IDEOLOGY OR OPPOSITIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS? THE CONDITIONS OF FEMINIST IDENTIFICATION.

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ABSTRACT

ANNE KRISTEN HUNTER: Ideology or Oppositional Consciousness? The Conditions of Feminist Identity
(Under the direction of Kenneth T Andrews)

Why do some women call themselves feminists while others do not? Scholars studying feminist identity tend to focus only on the identities of women who are members of feminist organizations, or to assume that all women who agree with feminist ideas identify themselves as feminists. Tests of this assumption, however, have proven disappointing. I trace the history of this hypothesis, and using Jane Mansbridge and Aldon Morris’ theory of oppositional consciousness, to develop my own. Using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), I test both hypotheses. I find that ideas do not matter; oppositional consciousness, not feminist ideology, is the key variable that conditions women’s feminist identification.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Why do women who have very similar beliefs about gender differ in their willingness to identify themselves as feminists? Many scholars have studied the extent to which women accept or reject a feminist self-identity based on their agreement with feminist ideas. Yet these scholars have struggled to explain why some women who agree with feminist ideas do not also accept a feminist identity. Others have explicitly linked feminist identity to participation in women’s movement organizations (Mansbridge 1995; Rupp and Taylor 1999; Taylor and Whittier 1992), and have offered very detailed accounts of the work that is needed to create and maintain identities within these organizations. Yet these accounts do very little to explain the acceptance of a feminist identity by approximately one-third of American women, far more than have ever participated in any movement organization (Boles 1991). Why is it that some women agree with the ideas of the feminist movement and call themselves feminists, while other women, who agree with the same ideas, reject the feminist label?

Within the social movement literature, the consequences of movement activity have received less attention than the activity itself, whether mobilizing resources or participants, framing movement ideas, or engaging in contentious politics. Even within the literature on the consequences of movements, more is known about some types of movement outcomes than others. In particular, the cultural consequences of movements have not received the kind of systematic and cumulative study that political and organizational consequences have (Burstein et al. 1995; Earl 2000, 2004).
Staggenborg (1995) identifies three types of successful movement outcomes: changes in the policy or practice of a formal organization, organizational survival, and cultural change. Earl (2004), building on Hart’s (1996) typology of the uses of culture in social movement research, identifies three types of cultural outcomes that movements produce: social-psychological outcomes, including changes in popular belief and public opinion; symbolic outcomes, including both the cultural products of movements and changes in the practices of everyday life; and community outcomes, including the creation of collective identities and communities of participants. The creation and maintenance of a collective identity is probably the most studied cultural outcome of movement activity (Earl 2004; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Snow and McAdam 2000), but it has been treated primarily as an outcome for movement participants.

Much of what we know about the consequences of movement participation comes from follow-up studies of former Civil Rights movement participants (Giugni 2004; McAdam 1999). These studies consistently show that the experience of engaging in dangerous social protest transformed the individual participants. Participants were more likely than their peers to remain committed to social justice issues and organizations, to have non-traditional families, to work in helping professions, and to have experienced low wages and unemployment (McAdam 1988; 1989). Broader research, based on less risky forms of social movement participation, suggests that former participants have led quite different lives than their peers who did not participate (Goldstone and McAdam 2001; McAdam 1999; Van Dyke et al. 2000; Wilhelm 1998). As an aggregate, former movement participants may be responsible for some of the major changes in the patterns of everyday American life that have occurred since the 1960s, including changes in employment, divorce, and child-bearing.
But most people do not participate in any measurable way. What are the consequences of movement support for sympathetic bystanders? Psychologists Ray and Anderson (2000) argue that the social movements of the 1960s had profound consequences for American society. They argue that not only movement participants, but also participants’ friends and family, and supporters who did not participate, had their lives transformed by their exposure to these movements. Like Goldstone and McAdam (2001), Ray and Anderson argue that these changed individuals are responsible for major cultural changes in American society, both directly, through their own attitudes and behavior, and indirectly, through their influence on the attitudes and behavior of their family and friends.¹ With Earl (2004) and Staggenborg (1995), I argue that the creation and maintenance of a collective identity among movement supporters should be seen as a successful movement outcome.

