley and I were in here and I fell down and hit my head and was unconscious, she wouldn't know what to do.

This is not a matter-of-fact account of emergency arrangements. Jane's words almost take on a hysterical tone as she talks about the possibility of falling down, hitting her head and being unconscious. Evidently, Jane carries with her a profound fear as she faces another deployment.

Other women in the study are also caught in a spiral of fear at this pre-deployment phase of the deployment cycle. For example, Charlotte has just learned that she is

pregnant and is fearful that she will not be able to handle the pregnancy in addition to the

care of her small son for the next six months.

> Emotionally...I'm not sure exactly. I thought I was emotionally set
>
> until I found out Monday that I'm pregnant...(laughter)
>
> (D.N. - Congratulations)
>
> So, now it's going to be a little different six months than what I
>
> originally planned...whatever...morning sickness...taking care of
>
> Benjamin and stuff...oh God...things hit you differently when you're
>
> pregnant...you're more emotional (laughter)...oh, I don't know what
>
> I'm going to do. I'm so afraid that I won't be able to handle it all...
>
> all on my own. I'm so afraid...

Sara also expresses fear during this pre-deployment interview. Her fears are

associated with the perceived fragility of her relationship with her husband. By her own

admission, Sara and her husband have experienced interpersonal difficulties and she is

fearful that the separation will weaken an already vulnerable relationship. In particular,

she is afraid that her husband will "fool around". Infidelity is a real threat to Sara because

she has experienced it before in her relationship. She reflects on her fears in this regard:

> It's awful when I'm expecting a call and he doesn't. I mean we've had a
>
> very, very hard year... a year where no way we ever thought we'd get
>
> married...but we got through it, you know, and through worse...like
>
> really bad stuff. So I know we've already been through a lot and can

handle a lot...but still I'm afraid that he'll want to fool around...and I

don't know what would happen...the game of it...because we know...

we've been there and we know what happens and how much hurt it

causes...

Darlene's words also evoke the fear that permeates the voices of the other women in the study. However, Darlene's fear is associated with the potential for danger within this deployment.

I'm having trouble sleeping...sometimes I get scared about where they're

going. I know that he'll probably be safe...they told us...they assured us

there was no danger...you were there...they say it's not really a war...

but they're in a war zone, so...(child screaming)...but it does upset me

because sometimes I think they may not come back...do you remember

the Gulf War when that woman asked her husband's CO at a briefing if her

husband was going to come back in a body bag?

(D.N. - Yes, I do.)

Well, she got a lot of flack for that and so did her husband and we all

thought she was crazy, but sometimes I wonder. Sometimes I think

I'm going crazy because I'm crying and all this.

From these accounts, it is evident that the everyday lives of the women in the study at the pre-deployment phase of the deployment process are fraught with a complex array of

inter-related emotions. Through their words, it is possible to detect anger, despair, resentment and for some, a profound sense of fear. Some of these emotions are associated with specific aspects of their lives, for example, an unplanned pregnancy, the potential for infidelity, the potential for danger during the deployment, or the fear that the deployment will trigger re-hospitalization for depression. However, all women admit, whether they have specific fears or not, that they are emotionally volatile at this time, that they are "crying at the drop of a hat".

This emotional fragility emerges with a particular intensity through the words of the women. While other studies (Logan, 1987; Hadaway, 1980) refer to the emotions associated with the deployment process, they are not explored with great depth. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, in Logan's (1987) study, emotional "stages" are identified in a step-by-step fashion with a particular emphasis on the chronological times when certain emotions may be felt. Specifically, at the pre-deployment phase, Logan's (1987) model states that women experience an "anticipation of loss" (Stage 1) 1-6 weeks before the deployment and "detachment and withdrawal" (Stage 2) during the last week before the deployment.

Such a model may be useful, but it assumes a uniformity of experience. All women will not experience the same emotions in the same way and certainly not in accordance with particular chronological times. Logan's (1987) model also assumes that the "stages" are discrete. This rules out the potential for overlapping stages. Conceivably, women could experience a myriad of emotions all at one time and in varying degrees of intensity. Indeed, the words of the women in my study suggest a matrix of emotional responses to the impending deployment. The emotional responses of anger, despair, resentment and

fear are braided together as overlapping strands within the words of the women. Moreover, some of the strands are larger for some women than others. Regardless, the emotional responses of the women at this stage of the deployment process have a complex character. In my view, that complexity is not captured through a step-by-step, linear, chronologically ordered model. This is significant given that Logan's model is often used as background for educational programming and counselling services within Military Family Resource Centres.

Emotions and Discursive Practice within Professional Sites

The complexity of female military partners' emotions in relation to the cycle of deployment is another aspect of their lives that breaks away along the line of fault (Smith, 1987) separating what these women know about their daily lives and what discursive forms of expression, such as the Logan (1987) model, claim to be "knowable". Given that Logan's model is readily used as a an authoritative reference within the military institution, particularly within professional sites such as Military Family Resource Centres, one can assume that it is ideologically relevant. Indeed, a shortened version of the model was distributed to women at the official pre-deployment briefing described in Chapter Four. It has also been modified and prepared as a educational phamplet by National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) in Ottawa. From this, one can deduce that the model embodies ideological relevances of the military or, at the very least, it does not threaten those relevances.

The discursive concepts and categories inherent within the model were developed through analysis of military research and through the observations of military clinical psychologists in practice. Therefore, when this model is used as a reference, the

emotional responses of female military partners in relation to the cycle of deployment are given shape through and by a professional standpoint. When the model is used in practice, it has the potential to flatten or distort the women's actual emotional experiences in an effort to fit them within the parameters of the model. Women may learn to set aside as irrelevant, or deny or obliterate any experiences which do not fit. Such complexity and intensity of emotion as that which emerged through this particular study would indeed break away along a "line of fault". As a result, the women would not have the benefit of fully understanding their own experience. Moreover, others would not have the benefit of fully understanding these women's experiences because they would not emerge as a knowable entity epistemologically.

The "Cover-Up" Principle

The emotional reactions of the women in the study are sometimes compounded by particular institutional practices of the military. These practices embody particular military ideologies which are present and organizing the everyday lives of the women in the study. As discussed in Chapter Three, Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) refer to one of these ideologies as the "cover-up" principle. These authors refer to this ideological principle as one which is particularly relevant to combat. It is associated with the perceived need to maintain a smooth and assured appearance even in the face of the uncertainty which invariably surfaces in preparation for a combat-related deployment. In practice, the cover-up principle may take the form of placating female military partners, trivializing their fears and concerns or simply withholding information. All of this is evident in the following account provided by Sara:

There was the briefing the other night...it was like...I think they expected

us to be weaker...that was my impression that night...now that I think

about it.

(D.N. - What makes you feel that way?)

Well, it was like...ah...you can call us directly anytime night or day...

can you believe it?...you can call the padre...you can do this...you can do

that...Don't get me wrong...I think it's great that they say that...every bit

of it...but now that I think about it...I feel that they sensed that we would

automatically be weak and want to...you know that we would have to

rely on them...you know...all that talk about emergency hotlines, 1-800

numbers and all that...and oh yeah...the MARCOM guy saying "you

can personally call me..." Give me a break.

(D.N. - So, do you think he really wants 280 women calling him on

a regular basis? laughter)

No way. I think they really don't want to tell us a lot. They're very

vague about a lot of stuff. I think they want to keep the women pacified

until they leave. We hear so many rumours. A lot of us left the briefing

more confused than ever.

The tone of Sara's words is somewhat derisive. Evidently, she interprets the stance of

the officials at the pre-deployment briefing as a patronizing and condescending shrouding

of the facts regarding the deployment. Her words also convey frustration in relation to the

rumours which circulate during such times of confusion and uncertainty.

Marie also conveys a sense of frustration as she relates the process through which she

learned of the length of time involved with this particular deployment.

> You see...Marty is still supposed to be on the *Atlantica* (a pseudonym).
> He was posted early to the *Illustrious* in ... when this UN thing
> came up and everything got changed. They said they needed him
> and that it would only be for four months. Ah...you know...we
> discussed it and I said I didn't know if I could handle it...but I thought
> well, four months may not be too bad...but now it's going to be six
> months and maybe longer. Why didn't they tell me that in the first place?

Chris' words also support the contention that the military can be somewhat intentionally deliberate in divulging details.

> Well, we didn't know they were going to the Adriatic, you know. It was
> to be just a regular NATO.
> (D.N. - Yes, I know.)
> So, that delayed everything...and we never seemed to get any straight
> information. Nobody could tell us how long they would be gone. So,
> it made it hard to figure out what you're going to do. And then there
> were complications this time. The VDS broke on the ship and they
> lost it out at sea, so there was an inquiry as to what happened.
> (D.N. - What's a VDS?)
> It's a variable depth sonar that they drag behind the ship. It's a great big long

cable and it sounds for submarines and stuff. But, it can strike out a

couple of thousand feet behind the ship, so...

(D.N. - It got lost?)

It broke off. Detached. The body is down below. But nobody will tell

us how serious this is or if anything else is wrong with the ship...

Women in this study appear to be convinced that the military is deliberately vague

about important details regarding the deployment. They are also somewhat sceptical

about the sincerity of those in command as assurances are provided. These contentions

also surfaced during a number of support group meetings held in the months following

the pre-deployment interviews.

As mentioned previously, Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) claim that such impressions

are evocative of one particular ideology of the military, that is, the "cover-up" principle.

Inherent within this ideology is the concept of control. The military values control

because it reinforces obedience and solidarity, both of which ensure that the military can

function in an optimum fashion. However, the military is also interested in control *for its

own sake,* particularly during combat. Indeed, both Harrison and Laliberte´ (1993; 1994)

and Wertsch (1991) maintain that this kind of control is synonymous with combat.

Control-for-its-own-sake is essentially about appearances. Polished performances

replete with condescending assurances on the part of commanding officers are designed

to inspire confidence and surety among serving members about the mission. Moreover,

those in command pay particular attention to assuring partners on the domestic front,

because when wives are also confident with regard to the mission, serving members are

better able to prepare for combat.

The withholding of information regarding such details as the duration of the deployment and the condition of the ship is also related to the notion of control-for-its-own-sake and thereby the ideology of the cover-up principle. From the military standpoint, full disclosure about such details has the potential to incite anxiety and apprehension, if not outright anger, which again could threaten combat readiness. The judicious release of valued information enables the military institution to manage emotions, particularly the fears of female military partners, which, according to this study, are very real for these women. Furthermore, this practice means that female military partners maintain an essential dependence on the military institution for information which directly affects their lives. With respect to this, the maxim "knowledge is power" comes to mind.

The accounts of the women in this study point to the presence of a particular military ideology, that is, the cover-up principle. As with all ideologies, the cover-up principle is not external to their lives, but is actually present and organizing the everyday lives of the women. This ideology is present as practices wherein their emotions, particularly their fears regarding combat, are contained. As women enact the practices associated with the containment of emotions, they are supporting military relevances, especially combat readiness. Furthermore, as female military partners learn to be dependent upon the military institution for valued information which, according to the accounts of the women in this study, is judiciously released, they are, in turn, reinforcing the relations of ruling within the military. Therefore, the ideology of the cover-up principle becomes embodied as practices constitutive of the relations of ruling within the military.

Networking and Unit Cohesion

Other military ideologies are present and organizing the everyday lives of the women in the study. In addition to the cover-up principle, the ideology of unit cohesion also emerges through their words. As with the cover-up principle, unit cohesion is also designed to ensure combat readiness. This military ideology is sometimes referred to as "esprit de corps" within other military literature (Enloe, 1983; Hunter, 1982).

Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) discuss unit cohesion or "esprit de corps" as a process which fosters strong bonding and mutual commitment among members of a platoon, squadron or ship or any other "unit" within the military. The military claims that when members are bonded and committed, they are in a better position for combat. While threats to national or international security or allegiance to particular political ideologies or politicians may play a role in combat readiness, it is really the bonds established with others on the "team" that establish and maintain combat readiness (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

Military rhetoric asserts that serving members go into battle to help their "buddies". Moreover, through unit cohesion, members of a unit learn to know that they can count on each other in the face of danger. Accordingly, the military institution depends upon these bonds acquired through unit cohesion. Without them, the military could not fulfill its mission and it goes to great lengths to ensure that such bonds are entrenched.

Unit cohesion is inculcated within serving members from their earliest days at boot camp and throughout their careers. Certain institutional practices such as the provision of base housing at a very affordable rate, the wearing of the uniform which fosters a group identity, enforced mobility which discourages ties to the civilian community and

member-only social events facilitate a closeness which is essential to unit cohesion (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

The words of the women in this study convey that the ideology of unit cohesion is also manifest within particular military practices as the ship is deployed. In the following passage, Sara is discussing a short stop at a resort that is planned for the *Illustrious* en route to the Adriatic.

I can't see why...you know...why...why are they taking these men that have families and putting them in the middle of the ocean and dropping them off at resorts? I mean they're going to a resort on the .... To me...

(D.N. - Where?)

Palma...some little island on the way.

But to me...it's like...why are they doing this? They leave their wives a week before and then they're going to this resort. And the wives are still home making the kid's lunches, and the guys are out at a resort because they're in the military.

(D.N.- This is en route to the Adriatic?)

Yeah, but they're just going there for R and R. Maybe this R and R is great. Maybe they deserve it, but I think that sometimes they push it. You know, it's...

(D.N. - Why do you think they do it?)

To keep the guys in the Navy.

(D.N. - How does that work?)

Well, it keeps them close, keeps them quiet, keeps them content. I mean,

can you think of a better way to keep them content than to drop them

off at a beach-filled little island? They're really bonded...these guys...and the

military encourages that. It's like ...when they get back...and this is after

months living cheek by jowl with these guys...they come home ...do the

family thing for a little while...and then they're all going down to the tavern..

(D.N. - So, how do you feel when that happens?)

I feel like a second-class citizen.

Resentment can be detected in Sara's words as she thinks about what she and other

female military partners will be doing as the men enjoy the "beach-filled little island".

Nevertheless, she consciously identifies the short vacation stop en route to the Adriatic as

a military practice which encourages bonding among members of the unit. In fact, Sara

seems quite familiar with the ideology of unit cohesion. Her words enable the reader to

see how unit cohesion pervades the lives of military families even when the ship is in

port. However, the last line of this passage is particularly informative because it tells the

reader of Sara's perception of her place and position in relation to the "unit".

A similar impression can be gleaned from Darlene's words. As well, Darlene's words

indicate that unit cohesion can also be cultivated through erratic work schedules during

the period of "trials" preceding the deployment of the ship.

Oh, sometimes I wish we had more time.

(D.N. - You wish you had more time...)

Yeah...a lot of time has been taken away from us...they always go out on

trials, you know, but they were supposed to be back on Thursday

afternoon...and they did come back, but then they took them right

back out again. They said they would give them this whole week and

then he ended up working. And I don't see any reason for it. That kind of...

that bothered me. I guess we're not important.

Both Sara and Darlene express their perceptions of their status in relation to the

relevances of the military institution. From this it can be deduced that the ideology of unit

cohesion constitutes practices which not only work to build and sustain bonds among

serving members of a unit but which also appear to weaken bonds to the home.

Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) support this contention when they discuss unit

cohesion as comprising a culture of idealized male bonding which sometimes relegates

women to a secondary status within the military institution. Keeping female military

partners in this place accomplishes three institutionally relevant purposes for the military.

First, it enhances the bonding necessary for combat readiness. Second, it habituates the

serving members to other members' company and third, it facilitates separations between

partners in relation to deployments (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

Essentially, the ideology of unit cohesion comprises practices which reinforce the

primacy of bonds within the unit. Concomitantly, as the words of women in the study

indicate, female military partners assume a secondary status. The purpose of such

bonding and the related positioning of female partners is associated with the imperative

of combat readiness within the military institution.

Interestingly, while the literature elucidates the ideology of unit cohesion in relation to the serving members, the capacity or the propensity of their female partners to also experience a form of cohesion is not explicitly addressed. However, women in this study did attest to the importance of being "part of the team" as well. As Holly states:

> If you're going to make it...you have to be part of the team.
>
> (D.N. - Uh huh...)
>
> Oh yes...you have to be. Otherwise, you might as well forget it. It works the same way as it does for the men. We have to be part of the team too.

The fraternization and intense bonding characterizing interaction among serving members and which supports and reinforces the military ideology of unit cohesion appear to transfer to the experience of the female military partners. Moreover, Holly's words imply that being "part of the team" is linked to the survival of female partners within the military institution.

While Holly's words imply the presence of bonding and institutional commitment, she does not tell the reader what this involves. She also does not explain or elaborate the link between bonding and institutional commitment and "making it" or survival. In other words, she is not explicit about how the ideology of unit cohesion is actually present within the everyday lives of female military partners. However, Sara's perceptions in this regard are more explicit and illuminating. She states:

It's funny...but whenever I see the ship or tied up at the

dockyard, I say...there's my ship.

(D.N. - Your ship?)

Yeah...it's my ship too. We're drawn into the whole thing too...the first

time I went to the wives' networking group...it was hilarious...I think

90% of us wore something from the *Illustrious*. Here we all are at this

meeting with the *Illustrious* t-shirts, jackets...somebody even had gym

pants on from the *Illustrious*. It was fairly neat. And I...I felt so good

because I had his leather jacket on, you know, I was the only one with

the new leather jacket on...but I wore it on purpose...I wore it because

I was going to an *Illustrious* function and I felt that I should.

The participation in the ship's networking sessions that Sara refers to is one practice

that constitutes being part of the team. Wives' networks were established within the

military during the Gulf War. Every ship, platoon or squadron has a network attached to

it which is activated upon deployment, particularly if a deployment involves

peacekeeping.

Each network is co-led by a family support centre staff person, a military partner and

a coordinating committee of other military partners. The network facilitators organize

social functions and telephone "fanouts". The social functions include such activities as

pot-luck suppers, bowling, fashion shows or craft sessions. The "fanouts" are hierarchical

systems utilized for the quick distribution of important information to all military partners

who are also part of the "unit" (ship, platoon or squadron) (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

Network organizers as well as military commanders place a lot of importance on the fanout. The fanout system is used to disseminate information related to the "tour" or deployment, particularly important developments regarding the conflict situation. There is usually an aura of urgency surrounding the activation of the fanout because of the military's need to reach military wives before media accounts of one potentially alarming situation or another begin to circulate. Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) claim that important developments in a conflict situation need to be given the military "slant" through the fanout system before partners hear differing accounts through the media.

Sara's reference to the "network" and the subsequent description of practices associated with the networks enable us to see how these practices embody particular military ideologies. The cover-up principle, which was discussed earlier in this chapter in relation to its embeddedness in other everyday practices, is also embedded within the practices associated with the networks. In particular, the activation of the telephone fanout system is a practice which works to contain the fears and other emotions of military partners in the face of a deployment in a war zone. Again, this practice maintains the dependence of military partners on the military institution for valued and "accurate" information which, in turn, reinforces the relations of ruling within the military.

However, networks are also about bonding - bonding among the female military partners. The social activities associated with the networks are certainly meant to provide enjoyable outings for military partners who are alone at home with children and other responsibilities. Nevertheless, there appears to be a deeper purpose underlying the socializing.

The social activities are strongly endorsed within the military hierarchy. This

endorsement is related to the realization that the networks and all of the activities they comprise establish and sustain bonding among the military partners. While this bonding may be of personal benefit to those who experience it, it also embodies a military relevance related to the ideology of unit cohesion. If the military partners feel that they have support from within the military institution and if they derive some benefit from the opportunities to bond with other partners experiencing the same deployment, conceivably they will be more amenable to the realities imposed by the deployment. Moreover, if the bonding results in an enhanced sense of identification with the unit or ship and its mission, then the military partners will be less of an encumbrance, interference or threat to the institution.

Participation in the network meetings and the bonding and identification that ensue from such participation comprise practices which embody the ideology of unit cohesion. Most of the literature on the military experience focuses on unit cohesion among serving members; however, the words of the women in this study also enable the reader to learn about unit cohesion among military partners. For example, Sara refers to the *Illustrious* as "my ship", while Holly talks about being "part of the team". To me, these phrases are evocative of a strong sense of bonding. The bonding also seems to facilitate identification with the military institution. As Sara states: "90% of us wore something from the *Illustrious*" at a wives' networking group meeting. Inherent within these words is a sense of pride in being part of the team that is the *Illustrious*. Conceivably, such pride enhances loyalty and commitment to the mission of the deployment. Therefore, based on the words of the women participating in this study, I am able to conclude that participation in social activities and the wearing of unit-specific paraphernalia are networking practices

embodying the ideology of unit cohesion. Furthermore, it is also possible to understand from these words that the sense of identification with the military institution, as evidenced through such phrases as "my ship" and "part of the team", that ensues from the enactment of networking practices embodying the ideology of unit cohesion is linked to women's survival within the military system. As Holly states "if you're going to make it...you have to be part of the team". From this, I can infer that this sense of identification facilitates coping in relation to the cycle of deployment. As stated previously, feeling "part of the team" can certainly strengthen one's commitment to the mission of the military institution and one's resolve to cope with any difficulties and stresses associated with the cycle of deployment. However, there are other ways and means by which female military partners cope with the challenges posed by the deployment.

Coping Strategies and Psychological Resources

The women participating in the study were very clear as they shared with me their feelings and experiences at this stage of the deployment process. As discussed previously in this chapter, a matrix of emotional responses which included anger, despair, resentment and fear emanate from the words of the women. In addition, the women acknowledge a high level of emotional volatility at this period of pre-deployment. This section of this chapter provides an understanding of how the women handled these emotional responses. In particular, the building of walls and conflict, or "the fight" emerge as coping strategies and psychological resources through their articulation of their experiences. As with other practices and processes articulated through this thesis, these too embody both gender ideologies and military ideologies.

<u>Denial</u>

A number of the women participating in the study admitted that they are shielding themselves from the full impact of the deployment. It is possible to gain a sense from their words that they are doing this both on the intra personal and interpersonal level. Some referred to this process of denial as "faking it". As Sara states:

I think I've been ignoring that it's going to happen. Oh yeah...I've been denying it. I'm not right now...because I am talking to you about it (laughter)...but I have been all along. I think it has made it easier...you see when my grandmother died a year ago, I was devastated. I was very close to her. But I did then what I'm doing right now...I sort of... put all my feelings in a closet.

(D.N. - Do you think that you are doing that right now?)

Oh yes...that's what I'm doing right now. I told him this morning...I said... let's fake it for the next three days, you know. Even if we want to cry and holler and yell...let's just fake it. I'm just going to pretend I'm happy. It's a lot easier than crying and getting upset and then having him leave with bad memories.

(D.N. - Does this help you?)

Oh yes...it's hell on earth right now...but being sad doesn't help.

Sara's words capture the personal and interpersonal character of the denial process. Her practices of denial appear to facilitate both her own coping and they also seem to ameliorate tension between herself and her husband.

Other women attest, although perhaps more subtly than Sara, to the presence of denial

at this stage of the deployment process. Holly states:

> We try to keep things on as even a keel as we can. We don't deal
>
> with a lot of difficult issues at this time just so that we can keep the
>
> stress down to a minimum.
>
> Charlotte's words also support the presence of denial:
>
> In some ways I'm trying to fool myself, you know, pretend that he's
>
> not going away...carrying on as normal.
>
> (D.N. - What does this do for you?)
>
> It helps me not to get angry at him for going away.

Darlene also supports the theme of denial when she states:

> I am upset right now...but I'm trying to hide my feelings from him a
>
> little bit.
>
> (D.N. - Why?)
>
> Well...I'm trying to keep up a brave front for everybody. It helps you get
>
> through it.
>
> Jane contributes to our understanding of the denial process when she adds:
>
> I'm trying to put off dealing with the fact that he's going. I know the
>
> last two days before he goes will be terrible. I'll probably be very
>
> emotional, and ah...I know in the past I've given Danny a guilt trip,

you know, leaving us or leaving me here all alone and I have to look

after things myself, but I'm trying not to do that this time. But, I'm aware

that I still have those feelings. I'll try not to raise them 'cause that bothers

him and it makes it more difficult for him to leave.

The words of Holly, Charlotte, Darlene and Jane resonate with denial. Like Sara, who

has learned to "keep her feelings in a closet", these other women also admit to denial

processes when they talk about "keeping things on an even keel", "trying to fool myself",

"hiding my feelings" and "putting off dealing with the fact that he's going". Furthermore,

the words of these women help the reader to understand the purpose underlying the

denial. Evidently, denial functions as a way of alleviating stress by helping to repress the

emotions associated with the impending deployment.

It is interesting to note that Darlene states that she is endeavouring to keep up a brave

front for *everybody*. This implies that the work of denial ongoing at this time not only

helps the women to maintain their own intra-personal equilibrium, but that it is also

designed to help *others*. Therefore, denial also fulfills a interpersonal function insofar as

the denial smooths over potential or actual conflict areas within relationships affected by

the deployment.

Jane and Sara clarify how the denial actually does help the other people in the

relationships. Jane states that raising issues and venting her feelings would "make it more

difficult for him to leave". Likewise, Sara conveys that pretending to be happy is "a lot

easier than crying and getting upset and then having him leave with bad memories".

From these words it is possible to postulate that the denial of feelings and anxieties

characterizing this phase of the deployment process also enables the women to meet what they perceive to be the needs of their male partners. From their point of view, the men need to leave with good memories. Conceivably, the women believe that expressing their feelings would mean that the men would leave with bad memories. So, the women actively and consciously suspend their emotional responses as they anticipate the impending deployment because, in their view, to do otherwise, would mean that the needs of their male partners would not be met. But what about their needs? Do they also have the need to see their partners leave with good memories? But what about the anger, despair, resentment and fear that emerges from their words and which was analyzed earlier in this chapter? What happens to these feelings as they try to create an atmosphere that supports "good memories"? Do they need to talk about these feelings, but learn that they cannot? Do the women learn to suppress these feelings in an effort to smooth the way for the imminent departure of their male partners and in so doing, are they thwarting the fulfilment of their own needs?

In suppressing their feelings about the deployment, the women are positioning their needs in second place, to the extent that the expression of their emotions would better enable them to deal with their own fears, insecurities and anger. This contention can be supported by assertions advanced within the body of literature which discusses the psychology of women's experience. For example, Kaschak (1992) notes that women in our society are viewed as having obligations to and responsibility for others that often override, or at least supplement, those to themselves. Apparently, there is an advantage underlying this socialized propensity. The advantage is related to the supposition that women receive positive reinforcement for attending to the needs of others while

simultaneously subjugating their own. Indeed, Kaschak claims that women are often unequivocally praised for putting other's needs before their own. This may mean that concepts of self, most particularly self-esteem, are linked to the denial of one's own needs. Moreover, the suppression of need is also often embedded in the success of relationships. Women are socialized to believe that a "good" relationship is one where they assume responsibility for the needs of others, either partners or children. Correspondingly, women learn to believe that to meet their own needs first is inherently selfish. Therefore, the drive to mute one's own needs in deference to the needs of others is deeply felt (Kaschak, 1992).

Miller (1986) also claims that a chief organizing principle for women's lives is "doing for others", and therefore, women tend to place the needs of others first. Further to this, Miller contends that women are diverted from exploring and expressing their needs, because to do so would not only conflict with their inner image of what it means to be a woman, but could also threaten relationships, particularly relationships with men. Given that women learn to value connections to others (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Kaschak, 1992; Miller, 1986; Surrey, 1986), the need to avoid any break or disruption in a central relationship is understandable.

In addition, Miller (1986) maintains that women are encouraged to "transform" their own needs. This may mean that not only are they diverted from recognizing their own needs as such, but in so doing, they may also transpose the needs of others as their own. In relation to this, Miller contends that women believe that they are meeting their own needs when they meet the needs of others and that they derive satisfaction from this.

So while the denial of the anger, despair, resentment and fear associated with this

stage of the deployment process may achieve a direct intrapsychic benefit for the women insofar as it serves as a coping strategy, the perception that this suppression of feeling will make it easier for the men to depart may also be helping the women to cope at this time. Furthermore, if, as Miller (1986) asserts, women learn to believe that in meeting other's needs they are also meeting their own and if they actually manage this transformation and can fulfill the perceived needs of their male partners, then the ensuing sense of comfort and affirmation of self-esteem can only be of help to the women at this time. Moreover, given that, as Kaschak (1992) notes, denial of need is often embedded in the success of relationships, the women may also benefit from the conscious or subconscious recognition that their efforts at suppression may be sustaining a "good" relationship. This too then might also function as a way of coping at this time.