Feminist identity is an ideal case for studying this process. Gamson (1991) identifies three levels or “layers” of collective identity. The deepest level in Gamson’s typology is identification with the broad social group a movement claims to represent. The intermediate level is identification with the movement as a whole, and the shallowest level is identification with a particular movement organization. Feminist identity is at the correct level for understanding the differential adoption of a movement’s collective identity because it exists between the narrower, organization-specific identities that exist among participants, and the broader identity of “woman” (Rupp and Taylor 1999).

Further, in contrast to many other movement identities, feminist identity has been repeatedly measured by survey researchers, who have asked respondents directly about whether or not they identify themselves as feminists. The ability to find a feminist identity

¹ Ray and Anderson estimate there to be about 50 million of these individuals, or less than a quarter of the nation’s adult population.
among a representative sample of American women, rather than only among those who were sampled because of their pre-existing connection to a feminist organization, enables me to understand the acceptance or rejection of a collective identity among all women, whether or not they are movement participants.

In this paper, I ask under what conditions women adopt a feminist collective identity, and under what conditions that identity is foreclosed, abandoned, or rejected.\(^2\) I review previous sociological research addressing this question, and the central role that feminist ideas have played in this research. I address the weaknesses I see in both the social movements and social-psychological approaches, and offer a new empirical model of feminist identity, while insisting that the insights of the movements literature be retained. Building on the scholarship of Rochon (1998) and Mansbridge and Morris (2001), I develop a model of feminist identity that incorporates the roles of both feminist ideas and oppositional consciousness. I test this model using Ragin’s (2000) fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) methodology on a nationally representative sample of American women taken in 1989. Finally, I address the implications of my findings for movements theory and research.

Approaches to feminist identity in social movements research

I find two major approaches to the question of feminist identity within the social movements literature. The first approach treats the set of women who participate in feminist movement organizations as identical to the set of women who identify as feminists. The

\(^2\) Although I cannot empirically distinguish between the different trajectories of women’s non-acceptance of a feminist identity, I think it important to note the many possible paths to non-identification. I consider identification with the feminist movement to be foreclosed when a woman has simply never considered the issue, abandoned when a woman who once identified with the movement ceases to do so, and rejected when a woman consciously decides not to adopt the identity.
second approach treats the set of women who agree with feminist ideas as identical to the set of women who are feminists, regardless of these women’s self-professed acceptance or non-acceptance of the feminist identity. While these assumptions have guided much useful movements research, I find that both approaches obscure certain processes already of interest to movements scholars, and that both are removed from the central question about feminist identity within mainstream sociology: why do some women call themselves feminists while others do not?

Scholars using the first approach focus on women who are already members of feminist organizations, using in-depth analysis to study the rich content of their feminist identities. These studies reveal the active work that is needed to maintain an organizational identity and the boundary that separates such an identity from competing claims. They have also shown the diversity of understandings of the feminist identity that coexist within the movement, both across and within individual organizations. Taylor and Whittier (1992) studied the processes that allowed lesbian feminists to maintain the distinctive identities needed to maintain their separatist communities. Reger (2002) found multiple feminist identities across organizations in her study of two local chapters of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in Cleveland, Ohio and New York. Reger shows that each chapter fostered a distinct feminist identity, allowing them to maintain different definitions of feminism and to pursue different strategies of social change. Whittier (1995) also found multiple feminist identities within organizations in her study in Columbus, Ohio, each corresponding to a micro-cohort formed by women who had entered the organizations around the same time.
While studies like these are valuable for their detailed analysis of the identities of women who participate directly in feminist movement organizations, they tell us nothing about the identities of women identify themselves with the feminist movement, but are not members of any feminist organization. I find this problematic because most women who identify themselves as feminists have never been members of a feminist movement organization. NOW is the largest national feminist organization, and had 200,000 members in 1990 (Barakso 2004). This is impressive membership, but it is less than of one percent of adult women, and is dwarfed by the 30 to 40 percent of American women who identified themselves as feminists at the end of the 1980s (Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodriguez 2003). Although many women have and continue to participate in the feminist movement through numerous other national, state-level, and grassroots organizations, these forms of direct involvement do not even come close to the indirect involvement of identification with the movement. Using a survey from 1991, Boles shows that about one-third of women identified themselves as feminists, but only one-third of one percent have ever participated in a feminist organization or protest event.