Through the writing of those who theorize about gender, it is possible to understand the ways in which denial processes facilitate coping. However, a fundamental question remains. Previously in this chapter, I discussed and analyzed what I refer to as a "matrix" of emotional responses emerging from the words of the women in the study. I endeavoured to capture and convey the depth and intensity of these emotional responses. But now that we understand the presence as well as the underpinnings and purposes of denial at this stage of the deployment process, one is left with the question of how the women actually accomplish and sustain the denial, particularly when we also know about the intensity of what is being denied. How do they hold the emotional responses back? Furthermore, how does this work of "holding the emotional responses back" serve as a coping mechanism?

The Building of Walls

Several women in the study indicate that "the building of walls" at this time of pre-deployment facilitates the denial process. Therefore, "the building of walls" also serves as a coping mechanism. Sara is very lucid as she refers to the "wall":

...He tries to break the ice with me and I think, that's OK...

but it doesn't work, cause I have this wall around me right now.

(D.N. - So, having a wall for you is not normal?)

No, not at all. When I found out yesterday that I didn't get my student

loan, I really needed him then. I needed to talk to him about my future,

what I was going to do, what we were going to do, but the wall was there.

You know, just being married, you don't expect to have a wall like that.

But, we had just started to get everything together and then it's time to think

about him leaving.

Charlotte adds to an understanding of the "wall":

You know...to make the separation time easier, you just sort of drift

apart before they go away... You don't plan to do it. It just

happens.

(D.N. - What is that like?)

Well...you just get totally blocked off from him and everything.

(D.N. - Like a "wall"?)

Yeah...like you're behind this huge wall.

Conceivably, women in the study construct psychosocial walls around themselves at this stage of the deployment process in an effort to hold back the flood of emotions they carry with them at this time. The women seem quite conscious that they are indeed holding their emotions back. In particular, Sara, who is newly married, acknowledges that this kind of behaviour is probably unusual in a newlywed, but regardless, her anxieties about the impending departure of her husband are such that she feels the need for the "wall". As she states, she and her husband are "just starting to get everything together and then it's time to think about him leaving". Sara is referring to the interpersonal difficulties that have characterized her relationship to this point and the new-found strength that she feels that they have finally achieved. She is fearful of losing that strength through the separation and is containing those fears behind what she refers to as a "wall". Even when she feels the need to break through the wall and discuss issues such as her student loan, she does not.

Charlotte's words corroborate Sara's as she discusses the state of being "totally blocked off from him and everything". Charlotte also addresses the reasoning underlying this when she indicates that it eases the stress associated with the impending separation. Therefore, the blocking off of emotions behind walls is part of the disengagement process ongoing at this time of pre-deployment. Moreover, these efforts facilitate the denial discussed previously in this chapter as a central and salient coping strategy.

"The Fight"

Despite these efforts to contain emotions as a means of sustaining denial and thereby facilitating coping, as the time of leave-taking draws nearer, feelings and anxieties do break through the wall. As Sara states, "the wall always cracks". She adds:

We're probably not going to leave on very good terms next week,

because everything is just so intense right now...the wall always cracks.

Sara attributes the eventual unleashing of emotion to the intensity of the feelings. Holly supports this when she states:

Yes...the wall cracks...hasn't happened yet (laughter). Emotions

are very high and everybody is kind of running on that really high energy,

you know, and some days it just doesn't take much at all.

A number of women in the study report that a particular event usually acts as a catalyst prompting the cracking of the wall. Jane refers to this as "the big fight":

Oh yes...the big fight. Actually, it happens. We've done that when he lived

in Halifax and I lived in Greenwood when I was in the service. Every Sunday

night I would fight with him because I didn't want him to leave and because

it was easier to say good-bye when you were mad at each other than,

I guess, when you're not. It does happen. It always happens to us.

Chris discusses a similar process ongoing in her relationship:

The closer it gets...I feel...like...oh. would you just hurry up and get

out of here.

(D.N. - So, you want to get it over with?)

Yes...(laughter)...that's always been a coping mechanism for this house anyway. It's not uncommon for us to have a big blow-up just before they go to sea.

(D.N. - You call this a coping mechanism?)

Yeah, you sort of have to break the ties...like...I don't need you for the six months, so...

(D.N. - Good-bye)

Yeah...good-bye...(laughter). It's like breaking up when you're in your teens and dating...it's about the same feeling...like...just get out of here...I don't like this...so let's just do it and get it over with.

(D.N. - So, how does the "fight" work into this?)

Well, like I said, it helps you break the ties. You find anything...some picky little thing...if nothing major happens, we find it. Actually, it happened last Sunday just before church. Alan was duty Saturday night, and he came home and was tired. He came home late and he had something to do before he went to church. I wanted him to go to church and he didn't want to go to church. So, we had a blow-out in the church parking lot.

Evidently, "the big fight" serves as the ultimate disengagement mechanism. The venting of interpersonal anger and frustration facilitates leave-taking. Moreover, it is apparent that "the fight" acts as a catalyst for the cracking of the "wall" that, up to this point, has helped the women sustain the denial that appears to be a significant coping

mechanism at this phase of the deployment cycle.

This delineation of coping strategies and psychological resources at the time of pre-deployment does not emerge as a feature of female military partners' experience through other studies. While Logan (1987) does outline the contours of women's experience at this time through her reference to "the anticipation of loss" and "detachment and withdrawal", she does not probe more deeply. These references merely label and categorize experience, rather than explicate it. For example, the reference to "anticipation of loss" does not elucidate the emotional processes inherent in the anticipation. Furthermore, merely referring to "detachment and withdrawal" does not shed light on the ways that this is accomplished nor the meaning this holds for female military partners at the time of pre-deployment. On the other hand, understanding the meaning and purpose of denial, the blocking off of emotions behind walls and the role of this activity in facilitating denial as well as the catalysts that serve to ease the way for the final leave-taking illuminates some of the relational processes ongoing at this time.

These points are significant considering that, as mentioned previously, Logan's (1987) model is often used as background for educational programming and counselling services within Military Family Resource Centres. Conceivably, women attending these programs and using these services may not be able to fit their experience within the ideologically relevant categories inherent in the model. As a result, women may learn to ignore or even refuse to acknowledge any experience which does not fit. Where this is the case, this means that the coping strategies and psychological resources employed by female military partners during the period of pre-deployment is another aspect of their lives that breaks away along a "line of fault" separating what these women know about their daily

lives and what ideological forms of expression claim to be "knowable". As a consequence, neither the women nor those that work with them would fully understand their experience.

Summary

This concludes the analysis of the discursive concepts and categories and ideologies embodied within the everyday lives of female military partners at the pre-deployment phase of the overall cycle. These findings are summarized in Table 1 which follows.

Within the context of this chapter, I have developed the argument, initially sketched in Chapter Three, that these practices, the meanings underpinning the practices as well as the coping strategies and psychological resources employed by the women can be characterized as "invisible". I have advanced and supported the claim that this invisibility is associated with the fact that most studies of female military partners are conducted in accordance with the principles of more traditional research methods and methodologies. Given that such research is generally framed in discursive concepts and categories rather than everyday experience (Code, 1991; Harding, 1991; Smith, 1987, 1990; Stanley & Wise, 1990), it is reasonable to contend that the everyday experiences of female military partners in relation to the cycle of deployment do not always fit within the concepts and categories and therefore do not emerge as a knowable entity.

Within this chapter, I have argued that this is indeed the case as far as the pre-deployment phase of the overall cycle of deployment is concerned. Through the analysis presented and discussed in this chapter, I have endeavoured to recover experiences articulated through the practices, processes, strategies and resources noted in Table I from the abyss created by the "line of fault" (Smith, 1987) separating what the women know

about their everyday lives and what ideological forms of expression claim to be "knowable".

As these pre-deployment practices, processes, resources and strategies have been rendered visible through this chapter, I have also discussed the ways in which these local and particular aspects of the everyday lives of the women in the study embody military and gender ideologies. Concomitantly, using the women's depictions of their everyday lives as a starting point, the chapter supports the argument initially advanced in Chapter Three, that ideologies are not entities that are "out there" exercising power as separate and reified structures, but are actually present and organizing the daily lives of military wives in relation to the cycle of deployment.

Table 1

Summary of Findings

Pre-Deployment

Practices Ideologies	Gender and Military
Maintenance of Family Cohesion Connection	Responsibility, Care,
Uniform Preparation Ceremony)	Unit Cohesion (Rank &
Coordination of Household Tasks	Self-Reliance Combat Readiness
Networking	Unit Cohesion

Emotional Processes Ideologies	Gender and Military
Anger, Despair, Resentment Fear	Cover-up Principle

Coping Strategies & Psychological Resources Ideologies	Gender and Military
Denial, Building of Walls The "Fight"	Responsibility Care, Connection

CHAPTER SIX: THE DEPLOYMENT PHASE

This chapter continues the explication and analysis of everyday practices, the meanings underpinning the practices as well as the coping strategies and psychological resources employed by a group of female military partners in relation to the cycle of deployment. As with Chapter Five, Chapter Six begins with accounts of everyday experience; however, the experiences that form the nucleus of Chapter Six are those associated with the actual deployment of the ship.

Ideology and Everyday Practice

As with Chapter Five, the analysis of the deployment phase of the cycle is grounded within the women's accounts of their experiences. The actual concrete practices enacted by the women as they lived through this phase of the deployment process are clustered here into four categories: maintenance of family cohesion, coordination of household tasks, problem-solving and accommodation and finally, networking. Corresponding emotional processes also emerged at this phase of the deployment cycle: anger, despair, resentment and fear. As I map out each of these practices and processes, I discuss the ways in which they embody military and gender ideologies.

Maintenance of Family Cohesion

A particular practice emerging from the analysis of interviews conducted at the pre-deployment phase of the deployment process involved the planning of "family time" in the days immediately preceding the departure of the ship. At this time, the women were organizing special trips and activities both as a means of spending "quality time" together before the deployment and to reinforce connections within the family. In

particular, the women were concerned that children would forget their fathers during their absence from the family. This concern carries over to this phase of the deployment cycle. As Charlotte states:

I worry about Benjamin forgetting Matt. I'll feel so terrible if that happens...

I don't know what to do about it though...I feel I should do something, but

I don't know what...It happens you know...Matt's best friend...when he got

back from the last tour...he was just devastated because his daughter

wouldn't come near him.

(D.N. - Is there anything that you are doing to help Benjamin remember?)

Well, as you can see, I keep all his pictures around the house and

I point to them and say "there's Daddy". And when we're eating

something for supper I'll say "Daddy likes this" and he draws pictures

to send to Daddy. Maybe I'm being foolish, but I just don't want him

forget his father. I want him to know him when he walks off that ship

in April. I think that as a mother I should be doing these things, do you

know what I mean...?

Charlotte's words are infused with apprehension and anxiety as she recounts the experience of her husband's best friend whose daughter did not recognize him upon returning from a tour of duty. She then delineates the practices she is enacting to ensure that her husband remains an identity in the household even in his absence. Perhaps the most salient feature of Charlotte's words in this regard, however, relates to her

acknowledgement that preserving a connection between her son and her husband is somehow her responsibility.

Jane shares the fear that her young daughter will forget her father. In the pre-deployment interview, Jane referred to the fact that she and her husband prepared a video depicting the family participating in activities together. The video shows the father playing with Haley (the daughter) in a playground. It also shows father and daughter feeding ducks at a local park and washing the car together. At the deployment interview, Jane was asked if Haley was watching the video during her father's absence. Jane replies:

Oh yes...I pop it in the VCR quite often. I say to Haley "let's watch the video of Daddy". Now sometimes she wants to watch the "Lion King" instead (laughter)...but usually she sits down and watches it. (D.N. - How does she respond to the video?) Well...she seems to be interested most of the time. Sometimes I've thought she might get weepy when she sees it, but she seems OK. She asks from time to time about when he's coming home and that's hard because April is so far away especially for a young child...but I don't mind too much because at least she's talking about him which means she isn't forgetting. (D.N. - Are you still worried that she'll forget?) Oh yes...I'll do anything I can to make sure she doesn't. I would feel just terrible if she didn't know him when he gets back. It would be like I was letting him down or something.

(D.N. - Letting him down...?)

Yeah...I mean I'm the one here with her, so it's really my job to

keep his presence...do you know what I mean? I mean he has

to have a place in this family when he comes back and a daughter

who remembers him.

Like Charlotte, Jane enacts particular practices designed to ensure that her

daughter will remember her father. For example, she regularly plays the video depicting

her daughter and husband enjoying activities together. However, Jane's words also reveal

that this assumption of responsibility for family cohesion during a prolonged period of

separation is tied to her sense of self. Her words echo Charlotte's in this regard.

As mentioned previously, the sense of responsibility for maintaining family

cohesion, the perception of this responsibility as a "job" and the association between the

assumption of this responsibility and a positive sense of self also emerged as key themes

during the analysis of the pre-deployment interviews. It is interesting to realize that these

concerns carry over to the actual period of deployment. The absence of the

husband\father has not even temporarily diminished apprehensions and anxieties in this

regard. This may mean that these concerns and responsibilities carry a particular

profundity for these women. Again, the writing of researchers who theorize about gender

can help elucidate why this may be the case.

Miller's (1986) contentions in this regard are particularly helpful. She claims that

the development and maintenance of connections within relationships are central facets of

women's lives. Indeed, she asserts that women's propensities in this regard represent very

deep needs. This evolves from a gender ideology that becomes embodied within women's lives through socialization. As a result, women's sense of self becomes organized around being able to make and then maintain these connections. Essentially, this means that both women's self-concept, or rather, a set of beliefs one has about the self, as well as self-esteem, which refers to feelings about or evaluation of these beliefs (Kaschak, 1992) is tied to the preservation of connections within relationships. From this, one can deduce that women are socialized to derive a positive self-concept and self-esteem from fulfilling what they believe to be a responsibility for maintaining family connections. Conceivably, the practice involving the maintenance of family cohesion that emerged at this phase of the deployment cycle embodies this gender ideology.

The Coordination of Household Tasks

The predominant theme underlying the women's accounts of the practices associated with the coordination of household tasks during the deployment period is a sense of accomplishment. During the interviews as well as the support group meetings, the women seemed quite eager to share their stories about all the challenges faced in managing their households on their own. While some of this sharing sometimes reverted to commiserating and complaining, particularly in the support group meetings, the overall tone was one of pride and fulfilment. This tone is evident in the following passage as Chris discusses her newly acquired mechanical abilities.

> There's so many chores to be done and I have to do them all by myself...
>
> (D.N. - Yeah...when I came in, you were covered with wallpaper paste...
>
> laughter).

Yeah ...and there's all kinds of other stuff...like shovelling the walkways.

I hate doing that. And I had to do some maintenance on the snow-blower.

I've had to change the oil, I've had to tighten the screws on it. I've had to...

you know...maintain it.

(D.N. - Do you normally do that when Alan's home?)

Oh no...certainly not! He would never let me near his precious

snow-blower...men and their toys...so he must be having a fit over

there right now knowing that it's snowing at home and that I'm not

only using it, but repairing it (laughter). But after I worked on it the

other day, I felt kinda good. I never knew I could do that stuff, but I

guess I can.

An obvious sense of pride in accomplishment emerges from Chris' words as she

recounts her experiences in using and maintaining a piece of household equipment. A

similar feeling can be detected in Holly's words as she details the coordinative work that

she is overseeing within her household.

Oh yes...there are certain things that have to be done. I make sure

that the kids do all their chores. That can be tough, because they're

used to Johnny keeping on top of that. They never argue with him, but

they sure do with me. The other day though I just laid down the law

and they're toeing the line now. And then the other day, I had to get the

refrigerator fixed. It was running funny and the temperature was really

high. I was afraid all our food was going to spoil. That would be drastic

with two teenagers in the house.

(D.N. - Do you normally do that kind of stuff ?)

Oh no...Johnny does...but I like doing it you know...it makes me feel

like I'm keeping everything going.

Evidently, a process that began during the pre-deployment period has continued to

evolve. In Chapter Five, I argued that as the women coordinated household tasks at that

time before the ship's departure, that they were instigating a shift in authority from their

husbands to themselves. I noted that this was a subtle process, but that nevertheless, as

women identified "things that needed to get done" and then enlisted the help of their

husbands in getting them done, that they were, in effect, precipitating the handing over of

authority from their husbands to themselves.

Now that we have access to the words of the women during the deployment phase of

the cycle, we can see that, indeed, women have assumed total responsibility for the

coordination of household tasks. The shift in authority has taken place. Both Holly and

Chris indicate that their new responsibilities were ones previously assumed by their

husbands. However, the women are now directing and coordinating household activities.

They are now fixing and repairing household equipment such as snow-blowers and

refrigerators. They are now supervising children's chores around the house. Clearly, this

coordinative work constitutes particular practices embodying a shift in authority within

the households. Moreover, as women enact these practices, they appear to be revelling in

the feelings of pride and accomplishment that ensue.

These apparent feelings of purpose and accomplishment were put to the test as women coped with additional responsibilities beyond the routinized management of household tasks. From time to time, particular pressures and stresses erupted within their lives necessitating the enactment of additional practices.

Problem-Solving and Accommodation

A number of the women participating in the study coped with illness during the period of the deployment. Usually, it was the children in the family who succumbed to the flu bugs and viral infections circulating during that winter season, but in a few instances women also became physically ill at the same time as they cared for their sick children. Sometimes an illness necessitated a visit to the hospital. Holly actually refers to visiting a number of hospitals in the following passage.

> The kids have been sick too. We've done three hospitals in the
>
> last little while. The IWK, the Dartmouth General and then the
>
> VG last night. So, I've been sharing my business around (laughter).
>
> I think I finally rolled into bed at 4:00 this morning.

Marie also experienced ongoing difficulties with illness:

> For the past three weeks to a month, the kids have been sick...
>
> you know...very, very sick...at various times...sort of thing.
>
> (D.N. - You mentioned to me on the phone that they all have
>
> asthma.)

Yeah...yeah, and whether...they say that asthma can be emotionally brought on, you know...I query whether some of this could be emotional...you know...but it's really difficult to say...you know.

(D.N. - Um humm)

I would imagine it is...some of it may have been...but they did have colds and stuff too...

(D.N. - Did you have to take time off work to look after them?)

Yeah, I did. There was one day when I just couldn't so I had to leave my eldest at home all alone when he was sick...like I only work four hours in the morning anyway...so I left him at home alone, you know, and took the baby to the babysitter and then my daughter went off to school...but he managed on his own just laying on the couch watching TV and things like that and I checked with him a couple of times in the morning...but he's pretty responsible...so I didn't...I didn't worry about him too much...but we had several trips to the IWK emerg, and...

(D.N. - When did you have to go there?)

Well, it was late evening, late evening sort of thing...it's tough when you're alone with three kids, because what are you going to do with the other two and so on and so forth...you never know exactly how long you're going to be over there depending on how busy they are, you know.

(D.N. - What did you do with them? Take them all?)

No, never. I wouldn't...I wouldn't even dream...I've heard other

people say that and I thought I could never imagine taking one over to

see the doctor and taking the other two just for the sake of dragging

them all. No, I managed to work around it...to get sitters or, my

day-time babysitter, you know, her husband is home, and she came

over a couple of nights and well...one night I guess...and the other

night I have another girlfriend that managed to take them for me...

so...you know...

(D.N. - So you have people you can call...)

Oh yeah...yeah. So, it worked out all right that way you know. And

then Nicholas developed whooping cough in the beginning of ...

did I tell you this before? Yeah...well...I guess the very beginning

of ...yeah...and it went on and on for three weeks...you know...

and I've...I query whooping cough myself...but I...you know...kept

thinking that's not what it is and had conversations with different on-call

doctors and was told there was lots of croup going around and so on and

so forth...and I finally just got so fed up with it going on and on and he

wasn't keeping anything down, he'd throw up a lot and stuff like that, so I

took him over to the IWK emerg and the doctor...the pediatrician listened

to him and said there's no doubt in my mind that this is what this child has

you know. So, she said I hate to tell you this, but you're in for another

at least six to eight weeks of this, you know. When it hit, it went on and on

and on (laughter).

Marie's account speaks of seemingly gruelling experiences with recurring illnesses among her children during the period of deployment. As she says, these illnesses seemed to "go on and on and on". From this account, it is possible to extricate particular practices. For example, because of the situation, Marie found it necessary to plan and coordinate care arrangements for both the sick child and other children in the family. Marie also participated in problem-solving with various health care professionals in an effort to arrive at a diagnosis as each of her children succumbed to illness. Perhaps this practice of problem-solving is particular to Marie's experience given that she is a nurse and would therefore be in a better position to discuss a diagnosis with a doctor, but nevertheless, there is no doubt that the illnesses of children, especially when they necessitated nocturnal visits to hospital emergency wards, were stressful for both Holly and Marie and definitely precipitated the enactment of particular practices.

Marie's problems were compounded by the fact that she too became ill during the period of the deployment. She discusses her own health problems in the following passage:

I don't feel as if I have any energy since he's been gone, you know,

but I, I've been going through a lot of health problems myself lately

too, so...

(D.N. - You mentioned something about physio on the phone the other

day...)

Yeah...I was going, well, I tend to sort of probably gather most of my

stress in my neck anyway, but I think there was other things related, I was having joint problems so I went through a whole course of physiotherapy, and I was having a lot of migraine headaches which I've never experienced before, you know. That was tough...going back and forth...arranging child care for that because they would only take me at 4:00 pm, you know. How I did it, I don't know. And then...shovelling snow...all those storms last month. I just couldn't do it, so I hired my neighbour's teen-age son.

As if Marie did not have enough to deal with in relation to the illnesses of her children, she also had to cope with her own physical problems. It is interesting to note that some of these health issues, specifically the migraine headaches, had not been experienced by Marie before. Regardless, just as the illnesses of her children prompted the enactment of specific practices, so too did her own health problems. Regular appointments at a physiotherapy clinic in the after-school hours necessitated the coordination of child care. Moreover, given that her physical condition at the time precluded the shovelling of snow, Marie also found it necessary to make alternate arrangements in relation to this as well. The work inherent in organizing alternate arrangements in this regard, as well as with the child care situation, involved an element of problem-solving.

Holly also found herself contending with particular difficulties necessitating the coordinative and problem-solving practices. In the following passage, Holly is referring to those difficulties:

This past month or so...it seems as if all hell's broke loose. For example, my car was hit in the parking lot at work...about $600 worth of damage. The funny part is...my car was the only one in the parking lot, and he slid into it, how he did that I'll never know. So, I've been dealing with that one. And you won't believe this...the car has since been hit again by my son's friend, and so now we have a matched set of fenders (laughter). And then...the kids have been sick, the car hasn't been acting normally since it was hit and then the bank decided that they were going to send back all my checks I've written in the past two weeks, so, I'm trying to iron that out. It was their mistake... a lady went into my branch and asked them to make up some checks while she was waiting for hers to come in and they put my account number on her checks. So, my statement came in and I saw these two checks for $70 which I never wrote. I took the checks into the bank and they put a caution on my account saying no checks were to go through unless signed by me. Well, apparently who's ever processing the checks didn't read the whole thing, they just must have thought no checks are allowed period...so they sent them back. What a nightmare! I feel so embarrassed. These were checks that I've been writing at different places since we moved here...like the gas station down at the intersection and the grocery store and everything. The bank is going to pay back all the service charges, but it took me forever to convince them they should do that. So, that was just one more thing to deal with.

It is not difficult to detect a note of exasperation in Holly's words as she recounts the challenges she is facing at this time. Not only is she, like Marie, coping with sick children during the period of the deployment, but she is also intensely engaged in the practice of problem-solving as she sorts out mistakes made at the bank with her account and as she deals with car problems.

Chris is also engaged in the practice of problem-solving as she deals with the management of finances. According to her, there are always extra expenses associated with a deployment. She states:

> Yes, finances are always tighter during a deployment. It's the telephone
> calls...my last phone bill was over two hundred dollars...I hope
> this month isn't going to be quite that bad, but it called for a bit of
> juggling, let me tell you! ...So it was really tough to "rob from
> Peter to pay Paul" (laughter). So...that put a crunch on the cash
> flow and I had to figure out a way to get around that...and then
> groceries go up at this time of year and the heating bills.
> Oh God...the phone bills are the worst though...they blew the budget
> all to smithereens.

From this account, it is evident that problem-solving for Chris involves the "juggling" of finances in response to the demands on the family budget incurred by long-distance telephone calls as well as seasonal expenses. Obviously then, financial concerns also necessitate the enactment of problem-solving practices at this time of deployment. Sara is

also faced with problem-solving in relation to finances, only her problems are compounded by a particular military practice. She refers to this in the following passage:

> I can't...I can't swing it without...without him home...it's too hard.
> I hoped I could, but...he gives me an allotment...I get a certain
> amount every two weeks, but it's not enough. It's just too hard...too
> hard to make it with what he gives me.

As described in Chapter One, the "allotment" is a sum of money subtracted from the paycheck of a deployed serving member and deposited in the bank account of the military dependent every two weeks. The actual amount of the allotment is decided upon, hopefully in consultation with those at home, by the serving member. In some cases, the amount of the allotment is insufficient to cover household expenses. This seems to be the case with Sara. Consequently, Sara's enactment of the practice of problem-solving in relation to financial management takes on an extra edge. Not only does she have to "juggle" as Chris is at this time, but she has to either negotiate with her husband for a larger allotment or look for other ways to bring in money during the course of the deployment. As the following account indicates, Sara is pursuing both of these options.

> (D.N. - Have you talked to Ron about increasing the allotment?)
> Oh yeah...little good it did me. You see...with his drinking problem
> he's not too anxious to send me more money. So...I'm a salesperson
> now.

(D.N. - You are? For who?)

For a vacuum cleaner company, can you believe it? (laughter) I hate

it...it's taking a lot of my time. Last week...I had to make a choice

between school and selling vacuum cleaners. But...I need the money.

Anyway, I told them I'll work every evening from 5:30 to 9:00 pm.

Evidently, Sara's situation calls for a particular resourcefulness. Because of an

insufficient allotment, she is forced to compromise her progress at school by assuming a

part-time job in order to meet household expenses. Consequently, Sara's problem-solving

practices are characterized by a sense of urgency.

Other women participating in the study were also faced with serious situations

prompting the enactment of certain practices. For example, during the pre-deployment

interview with Charlotte, she mentioned that she had just recently learned that she was

pregnant. However, on the day that the ship left port, Charlotte miscarried. In the

following passage, she discusses this experience and the circumstances surrounding it.

Do you remember I told you before I was expecting? I don't know

if you remember...

(D.N. - Um humm...I do.)

I had a miscarriage the day he left actually.

(D.N. - You did?...the day he left?)

Yes, I did.

(D.N. - Do you want to talk about this?)

Yes, I do. That's why I brought it up.

(D.N. - OK)

Well, I was having these symptoms a couple of days before...like

spotting and things...but I really didn't know what was happening.

There was so much going on here at that time. Matt's parents were

here all the way from Winnipeg...here to say good-bye to their son.

There was a lot of stress involved with their visit. I felt they were

taking time away from us and they were always commenting on the

way I keep house. They're so neat and tidy...very Dutch you know.

They have such high expectations...but I try to accommodate...I

always do...especially close relatives. Anyway, I was also so nauseous

and I wasn't at all with Benjamin. So...something was probably

wrong...

(D.N. - So what did you do?)

Well, things were getting really bad just before he left so the day before

I went to the doctor and he said it was happening and that it would

take about three or four days...Anyway, Matt left while it was happening.

(D.N. - How did you feel about that?)

OK...I told him I would be OK. I know I could have called the padre

on the ship and said, you know, "could my husband stay home?...this

is what is happening to me". But I really didn't think about that at the time.

Matt didn't mention it. He was really looking forward to this deployment.

They could have also kept him behind and flown him out to the ship, but

then he would be so far behind in what was going on that he would never

catch up so to speak.