Scholars using the second major social movements approach to feminist identity write about all women who agree with feminist ideology. Here I use “ideology” in the non-pejorative sense advocated by Oliver and Johnston (2000) to mean “a set of idea-elements that are bound together, that belong to one another in a non-random fashion,” (Gerring 1997; quoted in Oliver and Johnston 2000: 42). Feminist ideas belong together in a set of ideas, in a feminist ideology. The feminist movement is not characterized by total ideological unity (Armstrong 2002), but neither are the ideas of different feminists so different as to render them totally incompatible (Ferree and Hess 2000; Ryan 1989). Feminist organizations have

3 NOW’s contemporary membership has grown to over 500,000 according to Barakso.
tended to disagree with one another about emphasis and strategic priority far more than about their underlying ideas and values (Freeman 1973; Ryan 1989). There are many feminist ideologies - for example, liberal, radical, and socialist - and the total set of all feminist ideologies comprises a feminist worldview. Each feminist ideology contains a narrower sub-set of the ideas that fall within the broader feminist worldview.

Scholars using this approach argue that women who agree with feminist ideas are feminists, in an ontological sense, whether they identify themselves as feminists or not (Misciagno 1997; Staggenborg 1995). I find this approach unsatisfactory for several reasons. While it is possible to argue about women’s ontological status as feminists or non-feminists, this status cannot be directly observed or measured. In contrast, feminist self-identification can be both observed and measured, and has been on several national surveys, and it is logically distinct from agreement with feminist ideas, whatever the ontological implications of that agreement may be. I am concerned that this approach draws attention to one successful movement outcome, the dissemination of feminist ideology, at the expense of attending to another successful outcome, the dissemination of feminist identity. Declaring that all women who accept feminist ideology are feminists is rhetorically powerful, and it illustrates how much the feminist movement has succeeded in changing the thinking of ordinary American women (Evans 2004; Ferree and Hess 2000; Stacey 1989). As I argue above, both changing beliefs and creating collective identities should be considered successful movement outcomes, but to be considered at all, they must be theoretically distinct. Equating ideological agreement with collective identification muddles this distinction, and obscures more accomplishments than it illuminates.
Furthermore, collective identity both allows and encourages those who support a movement’s ideas to participate in movement activity. Klandermans (2004: 364) puts it succinctly: “a strong identification with a group makes participation in collective political action on behalf of that group more likely,” (see also Huddy 2001; Kelly and Breinlinger 1996; Mansbridge and Morris 2001; Simon et al. 1998; Stryker et al. 2000). While relatively few of those who support the feminist movement ultimately participate in feminist organizations or protest events, broadening the definition of “participation” to include other forms of ideologically structured action, as Zald (2000) recommends, allows us to find many more women attempting to enact their feminist ideas through many other activities, even the mundane activities of their everyday lives (Staggenborg & Taylor 2005). Assuming equivalency between ideological agreement and movement identification obscures this crucial link between support and participation, especially non-traditional forms of participation.

Perhaps most importantly, both the major approaches to studying feminist identity within the field of social movements, because they are fundamentally unable to engage the question of why some women identify themselves as feminists while others do not, are out of touch with the study of feminist identity within mainstream sociology, where that question is central. I next discuss the main theories used to answer this question by scholars using a social-psychological approach, and discuss the valuable contributions I believe social movements theory could still make to this research area. Finally, I test my own theoretical model in an fsQCA design, using insights drawn from the best social-psychological research and the social movements literature.
Approaches to feminist identity by sociologists of gender

Within mainstream empirical sociology, scholars interested in feminist identity have sought primarily to test the hypothesis that women who agree with feminist ideas call themselves feminists, while women who do not agree with feminist ideas do not? These scholars work from a baseline hypothesis that women will identify themselves as feminists if they agree with feminist ideology. The results have been disappointing. There have always been more women who agree with feminist ideology than who identify themselves as feminists (Jacobson and Koch 1978; Renzetti 1987). Furthermore, acceptance of feminist ideas explains little of the variance among women who do and do not adopt a feminist identity (Buschman and Lenart 1996; Schnittker et al. 2003; McCabe 2005). McCabe finds that it explains none at all. To account for the apparent discrepancy between feminist ideas and feminist identity, scholars have employed another hypothesis, that it can be explained by widespread negative beliefs about feminism that preclude identification with the movement among those who agree with feminist ideas.

Much of the scholarly research that empirically tests the relationship between feminist ideology and feminist identity comes from a social-psychological perspective (Buschman and Lenart 1996; Jacobson and Koch 1978; Myaskovsky and Wittig 1997; Reid and Purcell 2004; Renzetti 1987; Williams and Wittig 1997). These studies typically rely on small, non-representative samples of college students to substantiate their claims. Some of these studies use relatively complex models that include not only ideology and beliefs about feminism, but also other factors that potentially relate causally to feminist identity, but

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4 One exception to this trend is found among scholars interested in the effect of feminist identity on women’s performance of housework. Here, Kroska (2000) argues, scholars simply assume the connection by operationalizing measurements of agreement with feminist ideas as feminist identity. This practice remains problematic for the reasons I outlined above. (For examples of this type of work, see Henley et al 1998; Plutzer 1988.)
unfortunately, their sampling techniques severely limit their generalizability and compromise their empirical claims. Nonrandom samples may be used in classic experimental studies because the independent variable is fully controlled by the researcher. They are not appropriate for studies where the independent variable both precedes the study and affects the likelihood of potential respondents’ participation in the study, as is the case with agreement with feminist ideas. For example, Williams and Wittig (1997) model feminist identity as a function of ideology, perception of the feminist movement, preference for social change, and exposure to feminism, but rely on a convenience sample of 191 college students to test their model.

In the best recent study, Schnittker, Freese, and Powell (2003), find that the strength of the relationship between feminist ideology and identity is generationally specific, with identity and ideology most closely related among women who came of age during the height of feminist activism. Schnittker et al. correct the tendency to rely on small, unrepresentative samples by using the 1996 General Social Survey. However, they assume the importance of negative perceptions of feminism without testing it. This is again treated as a post hoc explanation in their conclusion section when they claim, “Given that considerations of the infrequency of feminist self-identification have often centered on the negative portrayal of feminism by its opponents, our results might be seen as implying that the negative depictions have ‘won out’ over the more positive images offered by feminism’s supporters,” (Schnittker et al. 2003: 619). They argue that their results should not be seen this way, but they do not treat the proposition as a testable hypothesis.

The postfeminist hypothesis
The argument invoked by Schnittker et al, that dis-identification with the feminist movement is caused by widespread negative beliefs about feminism, originated in the mass media (Faludi 1991; Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodriguez 2003; Staggenborg and Taylor 2005). I call this argument the postfeminist hypothesis, because it is an argument that since the 1990s, America has been in a “post-feminist” era. Hall and Rodriguez (2003) identify the central claims of this argument as being: the feminist movements’ goals are irrelevant to most women; the movement has been soundly defeated; that public opinion in general has turned against feminist ideas; and that women, and young women and women of color in particular, have strong negative perceptions of feminism. I present one form of the postfeminist hypothesis below, as a potential answer to my central research question: under what conditions do women identify themselves as feminists?