(D.N. - Um humm)

This is the most important deployment of his career 'cause it is a

culmination of all the things he has learned and he could put to work

everything that he had learned.

Charlotte's words are infused with a sense of stoic resolve as she discusses her

miscarriage. She acknowledges that she could have contacted military officials for the

purpose of requesting that her husband stay home, at least for a while, but that she chose

not to given that this deployment represented a significant milestone in her husband's

career. Even the option of requesting a delay in his departure date and then to later join

the ship by airplane was not pursued by Charlotte. Obviously, the relevances surrounding

this deployment have been absorbed and internalized not only by her husband, but by

Charlotte herself. At this time, she is making choices that support these military

relevances, even when to choose otherwise might be of benefit to her.

Focussing on the words of Charlotte as she recounts her experiences at this time

enables the development of a more complete understanding of practices enacted by

women in the study during this phase of the deployment cycle.

Accommodation

Accounts of Sara's, Chris', Holly's and Marie's experiences at this time reveal the

presence of problem-solving practices in relation to financial management, the illnesses

of children and other day-to-day concerns. However, from Charlotte's words emerge

understandings of other practices associated with slightly more catastrophic events. Evidently, Charlotte's experiences at this time precipitated the enactment of the practice of accommodation. It is possible to detect signs of accommodation as she recounts her thoughts as she considered her options regarding the miscarriage and her husband's leave-taking. She made the choice to handle the circumstances on her own, and in so doing, accommodated the professional needs of her husband and by extension, the relevances of the military institution.

The practice of accommodation also emerges from the words of Darlene. Like Charlotte, Darlene's accommodation to military relevances evolved in response to a particularly traumatic experience. During the period of the deployment, Darlene lost all of her household possessions due to an unfortunate and potentially catastrophic event (the details of this experience will not be referred to in an effort to maintain Darlene's anonymity). Moreover, her small son , who was involved in precipitating the event almost lost his life. Darlene discusses the event in the following passage:

(D.N. - Do you want to talk about...?)

Yeah...sure...it really doesn't bother me...

(D.N. - What time of day did it happen?)

In the afternoon...they were supposed to be playing in the bedroom.

Well...Morgan...she came out screaming and I couldn't make her

out...and I just panicked...

(D.N. - What did you do?)

Went out in the hallway---screaming---neighbour---you

stay here and I'll go get him out---she went in and apparently---

the bed---he was hiding in the bed---he was frightened.

While Darlene claims that she is not "bothered" by discussion of this event, her words and the way that she recounted this experience belie this assertion. A normally placid and calm individual, Darlene became quite agitated and distressed as she talked about the particulars of the event. Within field notes prepared at the end of this interview, I note that while talking specifically about the event, Darlene removed herself from her chair and began to pace the room and also began to deliver her words in an uncharacteristically staccato fashion.

Darlene's personal stress was probably compounded by the fact that after the event, her son experienced nightmares for a protracted period of time. These nightmares became so severe that Darlene's physician recommended counselling with a child psychologist. Darlene heeded this recommendation and did take her son to a child psychologist on a number of occasions, but not before experiencing severe stress herself. As she states:

Oh...you wouldn't believe it...it went on night after night...

screaming and yelling all of a sudden...waking up...he'd

wake his sister up and then she would start crying and then I'd

have the two of them to deal with. I never got any sleep at all.

I didn't know what to do, but I took him to the doctor and he

said he needs a specialist...so he fixed it for me and we've gone

a few times.

(D.N. - Has this helped?)

Yeah...a bit...he still wakes up sometimes though and screams

for me...

Not only is Darlene dealing with the effect of the event on her small son, but she is

also managing the stress associated with replacing all of her household goods.

Consequently, Darlene relied on the generosity of the military community as she replaced

her household possessions. She refers to this in the following passage:

All this stuff here you see was all given to me. Within two days

we had everything and they found this PMQ too. Kids stuff and everything.

We had no insurance...really stupid...so I didn't know what I was going

to do...I was crying and crying. And then Holly called and said they were

picking stuff up from everywhere. They put the word out and the guys

moved me in here. And the ladies cleaned it all first. I couldn't believe it...

It's not all great stuff...that chair you're sitting in doesn't really go...but

at least we have it.

This evidence of the military "taking care of its own" is a theme that will be

explicated and explored at a later point in this chapter, but it is interesting to note the

efficacy of the assistance provided to Darlene by the military during her time of need. It

is also worth noting that shortly after the event Darlene was contacted by the

commanding officer of the ship and asked if she wanted her husband sent home. In the

following passage, she recalls this conversation:

Yeah...the CO called and said we can send him home...help

get things sorted out. And I said no...that I could do it on my

own.

(D.N. - What did he say?)

He seemed pleased, it would be a lot of hassle sending him home

you know.

As Darlene recounted this conversation, she exuded a sense of pride. This was also

evident in a support group meeting about ten days after the event. Darlene was granted a

heroine's welcome as she joined the group that evening. The other women in the group

were very pleased that she was able to re-establish her household so quickly and

efficiently, but more importantly, they openly lauded her for the choice she made in

response to the commanding officer's offer to send her husband home. They praised her

and reinforced her choice and as I state in my fieldnotes prepared after this meeting,

"Darlene glowed with pride as she received this support".

Like Charlotte, Darlene consciously chose to deal with unfortunate circumstances

independently. In particular, she managed her own emotional response to the event, her

son's nightmares as well as the work associated with re-establishing the household.

Essentially, these activities and the choice to handle it all on her own are practices of

accommodation. If Darlene had made the other choice resulting in her husband being sent

home, the military would have incurred a substantial monetary as well as ideological cost. On the ideological level, to send her husband home would mean that the "unit" would be disrupted and as discussed elsewhere in this thesis, unit cohesion is essential for combat readiness. So again, like Charlotte, in enacting accommodative practices, Darlene is supporting the interests, aims and objectives of the military institution.

Further evidence of the practice of accommodation can be detected within Sara's descriptions of marital difficulties erupting yet again during the period of the deployment. In the following account, it appears that her problems have intensified in the midst of the separation, so much so that Sara's husband has written a letter threatening divorce and then has ceased to communicate with Sara.

I was doing so good, despite all the money problems and everything.

I did about 30 days of excellent school work. I didn't miss a class.

I didn't have a drink. I didn't do anything wrong when I went out. I was

drinking water, and, I mean, there was people I know from the military

at the bar that saw me and laughed because I'm drinking water and they

know that I'm, you know...Anyway, things were just getting to me. I'm

finding it so hard to handle everything. I know Ron's screwing around

over there...everybody knows it...I was probably the last to know.

(D.N. - How could everybody know?)

Well, because the other guys call home and talk about Ron doing this

and that...everybody gossips about us. Some of the other guys probably

fool around too, but Ron is always very public about it. So, when they call

home, all the women start to talk about it...

(D.N. - So what happened with you?)

Well...two weeks ago...I went out with this friend of mine...she's

single. She's free and I'm not and it's hard to hang around with

somebody who's free and I'm not...and the temptations of life

and everything else that just seems to be going all wrong.

Anyway...I didn't go home alone and someone saw me on the

dance floor and the word got back to Ron...He wrote and said it's

all over and I haven't heard from him since.

Evidently, there is an informal network functioning within the military which seems

to be very efficient at disseminating information both between spouses separated

geographically and among members of the military community at large. Apparently, this

network also ascends through the hierarchy to include military officials. As Sara indicates

in the following passage, word of her marital strife reached at least one padre on the base

who then contacted her to discuss her difficulties.

The padre called me the other day about all of this so I guess

the word got to him as well.

(D.N. - What did he say?)

He basically told me that I should be handling things differently.

He said he knew it was hard and that maybe my husband was

hurting me but that I should try to do better.

(D.N. - He said you should try to do better?)

Yeah...not in those exact words, but that was his message and

then he referred me to that twelve step program again. So...I guess

that's what I'll have to do...just put everything aside and try to handle it.

Civilian readers of this thesis may be affronted by the intrusiveness of this encounter

between the military padre and Sara. One could perhaps excuse this action as altruistic on

the part of the padre and while this may be the case at least in part, there was a deeper and

institutionally relevant purpose underlying his telephone call. As discussed in Chapter

Five, the military institution has a vested interest in smooth familial functioning on the

home front. Indeed, the military depends upon the effective management of both

households and relationships, especially during a deployment (Enloe, 1983; Harrison &

Laliberte', 1993; 1994; Wertsch, 1991). Combat readiness depends upon a calm home

front and the perceived disruption caused by a female military partner at home who is

experiencing difficulty handling the separation or the responsibilities associated with it is

a real threat to the military institution. Reports of marital infidelity and alcoholism that

inevitably trickle back to the ship have the potential to interfere with the ability of the

serving member to concentrate on the mission. As a result, military officials, such as the

padre are designated to intervene.

Interestingly, in Sara's case, the issue was presented as Sara's problem. As Sara recalls,

the padre implied through their conversation that despite the difficulties, she should "try

to do better".

The admonishment to "do better" constitutes a request to accommodate to the

relevances of the military institution. Despite Sara's ongoing struggles with alcoholism, the daily stress she is experiencing as she endeavours to meet financial obligations on an insufficient allotment, not to mention the pain she feels in relation to her husband's alleged infidelity and the guilt she feels in relation to her own marital transgressions as well as the anxiety associated with the threat of divorce, she is expected to act in a way deemed appropriate by the military. It is as if her problems do not exist or that she can somehow transcend them. In essence, it seems as if Sara is being asked to deny her pain and anxieties in an effort to maintain some sense of equilibrium so that the "mission" of this deployment is not affected in an adverse way. So, as with Charlotte and Darlene, Sara is pushing her feelings aside and in so doing, is enacting the practice of accommodation. As Sara states, she will "just put everything aside and try to handle it". Moreover, as evidenced by the padre's telephone call, the military institution is depending upon that accommodation.

Female Military Partners and Self-Reliance

Through the process of explicating the concrete practices characterizing the everyday lives of female military partners at this stage of the deployment process, I was able to discern a unifying theme associated with each of the practices. As I listened to the women discuss their coordinative work, their efforts to problem-solve as well as their tendency toward accommodation and as I began to conceptualize these aspects of their daily lives as practices, it became apparent to me that these practices embody the principle of self-reliance. For example, as Holly and Marie share their experiences with sick children and as Sara and Chris discuss the ways they are handling stressful financial situations, one is left with the impression that these are strong women who are incredibly resourceful and

self-reliant. This impression is reinforced through detection of the pride and strength emanated by Charlotte and Darlene as they discuss their choices to handle traumatic events independently. Moreover, Sara's account of her difficulties at this time reveals that the military expects and reinforces self-reliance. Indeed, it was Sara's discussion of the intervention of the padre as well as the overwhelming reinforcement offered to Darlene at the support group meeting following the fire that triggered my curiosity about the extent to which female military partners are encouraged by the institution to be self-reliant. Accordingly, I introduced this topic at a number of support group meetings and I also discussed self-reliance with women in subsequent interviews. In particular, when Jane was asked about whether or not she believed that the military expected her to be self-reliant, she responds in the following way:

Oh for sure...they do expect you to handle anything that life throws at you, especially when he's away. It's too much for some girls, but the expectation is definitely there. If a guy in the military doesn't have a spouse who can handle everything, he's got a problem.

Jane's comments were reinforced within the support group meetings. Women participating in these meetings repeatedly indicated that there is no alternative, they *have* to be self-reliant. They consciously claimed that the military expects them to be actively self-reliant. Furthermore, field notes prepared in the aftermath of these meetings refer to the zealous tone of these discussions and the way in which the women affirmed each other's contentions regarding the importance of this quality - both to themselves and to

the military.

The issue of self-reliance was indeed a popular topic for discussion among women participating in the support group meetings. On one occasion Holly brought to a group meeting copies of two "poems" (her term) which are commonly included in military handbooks distributed to military wives through the resource centres or at pre-deployment briefings. The titles of the "poems" are "The Military Wife" and "A Serviceman's Wife" (see Appendix D). These poems resonate with the rhetoric of self-reliance. For example, "The Military Wife" refers to the military spouse as "completely independent', as someone who can "handle every emergency imaginable without a manual" as well as someone who is able to "carry on cheerfully, even if she is pregnant and has the flu". The emphasis on self-reliance is also present within the poem "A Serviceman's Wife" through references to a military wife as someone who can mow the lawn or fix a youngster's bike. Understandably, when these "poems" were read aloud at the support group meeting, they incited a great deal of mirth and rather wry commentary, but nevertheless, once this response abated, it was apparent that the women did believe that these "poems" were relevant to their experience. They outwardly stated that, like it or not, this is the way they had to be. The women also verified as a group that the military expects them and depends upon them to be self-reliant and that this was made known to them from their earliest days in the military system. In fact, Marie indicated that "The Military Wife" was framed and presented to her as a wedding gift by a family friend who was also a military spouse.

The content and tone of the support group meetings which focussed on self-reliance as a topic for discussion, as well as Jane's comments, confirmed my impression that these

military wives have internalized institutional expectations regarding self-reliance. Their acceptance of what could be considered military propaganda presented in the form of the two "poems" and their stated conviction that they need the quality of self-reliance in order to survive in the military system and that the military depends upon them to act in this way led me to this conclusion.

The internalization of self-reliance was also apparent in the support group meetings as women openly employed this quality as a criterion for assessing the behaviour of other military wives. This was certainly evident in the way that they affirmed Darlene's choice in the aftermath of the catastrophic event that she experienced. Moreover, the use of self-reliance as a means of evaluating other spouses emerged on the occasions when participating women discussed and compared the ways in which other wives were handling the deployment. My fieldnotes indicate that a judgemental tone infiltrated the meetings at these times as the women talked about how other women "were doing" - all the time using characteristics they associate with self-reliance as benchmarks. My journal also indicates that I was periodically uncomfortable when the focus of our meetings moved in this direction because, to me, the tone of these conversations seemed somewhat "gossipy". However, such talk did reinforce my sense of the embeddedness of self-reliance within these women. Evidently, the quality of self-reliance is internalized within military wives to such an extent that it not only affects their perceptions of self, but it also shapes how they view each other.

The internalization of self-reliance within military wives transpires in response to the intensely prescriptive stance assumed by the military institution in relation to this quality. Women participating in the study openly acknowledged that, in their view, the military

expects them to be that way. This supposition is supported even within seemingly innocuous "poetry" such as "The Military Wife" or "A Serviceman's Wife" which exalts the self-reliant virtues of military wives thereby reinforcing the importance of this kind of behaviour. However, self-reliance is also reinforced through various formal and informal networks within the military institution. In all of my interaction with military personnel over the years, military wives have always been depicted to me in this way. Furthermore, I have consistently heard female military partners describe themselves and others in this way as well, both within the context of this study and on other occasions. This is a reflection of the prescriptive character of self-reliance. As women participating in this study claim, they know that they *have* to be self-reliant.

The very fact that self-reliance has attained prescriptive status means that it is ideologically relevant to the military. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter Two, Harrison and Laliberte´ (1994) characterize self-reliance as one of the five military ideologies. Self-reliance is also discussed within the work of Enloe (1983). These authors claim that self-reliance is touted as a natural attribute of female military partners. They also assert that the military institution mythologizes and idealizes self-reliance. These claims are certainly consistent with the tone of the "poetry" described previously in this chapter. Regardless, the military has a vested interest in promoting self-reliance. If female military partners are not able to manage and maintain day-to-day household responsibilities as well as traumatic and catastrophic events in the midst of a deployment, then combat readiness is threatened. From the perspective of the military, serving members have to be assured that all is well at home so that they can maintain concentration on the mission. Correspondingly, military officials do not want to be bothered by concerns and

complaints of military spouses. These too interfere with the mission because they counteract the image of the military as a strong and invincible institution. As Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) state: "the pressure to be self-reliant is strong in the military community because when it is successful, the military agenda is safe" (p. 85). This is particularly the case at this time given that most, if not all, units are deployed to war zones.

Obviously, self-reliance is ideologically relevant to the military. However, the assumption that all female military partners possess this trait and its prescriptive application to all works to trivialize efforts expended in the endeavour to be self-reliant. Instead of being considered as a set of practices requiring effort and skill that are acknowledged and valued as vital to the effective functioning of the military institution, self-reliance is merely presented as a trait that military wives ought to have. This works to denigrate and devalue the *work* involved and also hides from view its importance to the military institution (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

Essentially, the ways in which self-reliance is accomplished is totally lost when it is universally applied to all women. This problem is compounded by the fact that military rhetoric persists in referring to self-reliance as a *trait* which contributes to the invisibility of the work involved. Thinking of self-reliance in this way makes it appear to be *natural.* Even military wives themselves, including the women participating in this study, discuss self-reliance as an personal attribute or trait. In this way, the findings of this study support the work of Harrison and Laliberte' (1994) who claim that this disposition toward self-reliance obscures the real work and effort invested in being this way.

I believe that it is useful to conceptualize self-reliance not as a trait, but rather as

comprising *practices*. Indeed, this study reveals actual concrete practices that constitute the work of self-reliance. As women participating in the study discussed their everyday lives at this phase of the deployment cycle, the practices of coordinating, problem solving and accommodating emerged from their talk. Furthermore, these practices embody a particular military ideology - the ideology of self-reliance. So, in essence, this ideology is actually present as practices within the everyday lives of the women participating in the study. As the women participating in this study enacted these practices, they were working to ensure that the military could continue to function in a way considered to be institutionally relevant. Networking is another everyday practice which is also vital to military functioning.

Networking Practices: Coordinating, Gatekeeping and Ruling

In August of 1990, Canadian military members were deployed from Halifax as part of a United Nations mission that involved the imposition of stiff economic sanctions against Iraq which had invaded the neighbouring country of Kuwait earlier in the month. This mission was entitled "Operation Friction". Over the next number of months, the conflict escalated to the point where war was declared on the sixteenth of January, 1991. "Operation Friction" had now become "Operation Desert Storm" signifying the beginning of the Gulf War.

Serving members deployed to the Gulf in the midst of this conflict represented the first generation to participate in active combat since the Korean War of 1950-1951. If ever the ideologies of self-reliance, combat readiness and the cover-up principle were relevant and important, they were now. Understandably, anxieties and uncertainties were intensified as the various ships, platoons and squadrons were deployed to the Gulf. As a

result, military family resource centres across the country instigated the development of wives' networks attached to each unit, each of which was co-led by resource centre personnel, a female military partner and a coordinating committee (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994).

The Gulf War was brief, but the networks established during this conflict are still in existence. Perhaps one reason for this relates to the fact that the military received a considerable amount of favourable media coverage as the work and activities of these networks became known. However, the analysis in this current research suggests that the networks were sustained because they proved to be ideologically relevant.

Upon the deployment of the *Illustrious* to the Adriatic, its Wives' Network was activated. Holly, one of the women participating in this study, and the wife of a senior officer, was selected as the leader of the Network. Holly, along with staff at the Military Family Resource Centre, coordinated the establishment of a telephone information line. This information line served as a means of disseminating information related to the location and activities of the ship and it also conveyed inspirational messages, largely composed by Holly, from time to time. In the following passage, Holly discusses one such message:

(D.N. - Tell me more about that 429 number.)

Oh, the information line.

(D.N. - Yeah.)

Well, we use it for everything...to get information out...to deal with

the rumours.

(D.N. - I liked the last message I heard....)

Oh, you liked that, did you? (laughter) Well, it was such a beautiful day, but one of those days when I was feeling really blue, I just went for a long walk around the lake. you know...Burchell Lake...there are all these walking paths that wind through the trees. It was just so beautiful and it really perked me up...so...I guess I though that might provide some inspiration for the other ladies. But, I do get comments all the time... the ladies say that they call my tape just about every day. Some of them say: "It's the last thing I do before I go to bed".

Evidently, the information line is used to convey comfort and nurturance to women sharing the same experiences and emotions associated with deployment. Conceivably, the social activities organized through the network also help to alleviate some of the stress and tension associated with the deployment. As Holly states:

We try to have a social activity at least once a month. Sometimes we may end up doing two or three things a month depending on, you know, what's going on and how fast we can get things together.

(D.N. - What kinds of things do you do?)

Well, last week we had a line dancing class.

(D.N. - Oh yes, I heard about that on the line and from one of the other women.)

Yes, I've decided I'm a klutz.

(D.N. - Laughter)

Actually, I'd like to go and do another class just to make sure if I am or not.

But, it was a lot of fun. Then the ladies got together one time and went out for

dinner. Uhm...what else have we done? Oh, we've had some videotapes come

back and we've arranged to show those to the group.

(D.N.- How do the women respond to all of these activities?)

Well, they seem to enjoy them. I think it gives them an outlet...helps

them feel they're not alone.

Holly's acknowledgement that the social activities planned through the network help

the women "feel they're not alone" indicates that the networks facilitate a certain amount

of bonding among the wives. It also appears as if the coordinators of the network make

themselves available by telephone to all the military wives attached to the ship for

information and\or referral to other components of the military institution. Holly refers to

this in the following passage:

(D.N. - When the women call, what do they expect from you? An ear...?)

They want someone to set them in the right direction. Or they want to know

how to access something in the military or they want me to call someone.

(D.N. - Do you send all of their concerns up the line?)

No...Some of the calls are really not about anything important, but for the ones

that I think are important, I just make a few calls.

Evidently, women whose husbands are deployed on the *Illustrious* direct their concerns and queries through Holly to the appropriate military department. As a result, Holly's activities with the network involve the enactment of coordinative practices. However, Holly's role within the network also encompasses other practices. As she indicates, she decides which of the concerns and queries she receives through the telephone calls are actually channelled up through the military system. This means that part of Holly's role as the leader of the network involves a certain amount of gatekeeping. Therefore, this comprises another practice that Holly is enacting in relation to the network. Holly is in a good position to act as a gatekeeper given that she is sharing the experience of the deployment, but as the wife of a senior officer, she is able to access other levels of the military institution. Essentially then, the coordinative and gatekeeping practices enacted by Holly as leader of the network, mediate the local and particular world that she and the other wives associated with the *Illustrious* are experiencing at this time and the military institution.

Although significant, Holly's networking practices are about more than mediation. Holly's coordinative and gatekeeping practices embody the relations of ruling that are so vital to the way that the military institution does its work and accomplishes its objectives. It is doubtful that the wife of a serving member positioned differently within the hegemonic structure of the military would be able to assume leadership of the network and all that this role entails. However, Holly, as the wife of a senior officer, is aptly suited for this role. Indeed, it appears that the ranking structure that systemizes and orders the work and perspectives of serving members is transposed to the environment and experiences of the female military partners. After all, it is Holly, the wife of a senior

officer, who coordinates the concerns and activities of the wives attached to the ship. It is Holly who screens requests for assistance from a higher level within the institution. In my view, these coordinative and gatekeeping practices could only be effectively carried out by someone in Holly's position. No one else would be vested with that kind of power and authority by the military institution.

Metaphorically, Holly is wearing her husband's rank. This is illustrative of the phenomenon of the "two-person career" (Papanek, 1973) discussed previously within this thesis. Papanek (1973) discusses the "two-person" career as constituting a combination of both formal and informal institutional constraints and benefits experienced by both members of a couple even when only one is actually employed by the institution. To the extent that Holly derives some satisfaction from her role as leader of the network, one can assume that there are benefits associated with this position and these benefits are only accrued to her by virtue of her husband's rank.

While useful, Papanek's (1973) analysis seems to conceptualize a wife as subsumed within a husband's career. This is evident in the very way that he labels the phenomenon as a "two-person" career. This label evokes an image of two people contained within the same position. On the other hand, Finch's (1983) perspectives, also discussed previously in this thesis, add an additional dimension to a conceptualization of Holly's networking practices.

Finch (1983) builds on Papanek's (1973) perspectives by envisaging a wife's relationship to her husband's work as a career in itself. She refers to this as the "wife-of career". In Finch's view, this term connotes a wife's incorporation into her husband's work in a patterned way which parallels his own experience with that work. The idea of the

"wife-of" career emerges in the following passage as Holly discusses the rumours that invariably circulate in the midst of a deployment.

And then there are the rumours...oh the lovely rumours (laughter).

I have to put a stop to those and sometimes read them the riot act.

(D.N. - What do you mean by that?)

Well, I just have to lay down the law. Last week, Johnny called me up

and said: "Holly, do something about this, it's affecting morale". What was

happening was there were all these rumours floating around and the fellas

were hearing about them through letters and phone calls. So, I went on the

line and just told it like it was. Did you call in?

(D.N. - Yes, I did.)

Well, you heard it then. I had to be tough.

Further evidence of Holly's enactment of the "wife-of career" surfaces in this passage as she refers to the recent catastrophic event experienced by Darlene:

There was a comment made about Darlene...that it happened

so that she could bring her husband home. And so, I put

a little message on the tape saying I hope it never, ever happens

to you 'cause no one in their right mind would ever put themselves

through that kind of hell. She nearly lost a child. Who would go

and put all their belongings, everything they've worked for and

the life of their children in jeopardy. I was able to find out who was spreading those malicious rumours. I was really disappointed that someone that was connected with the *Illustrious* would make such a comment. But then I know who it is now...and I just hope that they never have to go through anything like that. I guess, what goes around comes around. It was a mean, malicious thing to say.

(D.N. - You're upset about this.)

Yeah, I am, but I think I put them in their place.

As Holly describes her "rumour squashing" activities in the above passages, one does not get a picture of a woman simply living vicariously (Reinerth, 1978) through her husband's position, nor does one get a sense that Holly is merely "wearing her husband's rank" through ascribed status (Snyder, 1978). Rather, I see through Holly's words a picture of a woman who is active and vital in her own right even though certainly her opportunity to act in this way is linked to her husband's position. She is entrusted with certain responsibilities, as evidenced by her husband's admonition to "do something about this".

As Holly responds to this request, I also see her enacting certain ruling practices as she, to use her own words, "reads the riot act" to other wives whom she believes are spreading rumours which are trickling back to the ship and affecting morale and as she "puts people in their place". Presumably, these practices correspond with those enacted by her husband as a senior officer on the ship. Therefore, Holly's ruling practices do

indeed parallel her husband's experiences with his work. Consequently, I believe that Finch's (1983) depiction of the "wife-of career" is personified through Holly and is particularly visible in her role as leader of the network.

Apparently, Holly's position as leader of the network, assumed by her as a direct result of her husband's rank, comprises practices which replicate her husband's position of power as a senior officer. Essentially, these practices embody the relations of ruling so vital to the military institution.

Despite her position, Holly is still subject to ruling within the military institution. Although her coordinative, gatekeeping and ruling practices mean that she mediates the bifurcation between the everyday worlds of the women and the institution and as such, she is implicated in the relations of ruling, she also does not appear to have a choice with regard to these practices. As she states, her husband informed her that she had to "do something" about the rumours on the home front because they were affecting morale on the ship. Holly evidently complied with this request and in doing so, she not only "rules", but she is being "ruled" at the same time. So, in enacting the associated practices, Holly is complicit in her own ruling.

It appears that the coordinative, gatekeeping and ruling practices associated with Holly's role within the network also embody other military relevances. In particular, the ideology of combat readiness and its subsidiary imperative of unit cohesion, which were previously described in Chapter Five, is embedded within the following account:

(D.N.. - Tell me more about the network.)

Well, last month was extremely bad.

(D.N. - uhm hum...)

Yes, I'm worn out. I can't wait until the time when I can hand these ladies back to the fellas.

(D.N. - What kinds of things do you deal with?)

Oh God....we've had two ladies diagnosed with cancer and then there was Darlene's situation, you know about that...Darlene. We've had ladies robbed and beaten, two of them, and uhm... we've had deaths in the family, children in the hospital, serious children's illnesses...what else? Oh gosh, it's hard to remember it all.

(D.N. - How often do you get those kind of calls?)

Well, hardly a week goes by without at least one of those kind of things...I had a call a couple of weeks ago from one of our ladies that had to have day surgery. She ah...has no family here, very few friends and any of the ones she does have are stuck at home with kids. So they couldn't really help her and she needed a drive home from the hospital and someone to sit with her for a few hours. Well, it turned out that when they called to say that she was ready to go home, the nurse informed me that she needed someone to stay with her all night. So that was a bit of a surprise, but I did it. And that was last Thursday in the bad weather....and then there was Darlene...but we sent a message out on the line... the line is great...it's a way to let everyone   know what is going

on in our *Illustrious* family...like with Darlene...we put a message

out...and we had her moved in that first Saturday...we had her set up

in a new apartment with everything she needed, and that happened

between Wednesday and Saturday. She could have moved in Saturday

night but I think she waited until maybe Monday night to actually

go in and stay there, but she was set up enough that she could have

moved in. It was great...there were   donations from everywhere.

(D.N. - From where?)

From the *Illustrious* family community.

In Chapter Five I described particular practices related to the pre-deployment phase of

the deployment cycle which, in my view, embody the ideology of unit cohesion. Within

that chapter, I noted that this ideology is visible not only within the serving members'

daily practices as part of the military institution, but that their female partners experience

a form of unit cohesion as well. I argued that the fraternization and intense bonding

characterizing interaction among serving members and which supports and reinforces the

military ideology of unit cohesion also appear to transfer to the experience of their wives.

I then proceeded to explicate the particular pre-deployment practices enacted by the

women which embody this ideology.

The preceding account offered by Holly indicates that the ideology of unit cohesion is

still embodied within the daily practices of the women participating in the study. As

Holly details emergency interventions, the hospital visits and the processes by which

Darlene's household goods were replaced, one does get the sense that, at least from her

point of view, this is a bonded unit - almost like a family. Indeed, she refers to the "*Illustrious* family community" twice in the preceding passage.

The references to the *Illustrious* community as a "family community" are also evocative of another, yet related, military ideology - the "military as happy family" ideology (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994). This is an ideology associated with the belief that the military is a caring and compassionate community that always takes care of its own. While no one would deny that members of the *Illustrious* "family community" were genuinely concerned about Darlene's predicament and were thereby moved to assist her in her time of need, Harrison and Laliberte' claim that there is a deeper ideological purpose underpinning the tendency to portray the military as an unfailingly supportive "family". These researchers assert that the "military as happy family" ideology fosters acquiescence to some of the less palatable realities of military life. Any sacrifices or frustrations that have to be endured in the interests of the "mission" are that much more endurable if military family members know that the military will always be there for them.

The "military as happy family" ideology also discourages the development of ties to the civilian community. If family members know that they can always count on the military institution for assistance, they will be less likely to take their problems elsewhere. As a result, any problems or issues affecting members of the military community are effectively contained within that community. This too serves to reinforce the image of the military as a strong and invincible institution.

It would be reasonable to suggest that Holly, as the spouse of a senior officer on the ship and the leader of the wives' network, might have a vested interest in depicting the *Illustrious* community as a caring and compassionate family. However, a sense of

bondedness and cohesion also emerge from the words of other women participating in the study. For example, Jane states:

> Some of us get together for coffee every now and then.
>
> If we're really lucky, we can organize getting all the kids
>
> together in one house and then pitching in together for a
>
> babysitter and then we can meet at Tim Hortons or some place.
>
> But then if we can't do that, we just get together at someone's
>
> house and let the kids run wild. We talk and we talk and sometimes
>
> it helps us work things through.
>
> (D.N. - What do you mean?)
>
> Well, this has been going on for so long...some times we get pretty
>
> fed up and agitated which isn't good, because it always gets back
>
> to the guys and that affects what they're doing over there.

Chris supports Jane's views in the following passage:

> I think things like the fashion show we're putting together are
>
> really important. Can you come?
>
> (D.N. - When is it?)
>
> Two Sundays from now - in the afternoon at the Fleet Club.
>
> (D.N. - I think I can, but I'll let you know for sure next week.
>
> Why do you think the fashion show is important?)

Well, it helps us...it gives us something to do...we're having a lot

of laughs pulling it together. Practising walking is really funny.

I'll be amazed if we get through this without cracking up, but

anyway...it just helps us deal with everything. And then we'll do

a video of it and send it over to the guys. You know, they really

like to know that we're doing this kind of stuff.

(D.N. - Why?)

Well...they like to know that we're tight and together because it helps

them be that way and they really need to be.

Interestingly, the preceding two accounts are offered by women who are the wives of

enlisted personnel. They are also not involved in the administration of the Wives'

Network. Therefore, they have no obvious vested interest, as might Holly, in expounding

on the bondedness and cohesiveness of the unit that is the *Illustrious*. Nevertheless, their

words do convey both the kinds of practices which constitute cohesiveness for them, the

importance of these practices from their point of view as well as perceptions of the

importance of these practices to their husbands.

Evidently, social gatherings over coffee and the planning of a fashion show constitute

practices which bring women together in a social environment.

While women such as Jane and Chris might derive enjoyment and personal benefit from

social activities planned through the network, these activities and the bondedness that

apparently ensues also embody the ideology of unit cohesion. As argued in Chapter Five,

if female military partners enjoy the opportunities to bond with other women

experiencing the same deployment, they will likely be more accommodating in terms of the realities imposed by the deployment. Furthermore, as I also stated in Chapter Five, if the bonding results in an intensified sense of identification with the unit and its mission, then the female partners will be less likely to be an encumbrance, interference or threat to the institution.

Contradictory Ideologies

As I reflect upon these particular practices which embody the related ideologies of "the military as happy family", unit cohesion and combat readiness and then think about the practices embodying the ideology of self-reliance which were discussed previously in this chapter, a significant tension or contradiction emerges.

Earlier in this chapter, the words of the women participating in the study revealed the practices of problem-solving and accommodation which, I argued, embody the ideology of self-reliance. From this analysis, it was possible to glean a picture of these women as strong, resourceful and independent in the face of both day-to-day difficulties as well as more traumatic circumstances. At this point in the chapter, I also discussed how the military encourages the enactment of the practices embodying self-reliance because this supports and sustains the related ideology of combat readiness - the ultimate imperative of the military institution.

However, when one compares these practices with those embodying the ideologies of "military as happy family" and unit cohesion, a discrepancy emerges. It seems as if on the one hand, the military expects and reinforces self-reliance, but on the other hand, also fosters dependence upon the military community as evidenced by practices embodying the "military as happy family" ideology in particular. As I reflected upon this apparent

contradiction at an earlier point in this research process, I wondered whether or not female military partners are aware of it and if so, how they handle it. Accordingly, I introduced these queries as topics for discussion at a support group meeting.

Women participating in this meeting readily agreed that they were expected to be both dependent and independent. They intimated that the military does indeed expect them to be self-reliant, but that they knew that they "could only take this so far". What I think they mean here is that self-reliance is only encouraged and reinforced to the extent that it is compatible with the ideological relevances of the military. As long as self-reliance supports and upholds the ideological imperative of combat readiness, it is encouraged. Indeed, it is even idealized and mythologized as evidenced by the "poetry" discussed previously in this chapter.

In a quest to learn more about the apparent contradiction, I asked Marie about it in a subsequent interview.

(D.N. - Do you remember what we were talking about in the meeting

last week - about being both dependent and independent at the same time?)

Oh yeah. (laughter)

(D.N. - Have you thought any more about that?)

Yes, I have. I really do think we're expected to be both...for sure.

But, I think we can only be independent if it suits...you know...

their purposes.

(D.N. - What do you mean?)

Well, they want us to be able to stand on our own two feet when

the men are away or else all hell would break loose. So...we have

to be independent that way, but we can't be independent in other

ways...like...they don't want us to start moving beyond...all of this...

and getting too independent. They want us to rely on them too...

it's strange...

(D.N. - So how do you handle that?)

Well, you just know your limits...you know you have to be strong,

but you know how far to go...you have to put up with it.

Marie's words reinforce impressions gained through the support group meetings. It

does indeed appear that women participating in the study live in a paradoxical situation.

Self-reliance or independence is encouraged to the extent that it supports combat

readiness. However, Marie also acknowledges that the military poses limits in relation to

self-reliance. She indicates that "moving beyond...all of this" is discouraged, probably

because that too would threaten the ideology of combat readiness. Apparently then, self-

reliance both upholds and endangers combat readiness.

In addition, the women participating in the support group meeting attest that the

military institution also expects female military partners to rely upon it, which as I argued

earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Five, reinforces an essential dependence upon the

institution thereby working to sustain the relations of ruling so fundamental to its

functioning.This expectation is transmitted through the "military as happy family"

ideology.

One wonders how these women manage the ideological paradoxes that seemingly

pervade their lives. Obviously, the women learn through the military system when to suspend their self-reliant practices. They are quite aware that it can be only taken so far, and apparently, they comply with the institutional need to desist when required to do so. It is almost as if self-reliance is wired to a light-switch which is turned on and off in accordance with military relevances.The question arises though as to how and when they know when to turn the light-switch on and off. How do they know when it is appropriate to practise self-reliance and when to engage in practices embodying the "military as happy family" ideology? Moreover, what kind of *work* is implicated in making the switch? To use Marie's words, what is involved in "putting up with it?" What kinds of emotional responses arise as this happens?

The very fact that some military wives know when to turn the "self-reliance light-switch" on and off means that the institutional cues that trigger must be present within their everyday worlds in a particularly intense way. Undoubtedly, sensitivity to these cues and the compliance with military ideologies inherent in responding to them in an institutionally appropriate fashion requires a certain amount of emotional work. This next section of this chapter discusses these emotional processes.

<u>Anger, Despair, Resentment and Fear</u>

Within Chapter Five, I argued that the words of the women participating in the study convey an emotional intensity that is not captured or explicated through other studies (Hadaway, 1980; Logan, 1987) which highlight the emotional aspects of deployment. Indeed, a complex and inter-related array of emotions emerged during the pre-deployment period. At that phase of the deployment cycle, I encountered an intense level of emotional volatility as I interviewed the women. As I analyzed their "talk" at that time,

I was able to explicate specific emotions, particularly anger, despair, resentment and fear. I identified this cluster of emotions as a "matrix", because they are not discrete, but rather inter-related and overlapping.

This matrix of emotion is still embedded within the lives of the women during the deployment period. Some of the emotions that constitute the matrix have subsided somewhat, while others have intensified. For example, the anger, despair, resentment and fear so evident during the pre-deployment phase have abated to a certain degree for some of the women. It seems as if women have worked through these feelings in an endeavour to manage the challenges posed by the deployment. I raised this as an issue at a support group meeting . I asked whether or not the emotions so visible at the pre-deployment period still prevailed. The general discussion which followed this question yielded an interesting response. Some of the women indicated that it would be impossible to live "in such a state" for a prolonged period of time. They asserted that to do so would ultimately result in "burn-out" and then they would be "no good to anyone", either to their children or to the military. Evidently, living "in such a state" would threaten self-reliance for some of these women.

In an interview conducted after this support group meeting, Holly affirmed these perspectives:

Oh yes...I was crying at the drop of a hat...you remember what

I was like. And I was also so mad...mad at the military for taking him

away from us...you know...the kids are teenagers now, they're not going

to be with us much longer and here he is missing a whole six or seven

months of their lives. That's a long time and nobody can ever give us that time back. But, you have to put that aside and get on with things or else you'd self-destruct. Then I'd be no good to anyone...the kids, Johnny or the ladies. We just have to be able to handle this and make a go of it.

Although I detect vestiges of the anger and resentment predominant within Holly at the pre-deployment period in this account, I also note the presence of a new attitude or approach to her situation. In the above passage, she underscores the importance of "getting on with things" and being "able to handle this and make a go of it". Certainly, such words reflect the extent to which Holly has absorbed the self-reliance ideology. Evidently, Holly has supplanted many of her previous emotional responses with an ideologically reinforced resolve to manage the deployment experience effectively. As has been discussed previously in this thesis, this ideology of self-reliance is embedded within concrete practices characterizing the daily lives of female military partners. However, Holly's words indicate that this ideology is also embedded within particular emotional processes. The apparent suppression of the vulnerability and volatility so visible at the pre-deployment phase constitutes emotional work for the women who are able to either suspend or transcend their feelings about their situation. The emotional work that Holly is enacting at this time is, no doubt, implicated in her management of the "self-reliance-military as happy family paradox" referred to previously.

While Holly and some of the women participating in support group meetings appear to have suppressed or resolved previous emotional responses, perhaps in an endeavour to live in accordance with the institutionally relevant ideology of self-reliance, this is not the

case for all women. Three of the women participating in the study always appeared to be particularly vulnerable, namely Marie, Jane and Sara. At the support group meeting, these women did not join in with the chorus of self-reliance rhetoric. Rather, they were quiet and subdued, which gave me reason to believe that their emotional experiences differed from the other women. I followed up on this impression in subsequent interviews. Interestingly, my impressions were confirmed. For example, Marie refers to reaching the "breaking point" in the following passage:

I went through...I think...a real bad spell in, probably towards the end of...a month or so ago... where I really felt I had sort of reached a breaking point, you know, but I managed to pull myself back together and we kept on going, and, ah, probably a couple of weeks ago, I found the same thing.

(D.N. - What do you mean? Do you mean another period where you had felt you had reached the breaking point?)

Yes.

(D.N. - What brings that on?)

I think it's stress and tiredness...It's no one thing, it's just everything all together...it just happens to be. I think this time there was just... I can't even remember what started it, it was just like the one straw that broke the camel's back.

(D.N. - What happens to you?)

Well, I honestly did...I honestly did feel that I was going to have a

nervous breakdown. I really did, you know. I just, ah, I just felt like

I couldn't cope any longer. I felt like I reached my ...my point...so I

thought ...five months..that's it. that's all I can take.

(D.N. - And this was three weeks ago?)

Yeah, I thought that's ...that's it for me. I just can't deal with any more

of this.

(D.N. - What did you do?)

Well, I saw my doctor...talked to my doctor...he gave me something

and told me to get a little more rest. But it doesn't matter...just rest

isn't going to do it. It's just not a surface tired. It's more than that.

I've just had enough.

This is a poignant account of one woman's emotional struggle during the period of

deployment. It would be interesting to speculate as to what lies at the heart of Marie's

despair. During our interaction throughout the research process, I intuitively sensed that

Marie would not be comfortable exploring the reasons with me. However, it is worth

reminding the reader that it was Marie who cried throughout almost the entire pre-

deployment interview even in the presence of her spouse (who seemed entirely oblivious

to her emotional distress). It is also worth mentioning again that it is Marie who, at this

phase of the deployment cycle, is handling an incredible number of illnesses both with

her children and herself. So, it is not surprising that she believes that she has reached her

"breaking point", a state which is probably compounded by a more intense level of

emotional vulnerability compared to the other women participating in the study.

The deployment interview with Jane also confirmed my impression that emotional responses vary within the group of women participating in the study. Like Marie, Jane exudes an acutely intense emotional demeanour at this time. The reader will recall that, during the pre-deployment interview, Jane's words were infused with a near-hysterical tone. In particular, she was afraid that she would not be able to cope with child-rearing all on her own throughout the long deployment. The reader will also recall that during a previous deployment, Jane experienced an emotional breakdown requiring hospitalization and has been treated for depression by a military psychiatrist ever since. In the following passage, it is evident that Jane's fears and intense emotional responses have not subsided:

> Oh, I'm just so afraid that something is going to go wrong. I'm so afraid that I'm going to end up in the hospital again. Some days I really scare myself. There are some days that I feel so foreign toward Samantha. There are days that I want to flush her down the toilet...I know that I probably sound like an abusive parent when I say things like that.
>
> (D.N. - What are you doing with those feelings?)
>
> Oh...I'm seeing my psychiatrist...don't worry...he says women go through these things and my hormones have never been the same since I had Samantha. He says the stress of the deployment is triggering it. And I'm taking my medication.

Sara's response to the deployment is also acutely intense:

All of last month, I'd go a week good, a week bad, a week good, all

month. And then I have these thoughts...suicidal thoughts and stuff.

Things are just going all wrong...I haven't heard from Ron in over a

month and I don't know what to do. So, I feel like giving up from time

to time...completely.

(D.N. - Do you know where to go for help?)

Oh yeah...and I am. I'm seeing the counsellor over at the Resource Centre...

the red lights go on over there when I walk in...Ron and I have such

a reputation and everybody knows everything and now this...And then

I go to my alcohol recovery program...my counsellor there is really good.

Jane's and Sara's alarming accounts of their emotional distress at this time provide

further support for the supposition that emotional responses to the deployment vary

within the group of women participating in the study. Indeed, the level of despair for Jane

and Sara has reached almost catastrophic proportions. Moreover, as with Marie, the

military appears to be blind to *emotional* catastrophe.

It would be reasonable to conjecture that Sara's apparent emotional fragility is

exacerbated by the threat of a marital break-up. This is working to increase her sense of

isolation and loneliness, feelings which, no doubt, are leading her to the brink of

catastrophe at this time. This is evident in the following passage:

It's awful to feel so lonely...and it's the loneliness more than anything

that makes me want to give up. And I need someone so much...

and I think I'm losing Ron for good.

While Sara's despair is apparently compounded by the spectre of divorce looming in front of her, Jane's acute sense of despair, which like Sara, has also reached serious proportions, is also exacerbated by a particular fear. Jane's fear is associated with the reality that the *Illustrious* is deployed in a war zone. She discusses this fear:

> I'm afraid they're going to get blown to bits over there. I really am.
> It is dangerous. Everybody downplays it, but it is. They're all nuts over
> there. That situation is just a disaster waiting to happen. I see
> it on the news. And then there's this deadline for the air strikes...
> and you know Danny's one of the ones behind the weapons...he
> would be one of the guys firing the missiles and the *Illustrious*
> has to look after the UN aircraft, so if the deadline passes and
> they start the air strikes, Danny will be right in the thick of it.

Again, it is not difficult to detect the hysterical tone of Jane's words. However, whether her concerns are grounded or not is irrelevant. What is relevant is that she, Marie and Sara seem to be caught up in a spiral of fear. At least for Sara and Jane, these fears are associated with specific issues, most notably the threat of divorce or the potential for danger given that the ship is deployed in a war zone.

Contradictory Ideologies

It is interesting to note that Marie's work of caring for her sick children, work which has compounded her emotional reaction to the deployment, is not visible or acknowledged by the institution. Nor are the emotional responses of Jane and Sara. Given the level of bonding and networking ongoing within the military community, particularly during a deployment, it would be unusual if no one else knew about the problems of these women. In comparison, when Darlene lost her possessions, the military "family" rallied around and came to her aid. Do not "families" help care for the sick as well? It seems as if the military is reluctant to acknowledge emotional fragilities and vulnerabilities. To do so would run counter to the ideology of self-reliance.

Moreover, it seems as if the "military as happy family" ideology is not wholly directed at serving the "family members". As I have stated before, there is certainly an element of altruism inherent within this ideology. However, the paradox which emerges when one compares the institutional responses to Darlene's circumstances and the lack of response to Marie's situation implies that the "happy family" ideology is only enacted when the military institution can benefit as well. Replacing household goods in the aftermath of a catastrophic event reflects well on the military. In fact, the local newspapers ran a picture of Darlene receiving some of the household goods as well as a short story to accompany the picture. This kind of activity helps to bolster the image of the military, something that is particularly important at this time when the institution is on the receiving end of a considerable amount of public criticism.

Reflecting on this leads me to conclude that this particular ideology is only activated within the everyday world when the military desires or needs the benefits accrued by the

image of a bountiful, caring and generous institution. As far as the military members and their families are concerned, however, the application of this ideology within their lives binds these individuals ever more tightly to the institution as they learn to live with the burden of being greatful.

Coping Strategies and Psychological Resources

This section of Chapter Six will focus on the coping strategies which emerged at this phase of the cycle of deployment:denial, religiosity and spirituality, compartmentalization, "looking to the future", "keeping busy", and fellowship.

Denial

At the pre-deployment phase of the deployment cycle, I noted that women participating in the study appeared to be shielding themselves from the full impact of the imminent leave-taking. In Chapter Five, I discussed this as a process of denial, which some women referred to as "faking it".

Evidence of denial or "faking it" also emerges during the deployment period. For example, while Charlotte acknowledges in the following passage that she is finding the deployment difficult, she also maintains a "positive front" in order to cope with the difficulties.

I am finding this deployment tough...with Benjamin and everything. It is dragging on and on, but I just have to keep a positive front. I find that works for me.

(D.N. - Can you tell me more about that?)

Well, I know it sound funny and some people might say...well...that

I'm not true to my feelings or something, but I don't see the point in getting depressed. I think if you keep the power over your mind, and if you convince yourself that you're happy, then you will be happier. I really feel that. It's not a fake way to live, A lot of people might think that it is, but it works. So, why knock it, right?

Obviously, Charlotte has discovered a coping strategy that works for her. Chris echos Charlotte's opinions in the following passage:

I don't see the point in being sad. When I do, I'm no good to anyone.

(D.N. - So what do you do?)

Well, I just stay cheerful (laughter). When I start to feel depressed about him being away for so long, I just push it aside. And it helps me, it really does.

Like Charlotte, Chris manages to cope with stress and difficulties associated with the deployment through denial. She emphasizes that she remains "cheerful" even when depression or despondency loom. This cheerful demeanour apparently helps her to push aside her concerns or worries.

Chris' words also reveal that the work of denial serves an important purpose. She clearly indicates that "being sad" means that she is "no good to anyone". Therefore, it appears that denial not only helps women maintain their own intrapersonal equilibrium,

but they also feel that it works to help *others*. This dual function of denial also surfaced within the pre-deployment interviews and was discussed in Chapter Five.

<u>Religiosity and Spirituality</u>

It is interesting to note that of all the women participating in the study, Chris and Charlotte have the closest affinity to denominational religion. Charlotte and her husband are devoted and active members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Chris is active within her local parish of the Anglican Church and actually works as secretary at her parish two mornings a week. I would not suggest that the church involvement of either Charlotte or Chris is directly linked to their propensity to block negative feelings regarding their situation at this time, but these women do seem to draw strength from their religiosity. As Charlotte states:

My church really helps me keep a positive attitude. It's really important to me. Whenever I'm feeling down, which I do from time to time, prayer is what does it for me. Yes, when Matt's away like right now, praying always helps. But sometimes I'm just so tired after keeping everything going all on my own all day that I just drop into bed and forget to say my prayers... and if I get into a habit of three or four days not doing that, it has an effect on me. 'Cause you just...you know...that's what I need to do, just get back on track.

Evidently, a connection to a denominational religion facilitates coping for Charlotte. Moreover, a sense of spirituality, as evidenced by the significance of prayer in her life,

helps her to "get back on track" and maintain a positive attitude. This approach to coping can also be detected within the words of Chris:

> When I'm feeling sorry for myself...for me church has been a great help.
>
> (D.N. - Do you mean going to church every week?)
>
> No...I do that of course, but it's more than that I think. Um...this is hard to put into words, but I think I've grown a lot in my spiritual development over the past few months.
>
> (D.N. - Have you?)
>
> Yes. I find myself praying a lot more now.
>
> (D.N. - What does that do for you?)
>
> Well, it gives me a chance to reflect on what I...on how I feel about things and the causes behind them. Um...I know if it wasn't for prayer from the people in our church and my own...I probably would have been a basket case by now.

It appears that, at least for Charlotte and Chris, denominational religion is serving as a means by which these women gain access to a spiritual dimension of self which provides them with a sense of strength and courage. Both women claim that reaching and developing their spirituality ameliorates the stress and tension they experience in relation to the deployment. As Chris states, without prayer and the attendant development in her spirituality, she would be "a basket case by now".

So while the words of Charlotte and Chris reflect a certain degree of denial as they

refer to "pushing aside" negative feelings or "convincing yourself that you're happy", they also appear to have discovered and developed a spiritual dimension to their lives. In my view, this enhanced sense of spirituality is either facilitating the denial process or is helping these women deal with the very feelings that they have attempted to deny in the first place. In other words, prayer, which the only spiritual practice they refer to, may be either anaesthetizing negative feelings associated with the deployment or helping these women deal with the negative feelings. In any case, both of these women have accessed an inner dimension of self that is enabling some sort of coping at this time. Other women participating in the study also reveal through their words other internal processes, or psychological resources, that are working to their benefit during the deployment period.

Compartmentalization

Jane discusses the process of "compartmentalization", which in my view, is another internal process facilitating coping at this time. In the following passage, Jane discusses what she means by compartmentalization:

Well...I try to do what men do, compartmentalize sort of.

(D.N. - What do you mean?)

Well...I don't know, but it seems common with all the men I know. They just seem to go like "this is my work compartment and this is my family compartment" separate like. Do you know what I mean?

(D.N. - Yes, I do.)

So...because men are like that... when something happens, it doesn't affect every area of their life or every role... Whereas women, I have found, if they

are missing their husbands or are upset, or if they work and something is not

right there, it affects almost everything they do, whether it's their job or their

relationship.

(D.N. - So, what do you do?)

Well, I just try to keep my feelings about him being away separate from

everything else...doesn't always work...but I try.

(D.N. - How do you try?)

Well, this may sound silly, but I wanted to have the house look different

somehow, so it wouldn't feel quite the same. So, I painted the whole

inside...and then I moved some furniture around, but probably the craziest

thing...is upstairs...I don't know if a lot of women do this...after he left...our

bed used to be in the center of the bedroom, so there was all this space around

the bed...but I moved it up against the wall so it feels different and looks

different...cozier sort of, but also...because it doesn't look the same as

when he's here, it doesn't remind me so much that he's gone.

(D.N. - So what will you do when he comes back?)

Oh, I'll move it back to the center of the room...(laughter).

Jane has discovered a very interesting way of managing the apparent loneliness she

feels during this long deployment. By painting the interior of her house and moving

household furniture, particularly the position of her bed, she is changing the appearance

of her home in an effort to make it "look different". From her perspective, this is

undoubtedly creating a different feeling and atmosphere to the home which serves to

minimize the reminders that her husband is not present to share the home with her at this time. Jane specifically refers to this means of coping as "compartmentalization". In essence, she is creating a physical space for herself that hers alone and then as she indicates, when her husband returns home, the furniture will be replaced to its normal positions. In this way, she is effectively fashioning a space that "hers" and is distinguishing that from the space that is "theirs". So, in living within the space that is ostensibly "hers" alone, the fact that her husband is missing from the picture is probably not quite so apparent. Evidently, this effort to compartmentalize the deployment as a separate and distinct period by creating a separate and distinct space for herself is serving as an interesting and innovative coping strategy for Jane.

"Looking to the Future"

Other women participating in the study reveal additional internal processes that are facilitating coping at this time. For example, Holly refers to the process of "looking to the future" as a means of enduring some of the pressure she feels in relation to the deployment. As she states:

I'm almost like a kid. I'm at the point right now where I'm saying to

myself...OK...only 54 more sleeps left (laughter). Can you believe it

Just like a kid at Christmas time. But looking to the future helps.

Yeah...counting the days until ...that's the light at the end of the tunnel.

Darlene also refers to looking ahead to the future as a way of coping. She states:

I just have to keep thinking ahead...that's all I can do. I've got to keep

thinking that it will soon be over. That helps me get through it.

Clearly, some of the women psychologically project into the future in an endeavour to

manage the difficulties associated with the deployment. This coping strategy along with

the others detailed thus far in this chapter, that is, developing and maintaining a sense of

spirituality and compartmentalization, refer to internal processes. However, other women

participating in the study identify externally oriented processes that facilitate coping.

Keeping Busy

The coping strategy that emerged with the greatest frequency from the words of the

women was one that they referred to as "keeping busy". With great regularity, women

discussed this as a means of enduring the deployment period. For example, Darlene refers

to this in the following passage:

Keeping busy...yeah...that helps...because if you sit down and

start thinking the time is getting long...but if you're busy and you do

things you don't have time to think about it.

Charlotte expands upon this:

I feel that you should never have a day when you've got nothing

to do. Not that often comes about, but I find that if you set

small goals and accomplish them that makes you feel good, like

simple things, like today I'm going to vacuum all the carpets and take

Benjamin for a walk. And uh...work on preparing the lesson for my

Sunday School class on Sunday for a couple of hours...and at the

end of the day you check them all off and you're like "alright...I

accomplished some good things and..."

(D.N. - Um humm)

You know, you take each day at a time, you plan, you fill your calendar

full of things, but you also give yourself a pat on the back for the little

things you've accomplished as well. I think that helps you get through

this. It does for me anyway. I find the days where I'm finished everything

early, or there's nothing else to do ...those are the days when I'm most lonely.