Postfeminist Hypothesis: Women identify themselves as feminists when they both agree with feminist ideas and have positive or neutral perceptions of the feminist movement. Women do not identify themselves as feminists whenever they have negative perceptions of the feminist movement or when they do not agree with feminist ideas.

(Figure 1 about here).

Figure 1 offers a graphic representation of the postfeminist hypothesis as I have formulated it here. In this representation, feminists are a subset of the set of women who agree with feminist ideas and of the set of women who do not have negative perceptions of the feminist movement. Agreement with feminist ideas, and having positive or neutral perceptions of feminism, are jointly the conditions of feminist identification.
It is true that some women have negative perceptions of feminism. Buschman and Lenart (1996) find that the word “feminism” itself has been successfully stigmatized for about 4 percent of the students in their sample. Kamen (1991) finds that many women who agreed with feminist ideas associated a feminist identity with other negative personal characteristics, which they did not want associated with themselves. Aronson (2003) argues that many women have an ambivalent relationship to feminism, and that even those who accept it do so conditionally. The postfeminist argument however, does not simply claim that some women dislike the feminist movement, but rather that the movement has declined rapidly in popularity and support, and that few, if any, women still identify themselves as feminists. As I discussed earlier, approximately 30 percent of American women identified themselves as Feminists at the start of the 1990s (Boles 1991; Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodriguez 2003). The central claim of the postfeminist argument is false.

Why then, do mainstream sociologists studying feminist identity continue to invoke the postfeminist argument to explain their inability to find a meaningful causal relationship between feminist ideas and feminist identity? I find that, in general, the contributions of the social movements literature are under-utilized by other sociologists interested in feminist identity. In addition to the claim that women have ceased to identify themselves as feminists, the postfeminist argument also includes a number of assumptions about the popularity of both feminist ideas and the feminist movement itself over time. Studies of trends in public support for feminist ideas and the feminist movement suggest that nearly every premise on which the postfeminist argument is built is false. Furthermore, the postfeminist gains its initial plausibility from a view that women’s non-identification with the feminist movement is most likely caused by movement failure. Studies of movement success challenge this
claim. Finally, I find that the social-psychological approach taken by mainstream sociologists treats feminist identity as an individual, “me” identity (Thoits and Virshup 1997). I look to Mansbridge and Morris’ (2001) study of oppositional consciousness to understand how to better treat it as a collective, “we” identity. By using these insights from the movements literature, I develop an alternative hypothesis about the antecedents of feminist identity, and test it against the postfeminist model.  

Insights from studies of social movement history

Scholars who use cross-sectional data to study feminist identity, as both I and many of the scholars I have mentioned do, cannot speak to historical trends in feminist identity from their own data. We must turn instead to research that incorporates historical data to understand the context of our own research. Many sociologists studying feminist identity appear to be relying on popular accounts of the history of the feminist movement, accounts which claim that during the 1980s, feminist ideas declined in popularity, negative perceptions of the feminist movement became widespread, and feminist identification dwindled (for example, Buschman and Lenart 1996; Myaskovsky and Wittig 1997; Reid and Purcell 2004; Renzetti 1987; Williams and Wittig 1997).

To evaluate these claims, I look to the excellent historical research of Ferree and Hess (2000) and Hall and Rodriguez (2003), who used dozens of public opinion surveys from the 1970s to the 1990s to chart trends in feminist identity, feminist ideas, and the popularity of the feminist movement. Their findings flatly contradict the postfeminist account. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, women’s rate of identification with the feminist movement

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5 While it should not surprise the reader that I consider the postfeminist argument to be theoretically bankrupt, I would also consider myself hypocritical for dismissing it in the same fashion I criticize others for simply accepting it. Therefore, an empirical test is needed to refute this argument properly.
remained roughly constant, staying around 30 percent. Feminist ideas were very popular at the beginning of this time-frame, and only became more so. By the 1990s, some feminist ideas, such as equal pay for equal work, achieved over 90 percent agreement among American women. Furthermore, perceptions of the feminist movement remained largely positive as well. Only about 20 percent of women indicated a serious negative perception of feminism. The narrative of the feminist movement that serves to bolster the postfeminist argument in the popular imagination is false in its every detail.