This approach to coping is also evident within Chris' words:

This whole thing has been hard...there's no doubt about it...but if

I keep enough stuff going on in my life...like working at church and

stuff...that it seems to go...go more quickly. We got into a routine very

quickly so I don't think it bothered me as much as some of the other

women because I had a lot of new stuff to occupy that space. There

was a short time when I was a little lost, but once the routine kicked

in I was OK.

Later in the interview Chris specifically mentions some of the activities that constitute her

routine:

> Like I said before, I think that it's important to have a routine...things
>
> to do so that you don't get into a rut.
>
> (D.N. - What kinds of things do you do?)
>
> Well, I've had enough to keep me busy. I make little projects for
>
> myself...there's this room upstairs that I have to finish papering. Then
>
> I'm going to re-wallpaper the bathroom. I've been working on another
>
> bedroom too, but then I ran out of wallpaper two strips before I was done,
>
> so I've had to order some more which is really frustrating...to wait.

Apparently, the establishment of "routines" which are directed toward the attainment of particular goals assist women participating in the study to handle loneliness and some of the other emotional aspects of the deployment. This is an outwardly oriented coping strategy which distinguishes it from the internal coping processes discussed previously in this chapter. An additional outwardly oriented strategy which also surfaces repeatedly within the words of the women involved fellowship with other female military partners.

Fellowship

Fellowship or socializing with other female military partners has been discussed previously in this chapter as a practice embodying the military ideology of unit cohesion. However, it also emerges as a significant coping strategy for women participating in the study. In the following passage, Holly refers to the perceived importance of socializing in managing some of the emotional effects of deployment:

(D.N. - You mentioned before something about the importance of

going to the Ward Room...)

Yes...definitely...'cause when you're with the other ladies you know

well, it's not just me that's going through this. So it definitely helps, and

I strongly suggest to the younger ones that, you know, that they get

involved, or they find some of the other ladies that they can be friends

with because they can only help them. Otherwise, they could be

pretty lonely.

At a later point in the interview, Holly expands on this theme:

Connections are important. Definitely...definitely. I remember and like

this is his third time on the *Illustrious* and the last time a few years ago...

we did another long NATO ...three or four months I think it was, and

our group of wives got very close, and they're were a couple of us that

ah, one lady and I in particular...my kids and hers were little at the time,

so we didn't get to see each other as often as we liked to do, but in the

evening, after she tended to her kids and made sure their homework was

done, because they were older and my kids were in bed, we'd wait until a

little bit later in the evening and we'd call each other. And we'd sit on the

phone for probably two hours, and have our cup of tea, and that was our

way of visiting. Because we couldn't physically visit each other.

As Holly describes the ways in which she has maintained connections to other military wives and as she affirms what she believes to be the importance of this, one might believe that she has a greater propensity to ascribe importance to fellowship because of her position within the military institution. Given that she is the wife of a senior officer, it would be reasonable to assume that she has absorbed the ideology of unit cohesion to an intense degree. While this is probably the case, the wives of enlisted men participating in the study also attest to the value of socializing and fellowship as a coping strategy. For example, Darlene states:

> It really helps to get together with the other girls. 'Cause then you
> know everyone else is in the same boat...and you know...you
> talk and carry on and it makes you feel good...like...you know...
> like they're all the same...ah...

Through the words of Holly and Darlene, it is possible to understand that both officers' wives and the wives of enlisted men ascribe importance to socializing and fellowship as a means of coping with deployment. Both women claim that these processes enable them to understand that they are not alone and that their problems are shared by others. Moreover, it appears that the opportunity to discuss their circumstances with others provides them with the emotional sustenance that can counteract the loneliness and isolation that often accompany deployment for female military partners.

Alcoholism and Promiscuity

The internal and external processes discussed thus far in this chapter as coping

strategies represent constructive approaches to managing the difficulties posed by a deployment. However, it is also important to note that some women employ rather destructive strategies as they endeavour to cope. I realize that in explicating these less-than-healthy strategies, the discussion might inadvertently take on a judgemental tone, but the intent is not to judge. Rather, because of different circumstances, personal histories or resources, some women in the study did not have access, either intrapersonally or interpersonally, to the more constructive ways of coping. For example, Sara, despite her best intentions, has not reached a place in her life where she even knows how to cope constructively, yet alone practise such coping. Sara's history is probably well known to the reader by this point in the thesis, so the following account will not come as a surprise:

I'm not very proud of myself most of the time. But when things

happen like Ron saying we're finished and then not hearing

from him again...and...then hearing about the infamous R and R

stopovers in Italy through the grapevine...I just go crazy and have

all these set-backs. But it doesn't even have to be something big

like that to make me start drinking again or fooling around...

even what happened on Valentine's Day...

(D.N. - What happened on Valentine's Day?)

He sent me flowers on Valentine's Day. I was doing okay,

then I got the flowers and the flowers to me were a slap in the

face. I...I...

(D.N. - Why?)

Because I mean...well, the cook on the ship is the guy who does this flower delivery and messages thing. I don't know how to put this, but anyway, I have this picture in my head of Ron going into the cafeteria to have breakfast and saying "Oh yeah, Ray (laugh) order my wife some flowers, will ya?" and then going on to eat. This is the image I have...

(D.N. - Eggs sunny side up and oh, by the way...)

Yeah (laughter)...just like that. It just seems so standardized you know...everybody gets the same dozen red roses and Ron knows I *hate* red roses..they look like they belong in a funeral parlour...I've always told him that I like just one flower, something simple. He *knows* that...so it's almost as if he does it deliberately. I was so hurt...and I just didn't feel like I'd be able to get through the day and the night...so I went downtown...called up this friend of mine...she said "the hell with him, lets go out". So, we did. We went downtown...and I wasn't drinking water and I didn't go home alone. I'm not proud of it...but I was just so lonely and so mad.

Evidently, for a woman such as Sara, who has been caught for some time in a spiral of alcoholism, infidelity and a number of other issues, the only way that she can conceive of coping with the emotional stress that she is experiencing in relation to the deployment

is by acting out - acting out in ways that are obviously harmful to her self-esteem, as well as being harmful to her in other ways. Sara has been struggling for years with alcoholism. She has tried to take this problem in hand by participating in recovery programs, but the difficulties in her personal life seem to trigger recurring relapses, as was the case during this deployment. Furthermore, the loneliness, hurt and betrayal she associates with her relationship with her husband, prompt her, by her own admission, to seek comfort in other, albeit temporary, relationships. Naturally, these ways of coping only compound her problems, both intrapersonally and interpersonally. Nevertheless, Sara's courageous depiction of her experiences and feelings throughout this deployment allow the reader to understand that not all coping strategies utilized by female military partners are healthy and constructive. Rather, as a result of personal circumstances, differences in resources as well as a number of other reasons, some women can only attempt to cope in ways that are potentially or actually destructive.

Coping Strategies\Psychological Resources and Military Models

This delineation of coping strategies and psychological resources during the period of deployment does not emerge as a feature of female military partners' experiences through other studies. Again, it is worth noting that Logan's (1987) model, commonly used as background for the planning and delivery of educational programs and counselling services within military family resource centres, does not capture the depth and complexity of the ways and means by which female military partners endeavour to cope. As was noted in relation to the pre-deployment phase of the deployment cycle in Chapter Five, Logan's model merely names experience, it does not explicate it. This means that

both the internal and external processes as well as the constructive and destructive

approaches to coping discussed in this chapter may not be captured within the Logan

model. Where this is the case, it is conceivable to contend that the coping strategies and

psychological resources employed by female military partners during the deployment

period represent another aspect of their lives that breaks away along a "line of fault"

separating what these women know about their daily lives and what ideological forms of

expression claim to be "knowable".

Summary

This concludes the analysis of the concepts and categories, ideological practices,

coping strategies and psychological resources embodied within the deployment phase of

the overall deployment cycle. These central analytical findings are summarized in Table 2

which follows.

Chapter Six has continued to use the words of the women to support a position first

advanced in Chapter Five. This position is that the local and particular aspects of the lives

of female military partners in relation to deployment are generally absent or not

accounted for within the literature. Again, I have maintained that this invisibility is

associated with the reality that most research focussing on female military partners

employs discursive concepts and categories as a starting point rather than everyday

experience. Alternately, this research has proceeded from the lived experience of the

women participating in the study.

In Chapter Six, the everyday experiences of the women in relation to the

"deployment" phase of the overall cycle of deployment have been displayed. In so doing,

I have again endeavoured to recover the particulars of their experience which have broken

away along a "line of fault" (Smith, 1987) separating the everyday world from ideological forms of expression.

While the epistemological gap created by the line of fault continues into this chapter as a central theme for the thesis, analysis in this chapter is also not just confined to the everyday world. Rather, as with Chapter Five, the recovery of experience allows for the critique of ideologies embodied therein. For example, through this chapter it is possible to see how ideologies such as the self-reliance ideology and the ideology of the military as a "happy family" contradict each other. The words of the women participating in the study allow us to understand that while the military institution reinforces the enactment of practices associated with self-reliance, it also fosters dependence on the institution through the "military as happy family" ideology. It also became apparent through the analysis discussed in Chapter Six that the "military as happy family" ideology is activated only when doing so supports the relevances of the institution.

Another central analytical conclusion developed within Chapter Six is also associated with the ideology of self-reliance. Through the words of the women it is possible to understand that the military perpetuates the idea of self-reliance as a *trait* that all military spouses somehow naturally possess. Within the chapter, I argue that this ideologically relevant assumption serves to denigrate and devalue the contribution made by military spouses to the institution. Furthermore, I contend that the ideology of self-reliance obscures the practices associated with efforts to act self-reliantly.

Table 2

Summary of Findings
Deployment

Practices Ideologies	Gender and Military
Maintenance of Family Cohesion Connection	Responsibility, Care,
Coordination of Household Tasks	Self-Reliance
Problem Solving, Accommodation	Self-Reliance
Networking: Gatekeeping Coordination, Ruling	Unit Cohesion

Emotional Processes Ideologies	Gender and Military
Anger, Despair, Resentment, Fear Lessening of Emotional Response for Some Greater Intensity for Others	Cover-up Principle

Coping Strategies & Psychological Resources Ideologies	Gender and Military
Denial Religiosity, Spirituality Compartmentalization Looking to the Future Keeping Busy	Responsibility Care, Connection
Fellowship Alcoholism Promiscuity	Unit Cohesion

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE POST-DEPLOYMENT PHASE

This chapter continues the analysis of the everyday practices of this group of seven female military partners as they experience the post-deployment phase of the overall cycle of deployment. Again, it will be possible to pull out from their local and particular standpoints embodiments of discursive concepts and categories and particular ideologies inherent within the relations of ruling associated with the military institution.

This discussion and analysis will complete the cycle. Through the words of the women, it will be evident that some of their experiences and the meanings they ascribe to experience carry over from the previous phases. On the other hand, new phenomena emerge that are particular to the post-deployment phase, such as practices associated with the jetty, which convey discursive and ideological relevance. Furthermore, other aspects of their daily lives that were so visible during the previous phases fade in significance at this time.

Ideology and Everyday Practice

As women participating in the study discussed their experiences during pre-deployment and deployment, an array of concrete practices emerged from their words. As mentioned previously, a number of the practices that were revealed through their "talk" at these times carried over to the post-deployment phase. One of the practices that did carry over was associated with the assumption of responsibility for family cohesion. Other practices evident are "going to the jetty", media practices and problem solving and accommodation.

<u>Maintenance of Family Cohesion</u>

The reader will recall that participants' concern for family cohesion was evident in a number of ways throughout both the pre-deployment and deployment periods. For example, in the days immediately preceding the departure of the ship, some women were planning family activities in an effort to spend "quality time" together before the deployment for the purpose of reinforcing connections within the family. In particular, the women were concerned that children would forget their fathers. This concern persisted while the ship was deployed as some women took special measures to ensure that fathers would remain a presence in their children's lives.

At the last support group meeting held before the return of the ship, anxieties and apprehensions associated with whether or not children (particularly small children) would remember their fathers surfaced as women discussed the imminent return of the ship. The women reflected upon the perceived efficacy of methods employed to ensure that their children would remember. In particular, Charlotte discussed her references to "Daddy" in her son's presence as well as the prominent displaying of photographs of her husband around the house. Jane referred to the home video which depicts her daughter and husband enjoying activities together. Other women, particularly those with older children, recommended that the mothers of younger children purchase a map upon which the mothers and their children could trace the progress of the ship toward home port with push pins or a felt-tip marker. In the view of these more experienced military wives, such an activity would help to build a sense of excitement that might ameliorate the tendency of young children to "make strange" (field notes) upon seeing their fathers again.

The older military wives participating in this group meeting also freely discussed

their concerns about how their older children would greet their fathers. Knowing full well that many teenage children are caught in the throes of adolescent egocentrism, they worried that they would have trouble "dragging these kids down to the jetty" (field notes) or that if they did manage to get them there that these children would be "blase" (field notes) upon seeing their fathers again. These women of older children also expressed concern at this meeting that the adolescents would not willingly or cheerfully participate in the family outings and vacations planned for the days and weeks following the return of the ship.

Not only did the older and younger military wives at this support group meeting allocate a considerable portion of the available time to the discussion of concerns regarding family cohesion, but they also appeared to be united as never before. Indeed, their interaction was charged with a shared sense of understanding and purpose with regard to the perceived need for family cohesion. Any barriers to interaction that may have previously existed within the group by virtue of age and\or rank dissolved as women discussed both their fears and hopes in relation to family cohesion upon the return of the ship. As I note within the field notes, "the women seem united on this issue" and "they are freely sharing perspectives and experiences". My notes also contain words and phrases such as "empathy", "apprehension" and "family cohesion their job".

This last phrase conveys the sense of responsibility articulated in Chapters Five and Six that the women assume with respect to family cohesion. At both the pre-deployment and deployment periods, some of the women participating in the study claimed that family cohesion was their "job" and that if they failed to fulfill the perceived requirements of this job, that they would be "letting down" their husbands. Evidently,

these women viewed themselves as integral to the maintenance of family cohesion at these phases of the deployment cycle.

Judging by both the tone and content of discussion at this last support group meeting before the return of the ship, this acute sense of responsibility for family cohesion has persisted over time. Moreover, as was noted with the analysis of both the pre-deployment and deployment phases of the cycle, not only do the women assume responsibility for maintaining family cohesion to the point where they consider this to be their "job", but they also make a connection between the assumption of this responsibility and a positive sense of self. Knowing that this had emerged as a key theme within the pre-deployment and deployment interviews, I raised this as an issue for discussion at this support group meeting.

Through the discussion, the women affirmed that this connection between responsibility for family cohesion and a positive sense of self still exists for them. The women freely stated that they would feel dissatisfied with themselves if their families did not experience a happy reunion on the jetty and then a happy period of fun through family activities and vacations and the like. My field notes contain repeated references to the ways in which the women claimed their self-esteem would be diminished if their families did not appear to be "tight" and "together" (field notes) upon the return of the ship. Again, as with the pre-deployment and deployment phases of the cycle, the women indicated that they would "feel just terrible about themselves" (field notes) if "things did not work out " in this regard. Given that the sense of responsibility for maintaining family cohesion, the perception of this responsibility as a "job" and the association between the assumption of this responsibility and a positive sense of self also emerged as key themes in the earlier

interviews, it would appear that these concerns and apprehensions represent prevailing needs for these women. The writing of researchers who theorize about gender is again helpful in articulating why this may be the case.

In Chapters Five and Six, I cited the work of researchers such as Miller (1986), Gilligan (1982), Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) and Kaschak (1992) for the purpose of understanding why the need to maintain family cohesion appears to be so important to these women. In particular, I previously noted that Miller (1986) claims that the development and maintenance of connections within relationships are central facets of women's lives. This researcher also asserts that women are socialized to organize their sense of self around being able to make and then maintain these connections.

Essentially, Miller (1986) is stating is that women's self-concept, or rather, a set of beliefs one has about the self is tied to women's socialized propensity for relatedness. Kaschak (1992) adds to this when she states that one's self-esteem, which refers to feelings about or evaluation of these beliefs is also connected to the preservation of connections within relationships.

As I reflect upon the writing of those who theorize about gender and consider their understandings in light of themes which emerged through analysis of field notes prepared at the summation of this last support group meeting before the return of the ship, the centrality of practices associated with family cohesion as far as these women are concerned is affirmed. As the field notes indicate, the women allocated a significant portion of group time to discussing these issues. They also freely sought and provided advice on various ways and means for ensuring family cohesion. Furthermore, they readily shared insights, perspectives and fears about "what it would be like" when their

husbands returned. Interestingly, their anxieties and apprehensions in this regard seemed to transcend any differences in the group that may have evolved in relation to rank and\or age. Both officer's wives and the wives of enlisted men were equally concerned about the imminent return of the ship and equally willing to assume responsibility for the ensuing family interaction.

These themes emerging from the field notes suggest to me that the maintenance of family cohesion does indeed represent a deeply felt need for these women. Researchers who theorize about gender (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Kaschak, 1992; Miller, 1986) allow me to understand that the profundity of this need is related to the supposition that women have been socialized through gender ideologies to derive a positive self-concept and self-esteem from the development and maintenance of connections within relationships. Therefore, in enacting practices associated with the maintenance of family connections and the gender ideologies embodied therein, women are deriving a positive sense of self as they believe their "work" in this regard is integral to the highly valued "job" of maintaining family cohesion.

Complementary Ideologies

The previous discussion elucidates the ways in which the maintenance of family cohesion is related to the notion of "self" for these women. As noted previously, this connection between self and practices associated with family cohesion has emerged not only at this post-deployment phase, but also at other points (pre-deployment, deployment) within the overall cycle of deployment. As I reflect upon the persistent emergence of

these practices and, in particular, as I think about the ways in which the military ideology of *unit* cohesion is embodied within practices associated with the pre-deployment and deployment phases, I am prompted to ponder a number of questions.

Specifically, can the enactment of practices associated with the gender ideology associated with family cohesion be articulated to practices embodying the overall military ideology of unit cohesion? In other words, as the women act in ways designed to ensure family cohesion throughout a long deployment, does this "work", in turn, also embody the ideology of unit cohesion? Do these women assume, even subconsciously, that as they enact practices designed to keep their families together, that they are also making a contribution to the ongoing cohesion of the "unit", that is, the *Illustrious*? Do they see these practices as integral not only to family cohesion but, by extension, to unit cohesion? Furthermore, if indeed the enactment of practices associated with family cohesion can be articulated to overall unit cohesion, to what extent is this contributing to the positive sense of self that consistently emerges in relation to family cohesion? With the support of previous references to the literature which theorize about gender, I have maintained that practices associated with family cohesion represent deeply felt needs for women because of socialization, but for women who are also military wives, to what extent do the ideological relevances of the military institution exacerbate the socialized and gendered propensity toward maintaining connections? I raised these questions in subsequent interviews with participating women. In the following passage, Jane reflects upon the relationship between family cohesion and unit cohesion.

(D.N. - Throughout the time that we've been working together, we've

talked a lot about how all of you work so hard to keep your families

together throughout these long deployments and how important you think

that is...but we've also talked about how important it is to keep the unit

together...do you see a connection between keeping your families

together and keeping the *Illustrious* together?)

Well...uhm...I've never thought about it like that before, but that's

probably the case...yeah...I guess that as we try to keep it all together

here at home and provide a place for them to come back to...where

kids remember them and everything...that bit by bit, family by family,

we're really keeping the ship together too.

Evidently, Jane finds the suggestion of a connection between family cohesion and

unit cohesion to be reasonable. Darlene adds to this understanding when she states:

Yeah...for sure...if we don't keep our families together...if we don't

keep like a base or something...then everybody...the whole ship is...not

good...I don't know...like... not strong...d'ya know what I mean?

Jane and Darlene articulate a relationship between family cohesion and unit

cohesion. Both of these women are the wives of enlisted personnel. In an effort to learn

about this from the perspective of an officer's wife, I raised the question with Holly. She

states:

Oh yes...definitely...definitely. If you think of the *Illustrious* as a

human body...and if that body has a broken arm or even a little

broken finger or toe...well...of course, the whole body is affected.

It can't do what it is supposed to do or it can't do it as easily. So...

yeah...what the ladies do at home to keep it all together...keeping a

place for Dad and everything...really helps...happy families...happy

ship (laughter).

(D.N. - And why is a happy ship important?)

Well...it means the fellas can do what they're supposed to do.

Holly supports the views of Darlene and Jane through her analogy of the unit as a

human body. As she sees it, if parts of the body are affected, then the functioning of the

entire body or unit is also affected. Furthermore, in referring to the "fellas" doing "what

they're supposed to do", Holly is linking her perception of the relationship between

family cohesion and unit cohesion to the ideological imperative of combat readiness.

Charlotte, another officer's wife, also draws these connections.

Well...I guess if the families are not working well, then the guys

on the ship can't do their job and that means that the military is

affected seriously.

(D.N. - So, they have a job and you have a job?)

Yeah...we do have a job too...I think we've talked about this in

meetings, haven't we? Their job is to keep the peace or whatever

and our job is to keep our families together...even though it is

hard...but the two go together.

Jane, Darlene, Holly and Charlotte, a group of women representing both officers'

wives and the wives of enlisted personnel, all view practices associated with family

cohesion as embodiments of unit cohesion as well. Moreover, they recognize the link

between their work in relation to family cohesion, and by extension, unit cohesion, and

combat readiness.

Interestingly, Charlotte also affirms that practices associated with family cohesion

represent responsibilities which she refers to a "job". The reader will recall that this way

of viewing the everyday practices of the women participating in the study has surfaced at

both the pre-deployment and deployment phases of the overall deployment cycle.

However, at those points in the cycle, the idea that the enactment of particular practices

constitutes a "job", or a set of responsibilities, emerged solely in relation to family

cohesion. At those times, the words of the women did not reveal that their "jobs" or the

practices associated with family cohesion can also be articulated to the work of the

overall military institution. Now we can understand that as these military wives work in

ways designed to ensure that the husbands/fathers maintain a presence in their families

throughout the long deployment and as they fervently plan family activities for the days

and weeks following the return of the ship, they are also working toward the maintenance

of *unit cohesion*. As Jane states, "bit by bit, family by family, we're really keeping the

ship together too".

The previously discussed theoretical understandings regarding women and

relationships helped display why family cohesion appears to be so important to these women. However, now that the women's words also confirm that practices associated with family cohesion can be articulated to overall unit cohesion, it is possible to claim that if women do perceive that they have somehow failed to maintain the connections, that they may also perceive that they are not only "letting down" their husbands, but conceivably, the whole unit. Moreover, it is not hard to imagine the negative impact this would have on their self-esteem and self-concept.

Evidently, the women participating in this study have absorbed the same messages and meanings that many other women growing up within this society have absorbed. They, like other women, appear to believe that their worth is linked to the perceived success of their relationships. However, the fervency and intensity of the study participants' words in this regard prompts me to contend that for women who are military wives, the ideological relevances of the military institution exacerbate women's socialized propensity toward maintaining connections. It is almost as if women who are military wives experience another level of socialization beyond that experienced by other women.

At some point in their socialization *as military wives*, these women have learned that the military institution depends upon the smooth functioning of the family unit. As they learn to view practices associated with family cohesion as embodiments of unit cohesion and as they make the link between these practices and combat readiness, these women are, in effect, acknowledging that the overall unit only functions well if individual family units are also functioning well. They know that serving members, their husbands, cannot concentrate on the "mission" if they are worried or distracted by family problems.

The women believe that serving members do *their jobs* more effectively if they are assured that their place remains within the family and if they know that they will be greeted by a joyous family reunion upon the return of the ship. We do not know from this study how important these practices actually are to the men, but they do appear to be very important to the women and to the military institution.

The military institution recognizes that if serving members consistently return to smoothly functioning family units, family units that have preserved a place for them despite their absences, that they will likely acquiesce with further job requirements necessitating other long absences from their families. Accordingly, the military institution encourages military wives in their enactment of cohesive practices on the familial level. This encouragement comprises part of their socialization as military wives and as such, constitutes that extra level or layer of socialization that I referred to previously. I asked Marie in one of our interviews about this "encouragement" and the forms that it takes. She states:

> Oh yes...we are encouraged to...you know...keep the home fires burning or whatever. I remember...at the first ships company dinner I ever went to after I was first married...I was scared to death...but I remember all these women...and the CO's wife taking me aside and asking me how things were going...you know...all friendly-like...but...she...talked a lot about how we have a special job looking after our families...that it is very important for us to keep the families together and that it's best if we don't work...I mean...it was just like your grandmother talking to

you. And then you get together with all the girls for coffee and it's the
same thing...so it sort of feeds on itself....

Marie's words confirm that the military institution actively encourages military wives in the enactment of practices associated with family cohesion. Sara concurs, but her words also allow us to understand that there are consequences if military wives are unable or choose not to assume responsibility for these practices.

Oh yeah...we're supposed to be the little woman at home keeping it
all together...for sure...(laughter)...although I guess I'm a miserable
failure at that, aren't I? Oh yeah...but you're supposed to...and if you
don't, you have some padre or the CO's wife or somebody on your
back before you know it.

Both Marie and Sara verify that the military institution exacerbates women's socialized propensity toward maintaining connections. Women who are military wives experience an extra level or layer of pressure that appears to be superimposed upon the customary socialization for familial roles that their civilian counterparts undergo. Moreover, it would appear that the pressure for military wives is so intense that, in the event that military wives fail or are unable to assume responsibility for family cohesive practices, that the military imposes negative sanctions as a result.

Further evidence of this additional layer of socialization can be gleaned from the examination of practices associated with the actual return of the ship. These practices

center around the "jetty". Indeed, the jetty represents the physical location where family cohesion and unit cohesion converge.

"Going to the Jetty"

The "jetty" is the location within the dockyard where the ship is berthed. The jetty figures prominently in both the leave-taking and the return of the ship to home port. I did not witness the departure of the ship from the jetty, but I was invited by the wife of a senior officer to the jetty on the morning that the ship arrived home. I was pleased to receive this invitation. At this point, I had worked with these women for over seven months and I identified, to a certain extent, with the realities of their lives. Consequently, I too was anxious to see that ship come home.

The wife of the senior officer provided me with very clear instructions as to which gate to drive through, where to park my car and so on. She also informed me about what I could expect to see at the jetty. Despite this prior knowledge, I was astonished and affected by the activity, the mood and atmosphere on the jetty that morning. My feelings were intensified by the fact that in the midst of approximately three hundred "dependents", children, various military personnel and media who were all milling around, I managed to serendipitously connect with four of the seven women participating in the study. I found it necessary to retreat into a doorway to record my impressions and feelings within my notebook used for field notes.

My field notes collected at this time contain references to "the hoopla", "the charged atmosphere", "the bustle and excitement". In the notes I also refer to the Base Band playing away at one end of the jetty as well as members of the media circulating with cameras, tape recorders and microphones. I also refer to the balloons, the banners,

the posters and the mothers who, in their excitement, were pushing strollers haphazardly around the jetty. I also recorded directly a comment conveyed to me by one of the women participating in the study. Upon my asking her how she was feeling, she remarked to me that she was "tired out, but excited...and nervous too".

There were many faces on the jetty that morning expressing that particular combination of emotions. However, I did not try to learn more about those feelings on that particular occasion. For the remainder of my time on the jetty, I was simply an observer. However, because I was intrigued by the role and meaning of "the jetty" in the overall deployment cycle, I introduced this as a topic for discussion in the final interviews with women participating in the study. In the following passage, Chris recollects her experience on the jetty that morning:

(D.N. - Would you like to talk to me about going to the jetty?)

Oh yeah...what a morning...it was exciting...I remember when we saw

the ship coming in...um...I was standing there on the jetty with Holly

and I just gripped her arm...and all the other girls...Donna and Jocelyn

were there too. We were all out there at the end of the jetty and I could

see the ship coming and I was trying to handle a camera...a video

camera...and Megan all at the same time. And she was asking a million

questions. As soon as the ship passed in front of us...I just burst into

tears 'cause they did that sailpast...remember?

(D.N. - Yeah.)

And when they went through the water and got to the end and

when they went to turn around we went and warmed up for a few minutes

and then were there when they came alongside. It was so exciting. We

were looking for Alan on the ship. We were standing on the jetty and

I knew he was going to be standing on the quarterdeck 'cause he told me...

Despite the passage of time, Chris' account of her experience on that jetty that

morning still resonates with excitement. Holly also fondly recalls her experience on the

jetty, but her enthusiasm is tinged with some frustration with the media.

(D.N. - Do you normally go to the jetty?)

Haven't missed one yet.

(D.N. - Do you think that is an important thing to do?)

Oh, definitely. Oh, yes. You have to. But there's nothing that could

keep me away from it. Going to the jetty is very important.

(D.N. - Why?)

Well, you get to be part of all the excitement, oh...especially with

the bands there...but it also helps us to remember that we have to

be strong, that we're special people and that we're a family.

Marie adds to both Holly's and Chris' depictions when she claims that there is

some pressure from within the military institution to take part in activities on the jetty.

She states:

There's a lot of pressure on us to go to the jetty. Even as a young

military spouse you learn that. You know...the CO's wife saying

c'mon ladies...we all have to go to the jetty and give the fellas

a good welcome home...you know...rah. And now the networks

are right into that. And they really like the media to cover everything

going on at the jetty as well. All of that started with the Gulf War.

But yeah...the jetty is important...and we're supposed to go.

(D.N. - It's almost as if the jetty is a symbol or something, isn't it?)

Yeah...you're right...it's a symbol of a lot that is important to the

military.

Based on Chris', Holly's and Marie's comments, it is possible to claim that the

military makes a conscious effort to romanticize and ritualize the return of ships to home

port, particularly after long deployments. For example, Chris refers to the ritual of the

"sailpast". The sailpast involves the ship sailing past the naval yards with personnel "at

attention" on the upper deck and facing the jetty which, in the general throng of people,

usually includes a collection of high ranking military officials and sometimes government

leaders. The ship sails past the jetty and then turns around and sails back again to pull up

"alongside" at the jetty.

The jetty is the focal point for rituals such as the sailpast and has therefore

achieved some sort of symbolic significance within military culture. Conceivably, the

sailpast and other rituals are responsible for helping to reinforce the bonding and sense of

group identity so vital to military functioning. As such, these rituals are highly

ideological. As discussed previously in this thesis, the ideology of combat readiness is the ultimate imperative of the military institution. I also discussed the ways in which the military seeks to ensure combat readiness through the encouragement of family cohesion and by extension, unit cohesion. Further, I argued in Chapters Five and Six that unit cohesion is not only visible through the fraternization and intense bonding characterizing interaction among serving members, but that it also appears to transfer to the experience of their wives. In relation to this, I identified and explained particular practices enacted by the wives which embody this military ideology. The post-deployment practice of "going to the jetty" or "being at the jetty" (field notes) and the rituals, such as the sailpast, which center around the jetty, also embody the ideology of unit cohesion which, in turn, supports combat readiness.

<u>Related Media Practices</u>

As these women articulate their experience with the practice of "going to the jetty" and the meanings they ascribe to this practice, it is apparent that they continue to produce a form of unit cohesion at the outset of the post-deployment phase. However, as Marie indicates, the media are now viewed as vital supporters of this ideology. The media have long been perceived as supporters of military efforts. In recent times, particularly since the Gulf War, where the media were perceived to be instrumental in both garnering and sustaining interest in and support for the War, the military seeks and values positive media coverage. This is evident through Holly's comments in the following passage when she refers to sending out press releases as leader of the *Illustrious* Wives' Network. With some frustration, she notes that members of the media do not always respond to these press releases, but it is evident that they usually appear on the jetty as a ship returns to

home port after a long deployment.

And all the press people. Oh, everything was great! I was happy to see the press there. Finally...we were getting so annoyed by the fact that we weren't getting any coverage at all. I mean...we put press releases out all the time saying that the *Illustrious* wives' network was having this or that event. -And nobody ever showed up...not even at the children's parties It was so different from the Gulf War when the media were around all the time publicizing everything going on with the networks. And we want to let them and everybody know that these NATO deployments are serious business too and that we are handling it all very well. But they've never shown up...anyway, it was good to see them at the jetty.

(D.N. - Why is it important to have media coverage?)

Well...it lets people on civvy street know what we're all about...I guess it sends out a positive image...

Readers of this thesis who reside in communities where the military is a presence will be familiar with the kind of media coverage that Holly claims "sends out a positive image". It seems as if the return of every ship to home port from long deployments to such places as the Adriatic, Somalia, Rwanda or Haiti is marked not only by balloons, banners and bands, but also by a "feel-good" story disseminated through newspapers, television or radio. For example, a recent front-page article in a local paper featured a

story involving an ordinary seaman who proposed to his girlfriend by hanging a sign emblazoned with "the question" over the deck of the ship in full view of not only the girlfriend, but all assembled on the jetty. Other coverage focuses on fathers meeting their newborn children for the first time as well as other tearful yet seemingly joyous military family reunions.

As far as this deployment was concerned, Chris was in the media spotlight. She states:

Did you know that the day they came back was our anniversary?

(D.N. - Oh, it was your anniversary?)

Yeah, it was...our seventh anniversary, yeah...and oh yeah...I don't know

if you heard this or not, they had it on the radio...Holly called me a week or

so before the ship came back and said "isn't the ship coming back

on your anniversary?" I said "yeah" and she said "leave it with me". So then

they call me from the radio...that morning one of the guys was on the ship

and the other one was in the studio and they asked me to call...so I called in

to wish him "Happy Anniversary" and they linked us up ship-to-shore so I got

to wish Alan " Happy Anniversary" on the air...

(D.N. - Oh, that's nice.)

Yeah...it was...it was a very nice surprise and then we had our picture

in the newspaper too

(D.N. - Great!)

Oh!...and I forgot to tell you...Alan said he was going to be on the

quarterdeck...he said look for me there, that's where I'll be so...and I couldn't believe this but, the captain...the captain was on the quarterdeck when the ship was coming alongside and he yells from a distance "Happy Anniversary". I couldn't believe it.

It is difficult not to empathize with Chris in her enthusiasm and appreciation for the special attention paid to her and her husband. However, it is worth noting that it is Holly, the wife of a senior officer and an active participant in the wives' network, who initiates the contact with the media. As Chris states, Holly said "leave it with me". Chris did just that and the result was another "feel-good" media story centering on the fact that one of the serving members was returning to his wife and family on his anniversary after a long and arduous seven month deployment.

The very fact that Holly was the instigator of this media event suggests that media coverage of activities on the jetty are not just meant to provide depictions of happy military family reunions. On the surface level, that is indeed what the coverage accomplishes. However, the media coverage of activities on the jetty also appears to be linked to ideological relevances.

Within Chapters Five and Six, I explicated practices which embody particular military ideologies such as the "cover-up" principle and the ideology of unit cohesion (Harrison & Laliberte´, 1994). In relation to the "cover-up" principle, the concept of control is central to this ideology. Correspondingly, the concept of control is central to the practice of "going to the jetty" and the ensuing media practices.

The words of the women participating in this study allow us to understand that the

practice of "going to the jetty" to welcome back military personnel has become romanticized and ritualized. While all the romance and ritual is undoubtedly exciting and perhaps valuable as a means for providing closure to the whole deployment experience, if one looks beneath the glow generated by the sailpasts and media spotlights, it is possible to discern the familiar military preoccupation with control.

Conceivably, the military does want the general public to look favorably upon the institution and its "mission". No one could dispute that the heartwarming media stories are instrumental in this regard. Hearing a young military wife pass on an anniversary greeting over the radio to her husband as his ship sails into port after a long deployment in a war zone undoubtedly fosters public goodwill toward the military. I am assuming that as the heartstrings are tugged, the public is less likely to question the expense or even the usefulness of such a deployment. Moreover, this kind of media coverage probably enhances what sense of pride still exists within the general public in relation to the military and its mission.

While it seems plausible to claim that media coverage of the practice of "going to the jetty" is ideologically relevant insofar as it publicly bolsters the flagging reputation of a beleaguered institution, it can also be claimed that the practice also has ideological significance in relation to female military partners. The hoopla, the bands and the sense of excitement generated by activities on the jetty seem to ameliorate the fatigue and the fears felt by military wives at the end of a long deployment. Indeed, all of the excitement generated by the events and atmosphere on the jetty may just be serving to contain or manage other less positive emotions. Moreover, just as for the general public, the practice of "going to the jetty" incites a sense of loyalty and pride in the institution. These feelings

were definitely inherent within the words of Chris, Holly and Marie. Therefore, the practice of "going to the jetty" embodies the military ideology of the "cover-up" principle, which, as discussed previously in this thesis is all about appearances and the management and containment of emotions.

It is interesting to note that both Holly and Marie indicate that the military expects wives to "go to the jetty". Undoubtedly, the military views this practice as a way of reinforcing the primacy of bonds within the unit. As discussed previously within this thesis, unit cohesion extends to the lives of female military partners as well. The loyalty, pride and sense of bondedness that develops within some women as a result of "going to the jetty" seems to contribute to their sense of commitment to the mission. With this greater commitment, these women are less likely to be an encumbrance, interference or threat to the institution. Therefore, it is not surprising that this practice is actively encouraged.

The practice of "going to the jetty" is probably encouraged for other reasons as well. The words of the women participating in this study suggest that this practice nurtures the image of the happy military family. Sustaining this image is also ideologically relevant to the military.

As serving members are warmly greeted by family members in the midst of the joyous confusion on the jetty, few would question the cohesiveness of these families. For all intents and purposes, these families do appear to be bonded. For some, this cohesion will last beyond the special occasion. For others, it will quickly disintegrate. Despite the pressure that military wives receive from the institution in relation to family cohesion that was discussed previously in this chapter, not all of these women are able to hold their

families together after they leave the ritualized and romanticized atmosphere of the jetty and return home. For some women, such as Sara, the cohesion was never there in the first place. Regardless, the military relies on the positive media images perpetuated by and through the practice of "going to the jetty". Such images evoke the notion of the happy military family that is so valued by the institution.

As I witnessed the reunions of military families on the jetty that morning, I was actually witnessing the outcome of months of work and labor on the part of many of the military wives present who seemingly complied with the powerful ideological directive to maintain family cohesion throughout the long deployment and then to joyously participate in the welcome-home ritual on the jetty. However, I was also witnessing the outcome of labor and work directed at maintaining the cohesiveness of the *unit* as well. Demonstrations of individual family cohesion were embodiments of overall unit cohesion. As I think through this analysis once again, I can see where the jetty, as stated previously in this chapter, is actually the physical site where family cohesion and unit cohesion converge. The jetty is the location where this relationship is played out. As such, the jetty is actually a symbol which mediates the everyday world of female military partners and the institution.

Evidently, the jetty and practices associated with it figure prominently in the post-deployment phase of the overall deployment cycle. The jetty serves as a focal point for the romance and ritual that accompanies the return of the ship to home port. Military wives' participation in the romance and ritual comprises practices which embody the ideologies of unit cohesion and the cover-up principle. Furthermore, the jetty is a site which mediates the cohesive work conducted by military wives in their everyday worlds

and the institutional ideology of unit cohesion. Indeed, the jetty is integral to the post-deployment period. However, what happens once the reunited military families leave the jetty and return home? This next section of this chapter will address that question.

<u>Problem Solving and Accommodation - Change in Household Routines</u>

A number of the women who participated in the study left town to embark on short vacations with their families immediately after the return of the ship. Approximately one month after their return from the various holidays, I began the post-deployment interviews. Interestingly, almost without exception, the women started the interviews by expressing their frustration over changes in household routines that had transpired since their husband's return home. One household routine that seemed to change significantly was associated with the scheduling of meals. Jane refers to this in the following passage:

> But, ah, you know, he got mad at me one day and said "you must
>
> do just whatever you want to do when I'm away" and I said "you're
>
> right". And that's true because I do, you know, I don't plan and organize
>
> when he's gone. I mean...if Haley and I want to eat home, we eat home
>
> and if we want to eat out, we eat out. And if we don't want to eat until
>
> eight o'clock at night, that's fine. But when Danny comes home, we're
>
> back into a schedule again. It's almost like a game sometimes.
>
> (D.N. - And do you like schedules or not?)
>
> Oh, I know schedules are important sometimes, but there are times when
>
> I just don't want to be bothered. There's just some days when I'll be

feeling blah or whatever and I don't...I don't want to make a big supper

so I'll say, "c'mon Haley, let's go out and grab a pizza". But you see,

when Danny's home, I always have to make supper and at a certain time.

It drives me crazy.

A similar note of exasperation can be detected within Marie's words. She states:

You do get into certain little routines when they're away. Meals....now

that's something that I found really hard when he got home...because

although I usually tried to cook a balanced meal for the kids you know...

but every now and then I just didn't...you know...where we'd have

sandwiches or whatever...kind of thing...

(D.N. - Hot dogs?)

Yeah...yeah...hot dogs...(laughter). The kids certainly didn't mind. But

I certainly couldn't get away with feeding Marty hot dogs. He'd have a fit!

So...there's this feeling...oh my God...now I have to cook supper every

night...

A change in routine associated with meals is also causing some tension and frustration

within Holly's household. She refers to this in the following passage:

I guess I was pretty loose about it all when he was away. I was

so busy with the network and the kids with school and soccer

and everything. We were all on different schedules and they're old enough to fend for themselves...so we all did. But Sally and Jesse would just put everything on a tray and go to their rooms. So...when Johnny came back and even when I would cook a meal for all of us...they'd put it all on trays and off they'd go. Well...the first time they did that, you should have seen the look on Johnny's face. He said: "you let them do that". He was not pleased. So now I have to fight with them every night to stay at the table. God...

The words of Jane, Marie and Holly convey that the feelings created by the joyous public demonstrations of family cohesion on the jetty are rapidly transformed by the realities of everyday living. Apparently, family schedules and routines, particularly those related to mealtimes, change to such an extent throughout the deployment that readjustments in the post-deployment period are difficult. Interestingly, the women seem to believe that they *have* to readjust the schedules and routines. Charlotte comments on this in the following passage:

The first week back...everything was fine. But then...the tension...

I didn't expect that.

(D.N. - Tension about what?)

Oh...supper...when he was away I ate supper whenever I felt like it... not necessarily at 5:30...you know. And then housework things...

he's used to being on a ship in a very organized environment and that's

what he likes at home too...most military men are like that. But when he

was away, I reverted back to my old ways of doing things (laughter)...

you know...with housework things. So since he's been back he's been

cleaning the house...putting everything back the way *he* likes it. And

then... one of the things I did to keep busy when he was away was

try to learn how to sew. So I've had the sewing machine and all my

stuff all over the dining room table and while he was gone I would just

leave it there until I could get back to it. But now that Matt is home, he

makes me clear it all off the table every night.

(D.N. - How do you feel about that?)

Well, I have to do it, I guess. He says he can't stand the mess. He says

it drives him crazy. But, even though I do what he wants, he's driving me

crazy. It's like he's intruding on my space.

Evidently, the sense of order that permeates life on board the ship transfers to the

home environment. However, while the cramped quarters on board ship may necessitate

order and rigid scheduling, the same is usually not the case for normal households.

Regardless, husbands of the wives participating in this study appear to be uncomfortable

with the looser patterns of family living that have evolved throughout the course of the

deployment and expect compliance with a more ordered way of living. Moreover, the

husbands seem to readily reproach their wives for the changes that they seemingly find

intolerable. Strong disapproval can be detected in their words as they realize that things

have changed. Holly's husband is "not pleased" when he realizes that his children now eat their meals in their rooms and asks Holly "you let them do that?"

The women are exasperated and frustrated by the attitudes of their husbands, but regardless, they do comply. Jane tries to prepare dinner "at a certain time". Marie states that she now *has* to cook supper every night. Holly "fights" with her children to eat at the family dining table and Charlotte puts the sewing machine away every day. Even though it could be construed that the changes in family routines that have transpired throughout the deployment are essentially only problems for the men involved, it is the women involved who act on these perceived "problems". They assume the responsibility.

This reaction is remarkable given the obvious satisfaction many of the women derived throughout the deployment from the opportunity to adapt and manage their households in ways that accommodated *them*. Charlotte comments on this in the following passage:

> Yeah...I really feel like he's in my space...and I don't just
>
> mean like in the house, you know...it's hard to put in words...
>
> (D. N. - Do you mean...psychological space?)
>
> Yeah...I guess that's it...
>
> (D.N. - Can you give an example?)
>
> Well...yeah...the sandbox...we were visiting some relatives in
>
> New York last summer and Benjamin...he just played on the
>
> beach all the time. He just loved it...sat for an hour and a half
>
> just sifting sand in and out of a bucket...just fascinated...I mean

this was...he was only sixteen months old then. And I mean...

if you can get a sixteen month old to sit for an hour and a half...

(laugh)...

(D.N. - That's quite an accomplishment.)

Yeah. So...last week...summers coming on...I have to get a

sandbox. That way I can get things done in the yard and so

forth because I won't be chasing him every two minutes. So I

decided to go check out the K-Mart and see if they have one

of those sandboxes that you put the cover on. I didn't even think

about running it by Matt because I knew it would be in the budget

because I have been doing the books for the past seven months.

All the time that he was away if I needed something, I would just

check the books and if there was room there I got it. So, I was

all set to do that this time. I told Matt I was going out to buy the

sandbox and he said "are you crazy?...they're seventy dollars...I'll

make one". Well, that was a month ago and we still haven't got a

sandbox. It is so frustrating. I'd forgotten what he is like. And you

know...I really did like making those kind of decisions when he was

away and I handled everything well...I didn't make any mistakes. I

even managed to save money and that's with Matt saying before he

left that the hardest thing he'd ever have to do was hand the books

over to me. Well...he doesn't have to worry now...he's got them back.

Charlotte's words resonate with frustration and even bitterness as she recounts through the story of the sandbox how the management of family finances has become usurped. Moreover, it is possible to detect through Charlotte's words the satisfaction she derived from assuming this responsibility before it was taken away from her. Darlene also experienced the same sense of satisfaction and then frustration. She states:

Well...you know..with losing everything...We had to do a lot of shopping when he got back because...you know...we lost everything. And...you know...I can't drive...and we had to wait for his extra pay that they get so I waited until he came back. Woolco...you know Woolco..it closed down and they were having this big sale. A good chance...so we each had a cart...he would look in my cart and say "why are you getting that?"...you know...like real...

(D.N. - How did you feel about that?)

Well, it pissed me off because...you know...I was here...and with all that happened...and the kids and everything...and I did it. And you know the problems I had...but it's made me feel good that I did it.

(D.N. - So what's happening now?)

Well, he's running the show (laughter).

Clearly, women participating in this study gleaned a considerable amount of satisfaction from their enactment of practices throughout the deployment period. Their

words are infused with a sense of pride and accomplishment. For the women who did or who were able to cope in a positive way, these feelings are indeed justified. Regardless of whether the circumstances were catastrophic or mundane, some women participating in the study did manage challenges posed through and by the deployment with confidence and conviction. The reader will recall that in Chapter Six I conceptualized this management activity as comprising the practices of problem-solving and coordination. I also argued that these practices embody the military ideology of self-reliance.

In Chapter Six I also referred to the practice of accommodation. Information about this practice emerged from the words of the women during the deployment phase of the cycle in response to such events and circumstances as Charlotte's miscarriage, the catastrophic event that destroyed Darlene's possessions and the combination of infidelity, alcoholism and financial pressure that permeates Sara's life. However, the words of Jane, Marie, Holly, Charlotte and Darlene allow us to understand that accommodative practices are ongoing within the post-deployment phase of the cycle as well. Charlotte describes these practices in a very eloquent way, using the metaphor of horses' reins. She states:

> I learned through the deployment that I can go it alone so to
>
> speak. But now I have had to turn over the reins to him. And
>
> I really resent that...him wanting all of me again and being in
>
> charge of everything again. It has been hard to turn the reins
>
> over. I mean...why can't I just give him one of the reins?

Despite the apparent frustration and resentment associated with "handing over the reins", women have changed routines and schedules, habits and patterns to accommodate the wishes of their husbands. Some women have also relinquished responsibility for household management, even when they managed these responsibilities very capably. In all cases, women have accommodated in these ways because they felt they *had to*. An obvious question arises; that is, who is telling these women that they have to hand over authority to their husbands?

On the surface, it is obvious that it is the husbands who are instigating this shift in authority. Evidently, the "spit and polish" standards and regimented routines the husbands experience on board ship can be transferred to the home environment. Of course, these standards and routines are not easily transferable to most households without inciting anarchy, but regardless, as the words of the women indicate, the expectation is there. Accordingly, even when households functioned quite well without the imposition of these standards and routines, some women participating in this study accommodate under the new "regime". To use Charlotte's words, these women "hand back both the reins". However, is it just the will and desires of individual husbands precipitating the shift in authority? Or, are deeper forces involved?

The words of the women allow us to understand that there are deeper, ideological forces embodied within these accommodative practices at the post-deployment period. As Chris states:

Well...its like we've always said in the meetings and so on...yes...

we do have to be able to handle it all. If we can't handle the washing

machines breaking down and the kids getting sick and God knows

what else, then we're not going to make it in this system. Our husbands

aren't going to get anywhere either.

(D.N. - Why?)

The military has to know that we can keep it together when they're

gone. They can't be sending the guys home every time there's a crisis

or whatever. It breaks up the unit, its expensive and its a pain...

I mean...we are even told that we shouldn't talk about bad news

or the latest crisis or whatever in our phone calls or letters...because

it upsets the guys...interferes...we are told to deal with it and move on.

(D.N. - But then when they come home...?)

Yeah...yeah...I know...we have to take second place...we're not

in charge anymore. But, that's our life, I guess.

Chris' words capture the central paradox that seems to characterize the lives of

female military partners. As discussed in Chapter Six, the ideology of self-reliance is

idealized and mythologized within military culture. From their earliest days in the

institution, military wives are socialized to be self-reliant. Self-reliance is the benchmark

against which military wives assess their own behavior as well as the behavior of others.

Moreover, during a deployment, the military depends upon the self-reliance of military

wives so that the institution can do its work. Indeed, the self-reliance of military wives is

a central organizing ideological principle underpinning the military institution. However,

once the ship returns home, these military women are expected to revert back to

dependence. As Charlotte notes, military wives cannot hand back just one rein, but both reins.

When the women "hand back both reins", they are accommodating not just their husbands, but the military institution as well. The military does depend on the self-reliance of military wives, but they do expect dependence and compliance as well. This is the paradox that military wives live with. Enloe (1983) uses the term "whiplash" in her discussion of the lives of military wives and although she is using this term to characterize other aspects of their lives, it also provides an apt depiction of how this paradox is experienced. Charlotte reflects on this in the following passage:

> Well...yeah... that is a good way of putting it. Yeah...it's like you're zooming along at 120 kilometers an hour and then when the ship comes home, it's like you're hit from behind...and you stop...but your head is all addled because its such a change from before. Everyone calls it a "transition", but it's more than that. It's not like moving from one stage to the next...sort of gradual...it's abrupt. It's almost as if you change into a completely different person. There's the Charlotte when he's away and the Charlotte when he comes back.
>
> (D.N. - So, its as if there are two different people?)
>
> Yeah, for sure. But, the thing is...changing into that different person is kind of mind-boggling.

Darlene adds:

> Yeah...you gotta change over real quick...but it leaves you kind of
>
> all unsettled or something. So...yeah...whiplash...yeah...it's like that.
>
> But...just like real whiplash, some get it worse than others.

Charlotte and Darlene confirm that the paradoxical situation that lies at the core of their lives as female military partners is experienced with some dissonance.There are two different people living out this dissonance - two different "people" embodied within the same person. Is it any wonder then that switching back and forth between the two different "people" and the practices deemed appropriate for each is experienced as unsettling or "mind-boggling"?

In accepting Enloe's (1983) "whiplash" analogy as a fitting way of conceptualizing the dissonance, the women reveal the way in which it is played out within their lives. However, Darlene also indicates that "some get it (whiplash) worse than others". Holly comments on this in the following passage. She also sheds more light on the rationale for the dissonance. She states:

> Yes, I guess it's a funny life that we lead. On the one hand, independent.
>
> On the other hand, not.
>
> (D.N. - But what is that like?)
>
> Oh, it's jarring, especially when they've been away for a long time. But
>
> you have to work it into your life and stop whining about it. It's just the

way it is and the way it's gotta be.

(D.N. - Why?)

Well...the military needs us to be able to hold down the fort during the deployments. But also...we *have* to switch back because the military doesn't want us to take this independence thing too far because that can be a problem too.

(D.N. - Why?)

Well... just like I said before...you know...about the military being like the human body...you know...with all the parts. Well, the parts... and that's us...have to be like the body. Organized and everything, with someone in charge and so on.

(D.N. - But, why can't the women stay in charge when they're home? Or why can't both be in charge?)

Well, some try to be, but that doesn't work very well. I mean... like it or not...the military is structured with ranks and everything. There is always someone in charge. It's the system. And the men are the ones who have the jobs to do in that system. So...I've been in this racket for nearly twenty years and I guess I've seen that it works best if the families are like the whole military. So that's why the ladies have to switch back. You see...the military also needs women who will be at home and who can move easily and so on. And...I hate to say this to you but...a woman who is too independent isn't going to be able to do that. Let's face it...you can only take this independence

so far or else everything will break down. And the ladies that realize

this are the ones that will make it.

Contradictory Ideologies

In discussing the shift between self-reliance and dependence, the words of Holly

and others participating in the study strengthen a contention advanced in Chapter Six.

While conducting the deployment interviews, I sensed that although self-reliance is a key

ideological principle of the military, there are also limits imposed on female military

partners as to how far they can take this. As I discussed this with participating women at

that time, they intimated that the military does indeed expect them to be self-reliant, but

that they knew that they "could only take this so far".

Evidently, self-reliance can indeed only be taken "so far". In the post-deployment

interview, Holly directly confirms this and other women suggest the same through their

words. As I reflect upon this, I can again discern that within the military institution, self-

reliance is only encouraged and reinforced to the extent that it is compatible with the

ideological relevances of the military. As long as self-reliance supports and upholds the

ideological imperative of combat readiness, it is encouraged. The self-reliance of female

military partners is a vital force within the institution to the extent that it contributes to

the realization of *military* objectives and relevances. Beyond that, self-reliance on the part

of military wives is perceived as a threat. Interestingly, self-reliance is considered to be

threat to the very same ideological component of the military that, in other situations and

circumstances, it is meant to safeguard and reinforce; that is, combat readiness.

Therefore, depending upon the stage of the deployment cycle; that is, deployment or post-

deployment, self-reliance is variously interpreted as either a support or a threat.

The relationship between the military institution and self-reliance is complex and paradoxical and it is military wives who are expected to manage this complexity. Accommodative practices are essential to the management of this paradox. Despite their frustration, bitterness and feelings resembling "whiplash", these women acquiesce with institutional relevances by accommodating the shift from self-reliance to dependence. Moreover, the practice of accommodation and the "switching" that is involved embodies the military ideology of combat readiness.

Although a number of the women participating in the study reveal some of their emotional responses as they practice accommodation, other emotional processes emerge as they discuss this and other aspects of the post-deployment period. This next section of the chapter will detail these processes, specifically, fatigue, flatness and difficulties with intimacy.

Fatigue, Flatness and Difficulties with Intimacy

As mentioned previously in this chapter, most of women participating in this study planned trips or holidays for the days and weeks following the return of the ship. After such a long deployment, many of the serving members were entitled to vacation leave, so the holidays could be easily arranged. These holidays were eagerly anticipated by most of the women involved. In fact, some of the conversation at the last support group meeting before the return of the ship focused on the topic. Women discussed their plans and shared information on bed and breakfast facilities, tourist attractions and the like. Others planned to visit extended family. All were eagerly looking forward to their vacations after the long deployment.

As I interviewed each woman at the post-deployment period, I asked many of them about their vacations. In a number of cases, I received a surprising response. For example, Charlotte's holiday did not live up to her expectations. She states:

My brother came down from... to look after Benjamin.

The idea was that we were going to have a romantic

weekend at a bed and breakfast. I had booked a place in

...l and off we went. Well. we might as well as stayed home...

saved our money.