At the same time, the 1990s saw an increase in feminist protest, after declines in movement activity following the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment (Ferree and Hess 2000; Staggenborg and Taylor 2005). NOW also grew throughout the 1990s, and is currently larger than at any point in its history (Barakso 2004). Staggenborg and Taylor (2005) evaluate a wide range of scholarly research on the feminist movement since 1990, and find that it remains today a large and active social movement. They argue that the contemporary feminist movement receives less attention from the mass media and from social movements scholars working in the contentious politics perspective (McAdam, et al. 2001) but that this lack of attention reflects pre-existing ideological commitments, not actual declines in the health of the movement.

Narratives of the feminist movement’s success or failure are not simply neutral accounts of events. Faludi (1991) argues that accounts of the postfeminist argument, and attendant stories of the feminist movement’s supposed failure, that appear in the news media are themselves a constitutive part of the anti-feminist backlash they purport to simply describe. More generally, Klandermans (2006) argues that stories of movement success and failure should be thought of as movement outcomes, and as at least partially independent of
the events they claim to depict. Because these stories are produced by the same competition among interested movement and counter-movement actors that drives other movement outcomes, and because few movements are ever wholly successful, it is entirely possible for real indicators of movement success to exist alongside widely popular stories of movement failure. In the case of the feminist movement, I argue that while a narrative has gained popularity which emphasizes defeat, this postfeminist narrative is only one possible story about the movement, and not one to which scholars should give precedence.

Insights from studies of movement success

From the social-psychological perspective used by most mainstream sociologists studying feminist identity, the empirical disconnect between agreement with feminist ideas and adoption of feminist identity appears to be a failure of the feminist movement. What sort of movement is it, after all, if there is no relationship between agreeing with its ideas and identifying with the movement itself? I argue that these scholars turn to the postfeminist argument because it is an argument that casts the feminist movement as a failure and views the disconnect between ideology and identity as symptomatic of that failure. I find in the social movements literature, however, evidence that movement success is often the cause of dis-identification with a movement. I argue that the disconnect between feminist ideas and feminist identity is an unusual byproduct of movement success, and turn to the movements literature for an account of the causes of the adoption of collective identities within successful social movements.

Studies of the de-mobilizing effects of movement success tend to focus on declines in protest events, rather than on identification with the movement, but their evidence is telling.
Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that both successful organization building and minor concessions by lawmakers led to declines in radical action by activists in poor people’s movements. Early legislative victories of the Civil Rights movement satisfied its more moderate supporters and partially contributed to movement decline (Jenkins and Ekert 1986). Minkoff (1997) finds that increases in black Congressional representation led to declines in the number of Civil Rights protests. Similarly, the successful institutionalization of women’s suffrage led to decreases in both the size and efficacy of feminist organizations after 1920 (Harvey 1998; Taylor 1989).

I argue that movement victories affect not only the organizational involvement of participants, but also the movement identities of supporters. Successful movements first create, and then destroy, the ideological justification for their own existence. Rochon (1998) argues that movements change popular ideas in a two-stage process. In the first stage, ideas that had been popular, consensual, unquestionable, become the subject of controversy because of movement protest activity. In the second stage, the movement has so thoroughly publicized its ideas, that what had been controversial becomes once again subject to consensus. It should come as no surprise that agreement with the ideas of a mature social movement does not predict identification with the movement itself. Participation in, and identification with, a mature social movement must have some other basis, beyond agreement with movement ideas. I discuss one possible basis below.

As an example, consider the first wave of the American feminist movement. Prior to the mobilization of this feminist movement, the idea that women should not participate in electoral politics seemed natural and appropriate to most Americans, including most women. Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue that at the time of the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848,
voting rights were the most controversial issue on the feminist agenda. Yet the right of women to vote was successfully institutionalized in American law in 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Today, the idea that women should be allowed to vote remains within the feminist worldview, yet it has entered the dominant ideology as well. Almost everyone in America now believes that women should be allowed to vote; only the opposite proposition would be controversial.