(D.N. - Why?)

Well...it's not like me to be like that but I was just so tired (laughter).

All I wanted to do was sleep...be by myself...that last month...that

seventh month was so hard. I had lost weight again which I didn't

want to do...and then I just...my health went down hill...and just

different things. So I wasn't really in good shape for romance, if you

know what I mean.

Marie recounts a similar experience on her holiday:

(D.N. - So where did you go?)

Oh, down to ....one of those B and Bs. It had just

opened for the season.

(D.N. - How was it?)

Well, it started off OK...but...I hate to say this, but then it got a

bit boring actually.

(D.N. - Boring?)

Oh yeah...I mean how many little villages and craft shops

can you visit? It was all a blur to me. I was just so tired. I felt like

I was expected to act in a way that I couldn't. I mean you would

think that it would be so romantic and everything after seven long

months. But not for me. The best thing Marty could have done for

me is send me away by myself, so I could just get away from it all.

Chris also expresses a desire for solitude in the following passage:

Well, we went to visit our families. Made sense to me.

We took two weeks. The longest two weeks of my life. Drove

to ...to see my folks and then on through to...where Alan is from.

The whole time I was away I just wanted to crawl into a hole.

They were all swarming him. Asking "What was it like"? I was

too tired to handle that.

The words of Charlotte, Marie and Chris indicate that the atmosphere created by

the warm and joyous reunions on the jetty dissolves in the aftermath. Charlotte and Marie

note that their fatigue precluded their full enjoyment of the holiday. They found that they

simply could not live up to the expectations usually associated with romantic "get-away" weekends. Chris also admits to fatigue, but her words also convey a certain amount of resentment. Although she does not state this outright, she seems to be vexed by the attention that Alan received from the relatives they visited. He was granted a hero's welcome, but she who held it all together while he was away was left on the sidelines. Interestingly, all three women also express that what they really needed and wanted at this time was to be by themselves.

Apparently, some of the women desire distance at this time. In fact, a number of the women expressed to me in interviews that they felt very distant from their husbands anyway. Again, this emotion is in sharp contrast to the emotions evident on the jetty. Jane comments on this in the following passage:

Oh, sometimes I think the jetty is all for show you know. Things aren't like that when you get home. I am sure you know by now that the military has all these lines and sayings...well...one of them... this is terrible (laughter)...is that all of the women should be down at the jetty with mattresses tied to their backs. Even the *women* make that comment among themselves. But...the thing is...as you can imagine, that's something many of us are a bit scared of. I mean... this guy is like a stranger...and you wonder...what's he been up to over there? And even if you do think that he's been one hundred percent true, it still takes a while to build up that intimacy again.

Charlotte echoes Jane's comments:

> Everything's kind of awkward actually (laugh). You've both changed
>
> a lot, like you said. Matt did feel like a stranger to me...I felt I didn't
>
> want to get close to him right away. And here you are...you're supposed
>
> to be blissfully happy...you've got this guy home again. It's honeymoon
>
> time...go off on little trips...but it doesn't work that way. It's so hard to
>
> explain. Your life went this way and his went that way and then all
>
> of a sudden its supposed to go gwishhhh...back together again. But it's
>
> like, who is this person? I know the body. I know the voice. I have
>
> the memories, but is this person still who I think this person is?

Charlotte and Jane courageously reveal their fears and anxieties associated with rebuilding intimacy in their relationships. Jane, in particular, refers to the foreboding feeling many military spouses carry with them in relation to infidelity. At one support group meeting held during the deployment period, a number of the women present acknowledged that a "knot in the pit of their stomachs" (field notes) begins to develop as the ship sails nearer to a port designated as a rest and recreation (R & R) spot. In the post-deployment interview, Marie refers to this particular anxiety:

> Oh, you worry that your husband will meet someone in a port
>
> or something. Every woman keeps that thought in the back of
>
> their mind. You think it could happen some day. Palma, where

this ship stopped has topless beaches. I don't think Marty has

done that, but you're never sure. So that's a big reason why it's

hard to get re-connected again. You have to work those terrible

thoughts out of your system. But, until you do...

Darlene adds:

I worry about that. The guys go out drinking and everything and

they see these women and they haven't seen their wives...He says...

he says...women start looking good no matter how ugly they are.

You worry about it...it crosses your mind. So...it makes it hard

when they come back...big fights.

Evidently, either real or imagined fears regarding infidelity contribute to the

difficulties some women experience in the post-deployment period. It is hard to conceive

just how these same women sustain the buoyant spirits so visible on the jetty given the

depth of their anxieties in this regard. However, a number of women manage to do that.

Some of the women also manage to work through, either intrapersonally or

interpersonally, their distress and apprehension during the post-deployment period. Over

time, these same women also gain back a sense of physical well-being. Holly is one of

these women. She states:

Well, I was really run down after they came back. And I think there

was a bit of a let-down because I no longer had the network stuff

to do. The day after they came back, the line was disconnected.

I couldn't believe it...so soon. I guess they needed the line for the

ship going out. And then there's all kinds of stuff you have to work

out as a couple. That's hard, but you do it. And so I began to feel

better...in all ways.

It is worth noting that the network telephone line was disconnected almost

immediately after the return of the ship. The institutional message inherent in this action

is that the women no longer require support from each other now that their husbands are

home.

Chris also discusses her experiences after the initial difficulties in the post-

deployment period.

Well, after the vacation from hell (laughter)...After we left the

in-laws...thank God...things got OK. You can't force it though.

He had a few days extra leave...the kid is in school...so we just

puttered around, did some errands and stuff. We just spent time

together, not really saying or doing much...just together.

This discussion of emotional processes ongoing at this phase of the cycle leads to

the delineation of related coping skills and psychological resources. The skills and

resources prevalent at this time involved patience, perseverance and a positive attitude. In

contrast, one woman employed coping skills that involved infidelity and alcoholism at this time.

Coping Skills and Psychological Resources

Patience, Perseverance and a Positive Attitude

Women such as Holly and Chris were able to regain their equilibrium and reconnect in their relationships with their husbands. Somehow these women have the psychological resources and the coping skills necessary to accomplish this. I asked these women about this in an effort to learn more about what can help in this regard. Holly states:

> Oh...a lot of patience. You can't rush in and try to make things
>
> normal right away. It's like if you've been exercising and then you stop.
>
> And when you try to go back to it...you can't do it at the same level as
>
> before. You have to build up to that. Or else, you'll hurt yourself.

With the help of yet another interesting analogy, Holly indicates that patience is vital in rebuilding intimacy and trust within relationships affected by long deployments. Chris concurs:

> Oh, you have to bite your tongue sometimes...be cool. Don't try
>
> and do it all in one night. I used to do that when Alan came back.
>
> Poor guy. He was terrified. You have to listen for the cues too...know
>
> when to move forward and when to back off. And you have to keep

remembering that this will get better...and don't visit your in-laws

right away (laughter)...no matter how much they pester and go on.

According to Holly and Chris, patience, perseverance and a positive attitude serve as psychological resources that facilitate coping at the post-deployment period. However, these women exude strength and commitment, so these resources are probably easily retrievable for them. However, not all women can or are able to operate from such a position of strength. For these women, rebuilding relationships is difficult if not impossible.

As mentioned previously in this thesis, three women participating in this study always seemed to me to be more vulnerable. Jane, one of these three women, has been hospitalized for depression in previous deployments and has been taking medication throughout this deployment for the same reason. Understandably, readjustment and rebuilding in the post-deployment phase has been more difficult for her. She discusses this in the following passage:

My regular doctor moved to Georgia, so I've been going to another one.

So, it's like starting all over again. And of course this new guy wants to

get his dibs in, so he starts to fool around with my medication. About

three weeks after that, I started having really bad days again. I started

to panic about everything. I told the doctor and he changed it again

but it still wasn't quite right by the time Danny got home. There was this

monster here...it didn't help at all.

The reader will recall that Marie experienced some profound emotional responses during the cycle of deployment. During the deployment interview, she admitted that she had reached a "breaking point". In the post-deployment interview, she comments on this and reflects upon the impact of this on her "coping" once the ship returned home:

> Oh, things were bad. You know that. You remember. I'm still not
>
> one hundred percent. Everything just got away on me...I wanted
>
> Marty to come back...I was mad at him for leaving me with sick kids
>
> and everything...and then when he did come back I just wanted to
>
> claw his eyes out. I wanted him to leave me alone...leave me in peace.
>
> So things have not been good for us since he came back...that's for sure.
>
> I haven't coped. I'm not coping.

Sara is the third woman in the study who consistently appears vulnerable. Before the return of the ship, the last communication Sara had with her husband consisted of a letter informing her that he wanted to pursue a divorce as soon he arrived home. At the time of the post-deployment interview, Sara and her husband have been married less than one year.

Despite the receipt of such a distressing missive, Sara too was at the jetty to welcome the ship back. However, by the time of the interview, Sara had moved out of the apartment she shared with her husband. Her daughter had moved back to Cape Breton to live with her father and her son, to use Sara's words, is "more or less on his own". Sara discusses her difficulties in the following passage:

Everything has fallen apart. I moved out two days after he came back. The kids...oh everything is a mess. Tabitha's father saying: "see, I told you so".

(D.N. - But you went to the jetty?)

Yeah, I know (laughter). I guess I thought everything that happened was a dream or something. I was hoping that everything would be OK. But as soon as he walked off the ship, I knew it wouldn't be. He was quiet...no scenes on the jetty. We went home and then after a day... he lost it. He totally freaked out...said he wanted to go back to his past life where he partied ...to be single. He said they partied at every port and that's what he wants. Thought he could get it out of his system over there, but it isn't. So then he sat in the apartment and binged... three or four days. It was awful...I screwed up and he knows about it. Some other guy...a navy guy went on the ship... Ron was working ... and he gave him all the details. The guy's wife knew someone in the network. Your personal life...you might as well put it on TV. Happens all the time in the military. You can't work things out in your own way. The guys stick together. It's like they're protecting each other..."for your own good" type of thing.

Obviously, regaining some sense of equilibrium is difficult, if not impossible for Sara - at least within the context of her relationship with Ron. Her situation is not helped by the fact that in the spirit of unit cohesion, a military compatriot felt compelled to

disclose personal information, even to the person directly affected.

<u>Infidelity and Alcoholism</u>

Sara also shared with me further perspectives on her situation. In the following

passage, she reflects upon how her infidelity and alcoholism served as coping

mechanisms for her. She acknowledges that these ways of coping are definitely self-

destructive, but nevertheless, she does maintain that she did not know of any other way to

get through the deployment. She states:

It was just dealing, dealing with the situation. It had nothing to do

with being attracted to somebody. It had nothing to do with love.

Like I would go out. I'd have a few drinks...perhaps get drunk...

and play the game. I think most of us who go downtown and screw up,

we're not looking for anything but just getting through.

(D.N. - Getting through the time...)

That space of time, nothing more, nothing less. It's not a good way

of getting through it. As you know, there was a time...when I didn't

think I could...

(D.N. - I know.)

But, I just didn't know of any other way.

Sara also provides some startling information regarding the reaction of others to

her way of getting through the deployment. She states:

The last network get-together...I gathered up the courage and went.

Not easy...because *everybody* knows and knew then. I went and no

one talked to me. My so-called friends just ignored me. Like I was

disowned. And then I had the nerve to go to jetty. And, and when

I went, I put my arm around this certain lady...someone who I thought

would be different...and I said ah..."it's finally over" and she completely

shunned me on the jetty. And I mean she was my friend for seven

months. I mean...even if I deserve that...all she had to say was "you're

right"...you know..."thank God it's finally over", but I did not get that.

As discussed in Chapter Six, the military institution seems to be intolerant of

frailty or vulnerability. Not all military wives share the same history or personal

circumstances. Some, through no fault of their own, are not able to embrace the self-

reliance ideology or other relevances that are so vital to the functioning of the institution.

Regardless, all female military partners are judged by the same standard and those, like

Sara, who do not or cannot meet the standard are shunned and ostracized. These women

run the risk of falling between the cracks.

Again, it is possible to see that if a model, such as the Logan (1987) model which

has been discussed previously in this thesis, was applied as a template to the experiences

of female military partners, some of these women, such as Jane, Marie and Sara would

not fit within the shapes and contours. As a result, their experiences would break away

along the "line of fault" (Smith, 1987) separating everyday experience from discursive

concepts and categories. For example, the Logan model stipulates that military wives

experience "readjustment" in the post-deployment phase of the overall deployment cycle. However, the words of Jane, Marie and Sara allow us to understand that readjustment is not always possible or, at the very least, it is difficult to achieve. The model does not capture the particulars, the contextual factors or the resources and strategies that may facilitate readjustment. Moreover, as has been discussed at various points within this thesis, the discursive concepts and categories embodied within the model serve as benchmarks by which the behavior of female military partners is judged and assessed by both the institution and individual players within the institution. When the pattern of life of some female military partners does not fit within the pattern posed by the discursive template, it is the *women* who are judged and sometimes ostracized. The institution and the discursively relevant models are not questioned, but as this study has demonstrated, women are.

Summary

This concludes the analysis of the post-deployment phase of the overall deployment cycle. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 3 which follows.

Some of the practices articulated in this chapter carry over from previous phases. However, new practices are revealed through the words of the women that are unique to the post-deployment phase. Practices associated with "going to the jetty" have particular analytical significance.

Within Chapter Six, the jetty is discussed as the physical site where the relationship between family cohesion and the ideology of unit cohesion is most visible. This contention is premised upon the supposition previously developed within the chapter, and which is supported through the words of the women, that practices

associated with family cohesion can be articulated to the overall ideology of unit cohesion. Indeed, I argue within the chapter that the jetty is the location where this relationship is played out. Therefore, based on the analysis advanced in this chapter, it is possible to conceive of the jetty as a symbol mediating the everyday worlds of female military partners and the military institution.

Through this chapter, it is also possible to learn about some of the ways in which women are socialized as military wives. Again, through analysis of practices associated with "going to the jetty" and practices embodying the ideology of self-reliance, it became apparent that womens' socialization as military wives involves an intense level of subordination (first discussed within this thesis in Chapter Two) that is superimposed upon the customary socialization that all women experience by virtue of living within this society. So, while Chapter Six illuminated the ways in which certain military ideologies contradict each other, Chapter Seven not only expands on the tensions that exist between ideologies, but also reveals the ways in which military ideologies and gender ideologies complement each other.

A final analytical theme discussed within this chapter is associated with the relationship between the media and the military. Discussion of the ways in which the military consciously relies upon the media for ideological purposes was contained within this chapter. Through this, it can be seen that coordination among various sites helps to accomplish the work of ruling for the military.

This chapter concludes the analysis of not just the post-deployment period, but the overall cycle of deployment. The accounts of everyday experience that have been mapped out in this chapter and the preceding two have implications for the planning and

implementation of educational programs and counselling services associated with

military family resource centres. This will be the focus of Chapter Eight.

Table 3

Summary of Findings

Post-Deployment

Practices Ideologies	Gender and Military
Maintenance of Family Cohesion Connection	Responsibility, Care, Unit Cohesion
Going to the Jetty	Unit Cohesion
Problem Solving, Accommodation Changes in Household Routine	Self-Reliance Combat Readiness

Emotional Processes Ideologies	Gender and Military
Fatigue, Flatness Difficulties with Intimacy	Cover-up Principle

Coping Strategies & Psychological Resources Ideologies	Gender and Military
Patience, Perseverance Positive Attitude for Some For Others: Family Change	Responsibility Care, Connection

CHAPTER EIGHT: IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY FOR EDUCATIONAL AND COUNSELLING PRACTICE

"Working Them Out...Working Them In": Summative Statements

This feminist qualitative research study on the cycle of deployment proceeded from accounts of everyday experience. This is consistent with Smith's (1987) contention that experience should not be used as a mere resource in research, but as a starting point. Accordingly, I drew on detailed accounts of everyday routines which originated within local and particular standpoints.

Seven women participated in this study. They were interviewed at each of the three phases of the deployment cycle, that is, pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment. They also participated in regular support group meetings.

In Chapter One, I noted that this research study was precipitated by a seemingly innocuous comment overheard a number of years ago at a coffee break during a program I was facilitating for military wives at a Military Family Resource Centre. As the women participating in the program discussed an upcoming six-month NATO deployment during the coffee break, one of the women, whose husband would be involved with this particular deployment, commented: "Well, this is all about working them out and then working them in".

The women's reference to the word "work" catalyzed a process whereby I began to think about deployment as not just a discrete period of time punctuating the lives of female military partners, but as a process involving purposive activity or practices. Conceptualizing deployment in this way afforded me the opportunity to understand that deployment is actually *accomplished* by female military partners through the enactment

of these everyday practices. In the context of this study, I have endeavoured to display the practices which "accomplish" deployment. Moreover, the emotional processes analogous to the practices are revealed, as are the meanings underlying the processes, and those practices and psychological resources which facilitate coping.

The practices and processes implicated in the accomplishment of deployment entail "work" for the female military partner. Within this study, I articulate this work to the work of the military institution and in so doing the military and gender ideologies embodied therein are rendered visible.

These findings are synthesized in tables 1,2 and 4 which are included in the summaries for each chapter. These tables denote the practices and the related emotional processes as well as the coping strategies and psychological resources associated with each of the three phases of the deployment cycle, that is, pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment. In addition, the corresponding military and gender ideologies are depicted in this table. From these overall findings, a number of general statements can be derived. This next section of the chapter articulates these statements.

Deployment Involves "Work" on the Part of Female Military Partners

First, through this study, the *work* that is involved on the part of female military partners in the accomplishment of deployment is displayed. For example, in the deployment phase, some of the women enacted coordinative, problem-solving and accommodative practices as they experienced this aspect of the cycle. These are not merely neat labels which name experience. Rather, these clusters of practices refer to actual work characterizing the daily lives of the women participating in the study. This work involved coordination, problem-solving and accommodation in relation to financial

management, the illnesses of children and other day-to-day concerns as well as facing

catastrophic or potentially catastrophic circumstances such as a miscarriage and marital

difficulties.

Bringing this daily work into view is a corrective to the invisibility of actual work

processes in most previous studies of military wives. Instead of producing accounts of the

lives of military wives that fall away along a "line of fault" (Smith, 1987) separating what

women know about their daily lives and what discursive forms of expression claim to be

"knowable", this study has endeavoured to recover and reveal the particulars of the daily

lives of female military partners.

This Work is Complex

These claims are related to the second general statement that can be extricated

from the findings of this study. The study not only displays the "work" or the everyday

practices enacted by the women in relation to the cycle of deployment, it also reveals the

complexities involved in this work. For example, the accounts of the participating

women at the pre-deployment phase of the cycle reveal the emotional processes of anger,

despair, resentment and fear which run parallel to particular practices ongoing at this

time. While a number of women experience these emotions, they are experienced in an

overlapping fashion and with varying degrees of intensity. This runs counter to the

theoretical frameworks which depict such phenomena as emotional responses to

deployment as step-by-step, chronologically ordered stages. Therefore, on the basis of

this study, I claim that the complexities of the everyday experience of female military

partners cannot always be reduced to concepts and categories inherent within theoretical

accounts.

The Work Embodies Military Ideologies and Gender Ideologies

The third general statement evolving from this study is that the everyday practices

implicated in the accomplishment of deployment embody military ideologies and gender

ideologies. For example, a practice identified as the "maintenance of family cohesion"

that emerged at each of the three phases of deployment embodies gender ideologies

associated with responsibility, care and connection. Furthermore, the women's

networking practices embody the military ideology of unit cohesion. In relation to

military ideologies, I argue throughout the thesis that the daily work of the women

participating in the study is both constituted by and constitutive of these ideologies. This

means that the generalizable properties and relations of the institution are accomplished

within the coordination and organization of practices enacted by these women within the

everyday world. Concomitantly, these practices are ordered in accordance with the

relevances of the institution.

Military Ideologies are Paradoxical and Contradictory

Reference to the relevances of the military leads to a discussion of the fourth

general statement evolving from the findings of this research. As noted previously, the

everyday practices of the women participating in the study embody particular ideologies.

However, some of the military ideologies are paradoxical and contradictory. For

example, practices embodying the ideology of self-reliance emerged in the deployment

phase of the cycle. The words of the women indicated that these practices are encouraged

by the institution to the extent that they support combat readiness. However, the military

institution also acknowledges that the self-reliance of military wives can be a threat to

combat readiness and is quick to discourage these practices where this appears to be the

case. The result of this is that military wives live with a paradox as far as this ideology is concerned.

In addition, the ideology of self-reliance contradicts the "military as happy family" ideology. On the one hand, the military expects self-reliance, but on the other hand, it also inculcates members of the institution with the idea that the military will always "take care of its own". Serving members and their families are encouraged to think of the military as an authoritarian, yet benevolent parent who can best address all problems and concerns. At the same time though, military wives learn that they must be self-reliant, which contradicts the notion of dependency fostered through the "military as happy family" ideology. Evidently, self-reliance is encouraged to the extent that it ensures unit cohesion and combat readiness, but beyond that point, it is viewed as a threat to those same ideologies. Female military partners must find that balance and live out their lives accordingly.

Other Ruling Practices Intersect with the Ruling Practices of the Military

These contradictions and paradoxes are associated with the work of ruling, a consideration which relates to the fifth general statement emanating from this study. As noted previously in this thesis, the work of ruling is implicated in, even integral to, the practices that produce broad institutional complexes such as the military. Moreover, ruling furthers the aims of the military institution and is accomplished through and by an apparatus which functions in such a way that relevances are absorbed within the everyday world (Smith, 1987). Indeed, the work of ruling is accomplished in the everyday world.

The findings of the study illuminate the ways in which ruling is accomplished within the everyday lives of the women participating in the study. For example, in her

role as leader of the *Illustrious* Wives' Network, Holly coordinated the work of ruling as far as other wives were concerned and, in doing so, she mediated between their everyday worlds and the military institution. However, this work of ruling can be seen to intersect with other ruling apparatuses. Specifically, the media were complicit in acts of ruling that the women participating in this study experienced. The intersecting ruling processes associated with the media and the military were particularly visible at the jetty upon the return of the ship. The media's role in creating the excitement on the jetty that morning was implicated in the reinforcement of the bonding and group identity associated with the military ideology of unit cohesion. Similarly, the findings of this study suggest that the media depictions of heartwarming reunions on the jetty (which the military encourages) help to construct a positive image of the military, its mission and of military family members. In particular, the media depict the women waiting on the jetty in a stereotypical fashion which embodies certain gender ideologies. From this it can be seen that the work of the media and the military intersect so as to construct a location for women within both the military institution and in society that is consistent with both gender ideologies and military ideologies.

Military Ideologies and Gender Ideologies are Reinforcing

The intersection of the work of ruling within the media and within the military allows one to understand that gender ideologies and military ideologies reinforce one another. This is the sixth and final general statement associated with the findings of this study. Ideologies of gender in society link with particular military ideologies. For example, the practices relating to the maintenance of family cohesion that emerged at each of the three phases of the deployment cycle embody the gender ideologies of

responsibility, care and connection discussed throughout this thesis. However, as addressed in Chapter Seven, when female military partners work in such a way that family cohesion is maintained, they are also working to ensure that *unit* cohesion is maintained. Therefore, the everyday practices related to the maintenance of family cohesion embody both gender and military ideologies which are mutually reinforcing.

This concludes the delineation of summative statements evolving from the findings of this study. In Chapter One, I noted that the ultimate purpose of this study was to reflect upon the ways in which findings of the study could be incorporated within educational programs and counselling services offered within Military Family Resource Centres. In that chapter, I commented that these considerations would take me back full circle to a place where many of my early questions regarding the lives of female military partners were, in part, first conceived. This section of this chapter addresses the question of what the findings of the study mean in terms of the development and implementation of educational programs and counselling services.

Application of the Findings of the Study

The Setting for Educational Programs and Counselling Services

In Chapter One, I provided background relating to the development of the system of family support now in place on many Canadian Forces bases across this country. I also described in that chapter the general programs and services available through this network of Resource Centres as well as those which relate specifically to deployment. On the surface, these Centres appear to hold great promise as educational and support centres for serving personnel and their families. When these Centres were established in

1991 as a result of the Family Support Program Project (FSPP), they were touted as

Centres embodying "classic community development" principles (Harrison & Laliberte´,

1994). This meant that the Centres would be democratic, that military family members

would be involved in the design and implementation of all programs and services. In

fact, the policy related to the establishment of the Centres stipulated that the membership

of the boards of directors must consist of at least 51% military spouses (Collier, 1994).

On the basis of this, many believed that the signs of concern for the military

family so evident during the Persian Gulf War were still at the forefront as far as military

policy was concerned. Indeed, in a guide for military wives entitled "Hurry Up and

Wait", the author, Dianne Collier (1994), proclaims:

> As a board member, for the first time ever, *you* have a say
>
> in the planning of programs and the hiring of personnel.
>
> these centres are for *you*! In one sense, you could say you
>
> own them and you control their rate of growth. This is a
>
> golden opportunity for all military wives and their families.
>
> No longer do you have to sit back and just accept whatever
>
> happens. You can participate in the formation of programs
>
> that meet *your* needs. (p.105)

Unfortunately for military wives, there was and is a gap between rhetoric and

reality as far as community development principles and Military Family Resource

Centres are concerned. Certainly, the boards do consist of a number that consists of at

least 51% military spouses. However, base commanders have veto power in terms of the composition of the boards. Women who are thought to be "troublemakers" are not invited to sit on a board (Harrison & Laliberté, 1994). Moreover, despite claims that military family members have "ownership" of the Centres, board members cannot make decisions without the approval of the base commander (Harrison & Laliberté, 1994).

So, while on the surface, these Centres appear to be vehicles designed to facilitate the empowerment of female military partners, they are actually entwined with particular ideologies that uphold the military relevances associated with power and control. Through the acts of hand-picking board members and approving all decisions, the military is working to ensure that even while presenting a caring and open front through the function of the Resource Centres, it is, in actuality, still maintaining the relations of ruling.

This contradiction is consistent with others noted throughout this thesis. For example, in Chapter Six, practices embodying the ideology of self-reliance were seen to be condoned and even mythologized by the military institution to the extent that such practices did not threaten another military ideology - the ideology of combat readiness. Self-reliance was also conceptualized in this chapter as contradicting another ideology that fosters dependence, specifically the "military as happy family ideology". Similarly, while the Military Family Resource Centres seemingly celebrate self-reliance by inviting military spouses to participate in the functioning and administration of the Centres, they are actually embodiments of the military ideology known as the "cover-up principle", which as discussed previously in this thesis, focuses on the relevances associated with the control of the image and appearance that is presented to both the members of the

institution and the public.

The Wives' Networks

The Wives' Networks represent a program of support activated through the Military Family Resource Centres specifically designed to ameliorate the stress associated with deployment. As discussed in Chapter Six, the networks were first established during the Persian Gulf War in an effort to handle the anxiety and uncertainties circulating at that time among military family members. The military received positive press as the media began to follow the activities of the various networks during the time that the various ships, platoons and squadrons were deployed in the Gulf. Indeed, the military was commended for its concern for military wives in particular. Evidently, the ideological notion of the military as a "happy family" always ready and willing to take care of its own was flourishing at this time and no doubt, the institution was enjoying the ensuing benefits as far as its public image was concerned.

The networks were such a success that they still exist to this day and still represent the most significant form of formal support available to military wives experiencing the cycle of deployment. Each network is coordinated by a military spouse and a representative from the relevant Military Family Resource Centre. The longevity of the networks can be explained, in part, by the favourable media coverage obtained during the Persian Gulf War. Indeed, the media response to the networks at this time illustrates, just as the findings of this study do, just how the media can be complicit in the enforcement of military ideologies. Acknowledgement of this complicity also allows one to understand, as was suggested and discussed in Chapter Six, that the networks were also retained because they proved to be ideologically relevant.

The networks facilitate bonding among military wives experiencing deployment which is helpful to the extent that it eases the loneliness and isolation so often experienced by these women at these times. Moreover, the coordinative and gatekeeping practices enacted by leaders of the network serve to mediate the everyday worlds of the women experiencing the deployment and the military institution. While these are useful functions, analysis of the words of the women participating in this study suggest that the bonding, coordination and gatekeeping practices associated with the networks also embody the relations of ruling so vital to the way that the military institution does its work. This makes sense when one considers that the wives who act as leaders of the network are selected by high ranking personnel such as the base commander, just as the board members of the Resource Centre are carefully chosen. If "trouble-makers" are not permitted to serve as board members, they are certainly not allowed to fulfill the prestigious position of coordinator of a network. On the other hand, women who are seen to be compliant with the relevances of the military are viewed as capable of doing the work of containment and image management that upholds the ideology of combat readiness.

The Wives' Networks attached to most military units serve to alleviate day-to-day difficulties for female military partners. When therapeutic intervention is required though, referrals are made to military counsellors. These counsellors may engage in one-to-one counselling sessions with these clients and/or they may encourage participation in educational programs offered through Military Family Resource Centres.

Educational Programs and Counselling Services

Counselling services are provided to serving members and their families by

military psychologists, psychiatrists or social workers. These services are generally available to those requiring therapeutic intervention. On the other hand, educational programs are generally more preventative in nature.

Implementing programs within Military Family Resource Centres is complicated by the perception within the military community that participation in programs will somehow negatively affect the military member's career. Some military personnel maintain that if a commanding officer or executive officer learns that someone in his command (or even a family member) is attending a program at the Centre, he will assume that something is "wrong with the family" and will thereby delay promotion and other benefits (Ridenour, 1984). It is difficult to assess whether or not the perceived threat is real or imagined, but nevertheless, this factor does discourage some from engaging in various programs.

Participation in programs is also complicated by rigid time limitations due to work conditions or impending postings to other locations. In addition, it is sometimes difficult to "reach" family members because to some, "seeking help" implies a personal weakness which is definitely not condoned for either military personnel or their female partners. Some members of the military community also report dissatisfaction with those Military Family Resource Centres which employ particular approaches and techniques associated with education and counselling.

Approaches to Education and Counselling: The Foster Parenting Approach

Some professional approaches utilized within Military Family Support Centres are based on a conceptual model which encourages the practitioner to convey to clients that they are cared for, esteemed and valued as members of a network of mutual obligation

(VanVranken & Benson, 1978). This emphasis is echoed within Whitaker's (as cited in Ridenour, 1984) approach to education and counselling within military family support centres. Whitaker conceptualizes work within Military Family Resource Centres as a form of "foster parenting" whereby a sense of caring and appreciation is imparted to the client.

The foster parenting approach is built upon the premise that during adolescence military personnel commonly experience difficulties in establishing individuation from their families of origin (Ridenour, 1984). Consequently, they join the military because it provides a rapid environmental change and a socially sanctioned escape route. Moreover, male military members often marry young women who are also seeking escape from their families of origin (Enloe, 1983; Ridenour, 1984). However, both male and female partners eventually realize that they have simply replaced one authoritarian system with another. Consequently, they are still engaged in an ongoing struggle between individuation and a larger, overarching and controlling system, whether it be the family of origin or the military system.

Some practitioners working within Military Family Resource Centres employ the "caring" or "foster parenting" style in an effort to help alleviate some of the tension associated with the struggle between individuation and authority. While it is reasonable to support conveying a sense of caring through interaction with program participants, the foster parenting approach can be criticized on the grounds that it has the potential to be patronizing and even demeaning - especially for female military partners. As such, this approach could serve to reinforce women's socialized tendency toward accommodation - a practice which emerged through this study and which was linked to both gender

ideologies and military ideologies.

The foster parenting approach is also consistent with the "military as happy family" ideology conceptualized by Harrison and Laliberté (1994). This is an ideology which embraces the notion of the "military" as one large monolithic "parent" who takes care of all who fall under its authority. Although, just as with the foster parenting approach to counselling, there is certainly an element of genuine caring as this ideology is practised, as I have argued in this thesis, this ideology is also associated with containment and image management. It is not unreasonable to contend that the related foster parenting model is also oriented to the same ideological relevances and thereby works to sustain the relations of ruling within the military institution. In practice situations, this may mean that individual responses to deployment, for example, may be trivialized or obscured.

Approaches to Education and Counselling: The Systems Approach

A corresponding predisposition underpinning the work of many practitioners in Military Family Resource Centres is the use of the systems approach. This is an approach that attempts to understand the relationship between the military system and the family system and to somehow mediate between those two systems (Ridenour, 1984).

Because the finite unit of analysis within the systems approach is the family, (Goodrich, Rampage, Ellman & Halstead, 1988: McGoldrick, Anderson & Walsh, 1989), it cannot help military family members understand the broader institutional ideologies within which their family experience is embedded. Accordingly, counsellors and educators who use the systems perspective in their work may be, knowingly or otherwise, in complicity with institutional relevances that have an interest in maintaining the purported dependence of military family members upon the institution. This contention

makes sense when one considers how an exclusive focus on familial issues could preclude the development of any critical understanding of how institutional relevances are embodied in daily life. In other words, if family members are encouraged to only look within, they are less likely to critique institutional ideologies.

The systems approach to education and counselling can also be criticized on another point. Because the most finite unit of analysis within this approach is "the family", *individual* differences among family members are obscured. Indeed, from this perspective, family members are viewed as equal and interacting components of the system. This means that systems proponents cannot conceptualize differences among family members in terms of power, resources, needs and interests (Goodrich, Rampage, Ellman & Halstead, 1988; Taggart, 1985). This means that the systems perspective is gender-blind and thereby of limited value in planning and implementing programs for *women* participating in the programs and services offered through the Resource Centres.

This claim cannot be substantiated through this study. As discussed previously in this thesis, anyone who is marginalized by virtue of a "lack of fit" between everyday experience and institutionally relevant discourses and ideologies, runs the risk of losing touch with those experiences and the underlying meanings. This study did reveal a lack of fit in a number of instances. As Smith (1987) contends, this means that these experiences and meanings break away from a "line of fault" separating the everyday world from institutions. Given that female military partners are deemed to be marginal to the institution (Enloe, 1984; Harrison & Laliberte', 1994) and given that there is a perceived lack of fit, the continued use of a perspective, which is essentially gender-blind, would only perpetuate the invisibility of their daily practices, or the "work" that emerged

through this study which is implicated in the accomplishment of deployment.

The systems perspective also appears to encourage dichotomizing (McGoldrick, Anderson & Walsh, 1989). Kaplan (1988) defines dichotomous thought as "...the proclivity to understand experience in terms of dichotomies" (p.3). In other words, dichotomous thought establishes oppositional frameworks such as "self-other", "me-not me" or "us-them". These oppositional frameworks help to define hierarchial relationships which order and determine the distribution of power and control. Indeed, Kaplan (1988) contends that control is a central aspect of dichotomous thought. She states:

> Those in control seek ever more carefully to identify differences; such identification serves to reify the importance of those differences; the value-based distinctions between groups become increasingly important; and these distinctions are then placed within this framework of power and control. (p.4)

Kaplan's (1988) writing has enabled me to further understand how the use of the systems perspective may be ineffective in working with female military partners. The "military" and the "female military partner" are potential dichotomies - the former representing the public or work realm and the latter the private. Kaplan (1988) asserts that dichotomizing the relationship between work and the individual can foster the creation of a power differential between these two entities with work in the public sphere assuming preeminence over work in the private realm. Therefore, to the extent that the

systems approach encourages dichotomizing, it may be counter-productive as an educational or therapeutic intervention given that it has the capacity to reinforce the hierarchial and dichotomous relationship between the female military partner and the military institution. The recurring emphasis on the asymmetrical relationship between the military and the female military partner that would be a feature of a dichotomizing systems approach would only reinforce and reify any differences and distinctions. As a consequence, the hierarchial power relationship would be strengthened. Instead of learning to transcend their subordinate status that is supported through the mutually reinforcing gender and military ideologies, these women would be constantly reminded of the differential distribution of power and control within their lives.

Evidently, there are problems associated with the use of the systems and foster parenting approaches commonly used in developing and implementing educational programs and counselling services within Military Family Resource Centres. As mentioned previously in this thesis, one of the goals for this research study involves the exploration of alternative approaches that can be utilized in educational and counselling practice with female military partners. The following section of this chapter presents background to an alternative that is congruent with the findings of this particular study.

The Alternative: Feminist Principles in Practice

Feminist approaches to education and counselling hold promise as far as work with female military partners is concerned. Educational programs or counselling sessions planned and implemented in accordance with feminist theory take on a specific character and are planned in accordance with particular principles. The following discussion will present and critique these principles in light of the findings of this study and the ways in

which it was conducted.

Breaking Down Power Relations

One of the distinguishing features of feminist education and counselling programs is associated with power relations. Educators or counsellors and their clients assume an equal relationship in the context of a feminist program. This is a significant departure from traditional approaches. Equality is expressed in various ways within feminist programs.

Feminist educators and counsellors generally do not use their official titles. Rather, in interaction with their clients, first names are used. The purpose of this practice is to break down the power relationship by dispelling the idea that an "expert" is present. Moreover, power is also dispelled when the client is encouraged to take an active part in charting the course of his/her own therapy (Laidlaw & Malmo, 1990). These recommendations for practice were followed in the implementation of this research study.

Within the literature, these power-dispelling practices are sometimes referred to as "relational therapy" (Kaplan, 1988; Surrey, 1987). Relational therapy is discussed as an alternative to hierarchial approaches. The goal of the approach is to override power and authority through an emphasis on ways of building connections through relationship. In this spirit, practitioners and clients become mutually engaged in a process that reinforces empathy and understanding (Kaplan, 1988).

Despite its promise, there are problems associated with the use of relational approaches in work with female military partners. One wonders whether or not it is ever possible to strike a balance in the relationship between practitioner and client. Hierarchical thinking is very firmly entrenched within the military institution. Therefore,

it is reasonable to question whether or not it can ever be transcended. However, I believe that practitioners can work toward equality in their work with clients. Reflexivity can be of value in this regard, just as it was in designing and implementing this research study. If practitioners actively acknowledge and reflect upon the predicaments they encounter in striving toward equality, even if it is difficult to surmount those predicaments, then the promise of relational therapy with female military partners is more likely to be realized. Moreover, if practitioners can remain critical of their own practices and cultivate an ability to detect clients' conscious or subconscious reliance on hierarchial or dichotomous thinking, then it is plausible that they are doing their best to dislodge power relations.

Another critical issue emerges from an analysis of relational therapy. In breaking down the power relationship between practitioners and clients, concerns about boundaries may arise. It is quite conceivable that a client, particularly a very troubled or vulnerable client, may experience confusion as to his or her position in relation to the practitioner. This confusion is understandable, considering that as practitioners work toward equality by using first names as well as other practices of affirmation, they are taking on the appearance of a "friend". However, while practitioners may be "friendly", their relationship with the client is a professional one. This can be an extremely difficult situation for both the client and the educator/counsellor. Boundary issues need to be handled with great sensitivity on the part of the practitioner, particularly within deployment programs where female military partners may be experiencing feelings of isolation and loneliness.

<u>Empowerment</u>

The feminist literature on education and counselling identifies a definite goal for

work that proceeds from the empowerment perspective. In so doing, this literature questions the "adjustment" model of mental health. A number of feminists contend that the adjustment model fails to instigate real change. They argue that it merely encourages clients to conform to social expectations in an endeavor to "fit in" (Goodrich, Rampage, Ellman & Halstead, 1988; Laidlaw & Malmo, 1990). This means that the underlying causes of problems are not addressed. The literature stresses that if we truly wish to help our clients seek "change" as opposed to adjustment, then we need to think about the use of empowering approaches in our work.

The idea of "empowerment" is quite different from power and is thereby consistent with the principles of feminist education and counselling. While power refers to domination, control and mastery, the empowerment model embodies a spirit of cooperation and mutuality between practitioner and client. Accordingly, empowerment emphasizes a "power-with" rather than a "power-over" approach to change (Surrey, 1987).

I endeavoured to use an "empowerment" approach in the context of this study. Based on this experience, I can contend that it holds great promise for education and counselling work with female military partners. Indeed, many of the suggestions advanced in this regard and discussed to this point in this chapter were modified and adapted as feminist qualitative research practices which guided this study (refer to Chapter Four). In particular, many of the principles and practices were interpreted and practised as "intersubjectivity" and "reflexivity" as this study unfolded.

Throughout the study, I noted that some of the participating women felt overwhelmed by the institution. Presumably, women experiencing counselling or

educational programs would share this feeling. Normative expectations regarding their behaviour and other institutional constraints can make daily life within the military quite difficult. This problem is usually more intense for military families living within the boundaries of a base community. In this context, the military institution is constantly and unremittingly present to the families on a daily basis.

The sense of empowerment gained through feminist education and counselling programs can help to ameliorate some of these difficulties. Moreover, through the pooling of individual resources and strengths inherent in the empowerment approach, military wives can work toward the transformation of the institutional relations that shape their lives.

Summary and Recommendations

Recommendations for practice can be devised in accordance the methods as well as the epistemological understandings associated with this research study. The feminist qualitative research methods that proved to be invaluable in shaping the process and product of this research are readily transferable to the practice domain. Moreover, the summative statements outlined at the outset of this chapter can be of use in developing an alternative approach. Such an approach has the potential to be an effective alternative to existing practice models, such as the foster parenting and systems models.

First, an alternative approach would need to enable Resource Centre participants to understand the ideologies and discourses within which their experience is embedded. This would allow for the critique of those ideologies thereby transcending a "blame the victim" stance when difficulties occur. Moreover, an intersubjective and reflexive relationship between educators\counsellors and program participants, such as the one that

proved to be so important in the development of understandings in the context of this research study, would enable the participants to see how some of the ideologies complement each other and how some of them are complex and paradoxical.

Second, an alternate approach, to be effective in work with female military partners, would require that the *individual* and not the family comprise the most finite unit of analysis. This would mean that such an approach would not be gender-blind, something of obvious importance in planning and implementing programs for women.

Third, any alternative to the foster parenting and systems approaches should not be devised so as to reinforce dichotomizing between potentially oppositional entities. Dichotomizing reinforces differences between counsellors and clients and would thereby have the effect of entrenching power differentials between institutions and individuals, or the military and military wives.

Fourth, approaches employed in the development and delivery of educational programs and counselling services offered to female military partners should not perpetuate military and gender ideologies which encourage dependence upon the military institution. As the findings in this study indicate, it would be important to move away from approaches, such as the foster parenting and systems models, which support institutional relevances which have an interest in developing and maintaining dependence upon the institution.

The fifth, sixth and seventh recommendations for practice are somewhat more pragmatic in nature. Fifth, board members of Military Family Resource Centres and leaders of Wives' Networks should be solicited from the general military population. Doing so would more closely adhere to community development principles than the

current practice which embodies military ideologies associated with control and containment.

Sixth, the Wives' Networks attached to military units should not be deactivated immediately upon the return of a unit following a deployment. To do so, assumes that female military partners do not require support from their peers when their husbands are home. This practice also removes a significant form of support from the lives of military wives who may be experiencing difficulties in the post-deployment phase.

Seventh, as far as the actual enactment of programs and services designed from an alternate model is concerned, the character and style of interaction employed throughout the conduct of both interviews and support group meetings in the context of this study can serve as an example for the implementation of an alternate approach. This means that reflexivity and intersubjectivity would be key features of this approach. On a more specific level, this would also mean that respect for boundaries between participants and program facilitators would guide interaction, but efforts would be made to build trust and rapport.

Providing participants with a sense of ownership in relation to the educational experience would also be important. In the conduct of this study, this was accomplished through such means as allowing the participants to set the agenda for each support group meeting and direct its progress. In addition, within the study, as discussed at length in Chapter Four, a flexible interview guide was used and specific skills related to standpoint as a method were employed so as to ensure that the *women's* voices were heard and so that I, as the researcher, would not consign their words to pre-existing theoretical schema. It appears to me that such strategies could also be applied in educational practice where

the empowerment of female military partners is the focus.

Lucie Laliberte', the co-writer of the book entitled <u>No Life Like It: Military</u> <u>Wives in Canada</u>, is familiar with the potential that lies within the empowerment approach. She, in community with other military wives, was responsible for forming an organization known as OSOMM (Organization of Spouses of Military Members). This was not a typical military wives' network as described in this study. Rather, OSOMM began at CFB Penhold in 1984 with a group of military wives lobbying for a dental plan, day care, pensions and a safer traffic intersection (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994). Even though this group was labelled a "political" group by the institution and thereby forbidden to meet on base (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994), it soon became a movement and was successful in achieving some of its goals. Some even claim that the creation of the national Family Support Program evolved out of the civilian media attention that OSOMM attracted (Harrison & Laliberte', 1994).

While the OSOMM model provides inspiration and encouragement for anyone interested in programs or services designed to empower military wives, it is important to note that there are risks and difficulties associated with these initiatives. For example, participation in such a group could potentially affect the careers of the serving members.

Given that the goal of change associated with the empowerment approach comprises intrapsychic change as well as interpersonal and social transformation, it is quite reasonable to expect that some individuals might discover aspects of the self that cause discomfort or pain. As a result, practitioners have an ethical responsibility to carefully consider the potential risk of self-exposure for each individual or group participating in programs that are focussed on empowerment.

If it appears that risk is there, even to a minimal degree, then I think that it is incumbent upon practitioners to build in safeguards or safety nets within their practices. The form that these safeguards will take will vary in accordance with the situation, but nevertheless, some form of support network needs to be in place. In the context of this study, a support group was helpful in this regard.

It is also necessary for practitioners to think about whether or not they are willing and/or able to take the empowerment approach to the point where interpersonal and social change transpires. Practitioners need to consider the consequences of seeking change on this level, both for themselves and for the people they work with.

As the findings of this study indicate, the everyday practices of female military partners embody particular military ideologies as well as complementary gender ideologies. Moreover, the study supports the contention that the enactment of the practices sustains the relations of ruling so vital to the functioning of the military institution. This means that the relevances and preoccupations of the institution are woven within the lives of military wives. An empowerment or emancipatory approach, as the recommendations presented previously in this chapter infer, would mean that participating women would be encouraged to stand back from their experience, disentangle the ideologies and discourses and subject them to critical review.

On the surface, this seems like a laudable goal. However, there are also ethical risks associated with the pursuit of this goal. The application of the empowerment approach could precipitate interpretations of life as a military spouse that could be discordant with interpretations that some may have adopted in order to endure the challenges associated with life within the military institution. There are significant

contradictions between the empowerment of military wives and the relevances of the military institutions. Although some, like Lucie Laliberté, may eagerly embrace the empowerment model and transcend the inherent contradictions, others, in order to benefit from the emancipation would have to change their lives to an extent that might put them at risk.

These ethical concerns pose questions in relation to the fundamental premises of feminist research. As discussed previously in this thesis, a feminist model for research that is based on the principles of standpoint method and the notion of doing research "for" women is an attractive alternative for those disillusioned with traditional research paradigms or for those who wish to recover the experiences of marginalized individuals from the gap created by the "line of fault" (Smith, 1987). However, what does it mean to do research "for" women when doing so may create dissonance and pain within their lives? Moreover, although "starting from the everyday lives" of individuals in accordance with the principles of standpoint method does resolve epistemological issues associated with "absent voices" and "absent experiences", what does it mean when those voices and experiences are inconsistent with or in direct opposition to institutional relevances? While Lucie Laliberté's voice and the voices of other OSOMM members certainly did confront institutional relevances and also were instrumental in bringing about institutional change in relation to the instigation of the Family Support Program Project (FSPP), the question remains though as to whether or not other emancipatory endeavours would achieve similar results.

Although skepticism in this regard is understandable given the implacable character of the military institution, I believe that future empowerment initiatives may be

possible as far as military wives are concerned. At this time, many of the ideologies and discourses that have long been immutable within the military institution are being scrutinized in both official and civilian circles. In particular, the Somalia Inquiry is calling into question ideologies associated with image, appearance, containment and control. Videotapes of hazing rituals and other military practices are exposing some of the more horrific details of unit cohesion. The recent disbandment of the Airborne Regiment has precipitated further questions about the ultimate imperative of the military - combat readiness. Now that the Cold War is over, uncertainties prevail regarding the suitability and viability of deploying elite fighter regiments to areas of the globe that require peace-keeping and negotiation skills to resolve their conflicts. Even popular culture is contributing to the analysis of the military institution and its ideologies and discourses through dissemination of movies such as "Courage Under Fire" and "A Few Good Men".

The point to itemizing these examples of the ways in which military ideologies and discourses are now open to public and institutional scrutiny is to offer hope for future empowerment initiatives within the military institution. As institutional relevances and associated military practices are questioned and perhaps re-conceptualized, it is plausible that an empowerment model for educational programming and counselling services within Military Family Resource Centres could be tenable. While stating this, it is also important to emphasize that the ethical and methodological implications associated with empowerment models within the military institution require analysis through future research.

Letter to Ship's Personnel

Date:

To:

From: Deborah Norris
8 Shawinigan Road
Dartmouth, NS B2W 3A2
435-7148

Re: Ph.D research in the School of Education, Dalhousie University, Halifax B3H 3J5

I am currently working on my Ph.D within the School of Education at Dalhousie University. My area of interest is in counselling and family life education programs. In the past, I have planned and implemented a number of different programs for Military families through the Military Family Resource Centre.

It is through this experience that I became interested in conducting research with military wives. Accordingly, I am now planning research which will attempt to understand the experiences of military wives with deployment. Understandings gained from this research will be applied to education and counselling programs that are planned and implemented through Military Family Resource Centres.

I am writing to you to ask for your cooperation with this study. Your ship is about to leave on an extensive NATO deployment. I would like to work with a small number of military wives attached to your ship. These women would be asked to participate in three interviews with me alone and to attend a support group with other women participating in the study. I hope that you will grant me the opportunity to learn about how military wives experience deployment.

I look forward to your reply.

Appendix B

Research Schedule

Activity	Months	Briefing	Interviews	Phone Calls	Support Group Meetings
Pre-Deployment	1	X	XXXX XXX	X	
Deployment	2			X	X
	3			X	X
	4			X	X
	5		X	X	
	6		XXX	X	X
	7		XXX	X	X
	8			X	XX
	9			X	X
Post-Deployment	10		X	X	
	11		XXX	X	
	12		XXX	X	X
	13			X	X

Consent Form

Name:_____

I understand that Deborah Norris is conducting research for her Ph.D at Dalhousie University within the School of Education. In the research for her thesis, she is attempting to explicate the concrete practices characterizing the everyday lives of female military partners, particularly with reference to the cycle of deployment. In so doing, she will endeavour to discover the meanings women ascribe to these everyday practices, as well as the psychological resources and coping strategies they believe they employ as they experience the cycle of deployment. I understand that findings resulting from this research will be applied to education and counselling programs that are planned and implemented within Military Family Resource Centres.

I agree to participate in three interviews with Deborah Norris at specific points in time in relation to the deployment process, ie., before, during and after the deployment.

I understand that the interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed. Everything I say will remain confidential. Anything that may identify me will be changed or omitted.

I understand that I can ask that the tape recorder be turned off or that my words not be transcribed at any point.

I understand that I will be provided with the opportunity to read the transcripts of my interviews and a draft of the thesis that presents and discusses this part of the research. Any changes that I wish to make will be incorporated.

I understand that the tapes and transcriptions of my interviews will be stored in a secure location within the researcher's home and that only myself, the researcher and her supervisor will have access to this material. I also understand that the tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed upon completion of the research project.

_____   _____
Signed (Research participant)   Date

_____   _____
Signed (Researcher)   Date

Interview Guide

Pre-deployment Phase

Pseudonym:

_____

Where do you live?

How long have you lived in this location?

How long have you been married/together?

How often is your husband/partner deployed?

How long are his deployments (usually)?

Can you tell me what the last few days/weeks have been like for you?

What do you do on an average day?

Are your days different now that you are getting ready for the deployment? If so, how?

What kinds of special preparations are you making right now as you get ready for the deployment?

How do you feel about the deployment experience?

Are you feeling differently about yourself or your life now that the deployment is near? If so, how?

(If applicable) Why do you think your life changes as deployment approaches?

(If applicable) What causes those changes?

(If applicable) Why do you think your feelings change as deployment approaches?

(If applicable) What causes those changes?

What helps you cope with "getting ready" for deployment?

What doesn't help you?

How do you feel about the way you manage the preparations necessary for deployment?

Why do you think you manage things in this way?

Is there anything you would like to do differently as you prepare for deployment?

What would help you with this?

Appendix E

The Military Wife

The good Lord was creating a model for military wives and was into His sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared. She said, "Lord, you seem to be having a lot of trouble with this one. What's wrong with the standard model?"

The Lord replied, "Have you seen the specs on this order? She has to be completely independent, possess the qualities of both father and mother, be a perfect hostess to four or forty with an hour's notice, run on black coffee, handle every emergency imaginable without a manual, be able to carry on cheerfully, even if she is pregnant and has the flu, and she must be willing to move to a new location 10 times in 17 years. And, oh yes, she must have six pairs of hands!"

The angel shook her head, "Six pairs of hands? No way."

The Lord continued, "Don't worry. I will make other military wives to help her. And I will give her an unusually strong heart so it can swell with pride in her husband's achievements, sustain the pain of separations, beat soundly when it is overworked and tired and be large enough to say, "I understand" when she doesn't and to say "I love you", regardless.

"Lord", said the angel, touching his arm gently, "Go to bed and get some rest. You can finish this tomorrow."

"I can't stop now", said the Lord. I am so close to creating something unique. Already this model heals herself when she is sick, can put up six unexpected guests for the weekend, wave good-bye to her husband from a pier, a runway or a depot, and understand why it is important that he leave."

The angel circled the model of the military wife, looked at it closely and sighed, "It looks fine, but its too soft."

"She might look soft," replied the Lord. But she has the strength of a lion. You would not believe what she can endure."

Finally the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek of the Lord's creation. "There's a leak," she announced. "Something is wrong with the construction. I am not surprised that it has cracked. You are trying to put too much into this model."

The Lord appeared offended at the angel's lack of confidence. "What you see is not a leak," he said, "its a tear."

"A tear? What is it there for?" asked the angel.

The Lord replied, "Its for joy, sadness, pain, disappointment, loneliness, pride, and a dedication to all of the values that she and her husband hold dear."

"You are a genius!" exclaimed the angel.

The Lord looked puzzled and replied, "I didn't put it there."

Author Unknown

A Serviceman's Wife

A serviceman's wife is mostly girl. But there are times, such as when her husband is away and she is mowing the lawn or fixing a youngster's bike, that she begins to suspect that she is also a boy.

She usually comes in three sizes: petite, plump and pregnant. During the early years of her marriage, it is often hard to determine which is her normal condition.

She has babies all over the world and measures time in terms of places as other women do in years.

"It was at Gagetown that we all had the mumps...in Germany Dan was promoted..."

At least one of her babies was born, or a move was accomplished, while she was alone. This causes her to suspect a secret pact between her husband and the service providing for a man to be overseas or on temporary duty at times such as these.

A serviceman's wife is international. She may be a prairie farm girl, a Quebec mademoiselle, an Indian princess or a Maritime nurse. When discussing service problems, they all speak the same language.

She can be a great actress. To the heartbroken children at posting time, she gives Academy Award winning performances: "Wainwright is going to be such fun. I heard they have Indian reservations...and gophers...and gophers...and more gophers." But her heart is breaking with theirs. She wonders if this Armed Forces is worth the sacrifice.

A serviceman's wife has the patience of an angel, the flexibility of putty, the wisdom of a scholar, and the stamina of a horse.

If she dislikes money, it helps. She is sentimental, carrying her memories with her in an old barrack box.

She often cries at parades without knowing why.

She is a dreamer and vows, "We will never move again!'

An optimist, "The next place will be better!"

One might say she is a bigamist sharing her husband with a demanding entity called "Duty". When duty calls, she becomes Wife #2, and until she accepts that fact, her life will be miserable.

She is above all a woman who married a serviceman who offered her the permanence of a gypsy, the miseries of loneliness, the frustration of conformity, and the security of love.

Sitting among her packing boxes with squabbling children nearby, she is sometimes willing to chuck it all...until she hears the firm step and cheerful voice of the lug who gave her all of this.

Then she is happy to be..."A Serviceman's Wife!"

Author Unknown

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