Although most people believe that women should be allowed to vote, most people do not identify themselves as feminists. As I describe above, analysis of public opinion data shows that many more recent feminist ideas enjoy nearly as much support as women’s right to vote (Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodreguiz 2003). Furthermore, not all feminists hold the same ideas, and there are many feminist ideologies within the broader feminist worldview. Against this backdrop of widespread public support for many feminist ideas, and internal divisions among feminists with regard to others, I would like to propose that ideas do not matter. Or at least, movement ideas, as they can be measured by survey researchers, do not predict identification with a social movement.

Survey researchers seem able only to pose their questions during one of two periods: when ideas are still contested even among movement activists and theorists, or when ideas are already so popular that they scarcely seem worth asking about. When rapid social change occurs, the moments between these two periods are fleeting (Rochon 1998), the time during which acceptance of movement ideas might predict acceptance of a movement identity is brief, if there is truly ever such a time at all. Surveys attempting to catch respondents during this time are condemned always to come too early or too late. If researchers hoping to link movement ideas to movement identity cannot succeed, then what comes before
identification, and how might we understand why some movement supporters identify themselves with a movement?

Insights from the study of oppositional consciousness

Mansbridge and Morris (2001) argue that what they call “oppositional consciousness” serves as the individual psychological basis for social movement participation. This consciousness originates in the oppositional subculture of a subordinated group, and is later deliberately cultivated by activists. The initial cultivation of oppositional culture occurs within segregated spaces (Morris and Braine 2001) or “free spaces” (Groch 2001) where members of the subordinated group can meet to exchange ideas and develop a critique of their social position. This process mirrors Rochon’s (1998) concept of the initial development of social movement ideas within critical communities, such as feminist consciousness-raising groups. Activists then later attempt to cultivate oppositional consciousness among subordinated group members more broadly. The diffusion of oppositional consciousness into the wider public, although limited to members of the group in question, occurs alongside and facilitates the diffusion of movement ideas and movement identity.

Oppositional consciousness exists along a continuum and should not be considered a fully dichotomous concept (Mansbridge 2001b; Marshall 2001; Stockdill 2001). Mansbridge (2001a: 5) argues that “At a minimum, oppositional consciousness includes the four elements of [1] identifying with members of a subordinate group, [2] identifying injustices done to that group, [3] opposing those injustices, and [4] seeing the group as having a shared interest in ending or diminishing those injustices.” In this conception, feminist identity is potentially
part of the minimal definition of women’s oppositional consciousness. I would expect
women who identify themselves as feminists to be the same women who possess other
elements of oppositional consciousness.

The social-psychological approach taken by these scholars treats feminist identity as
an individual identity, or what Thoits and Virshup (1997) call a “me” identity, which
describe the self as an isolated individual. In contrast, I believe a social movements
approach would treat feminist identity as a collective identity, a “we” identity, which
describes the self as a member of a social group (Thoits and Virshup 1997). Measures of
agreement with feminist ideas, or of perceptions of “feminism,” seem intended to tap the
calculations women might make as they attempt to decide whether to apply an individual
identity to themselves. I argue that scholars should strive instead to tap the calculations
women make when attempting to decide whether to apply themselves to a collective identity.

Scholars using the social-psychological approach emphasize specific ideas that
supposedly inform a rational, cognitive decision to adopt a feminist identity. In contrast,
Mansbridge (2001a: 5) emphasizes the affective nature of oppositional consciousness: “It is
usually fueled by righteous anger over injustices done to the group and prompted by personal
indignities and harms suffered through one’s group membership.”

While the social-psychological approach predicts that ideas will lead to identity,
Mansbridge argues that most people who identify with a movement will possess only a
minimal oppositional consciousness, and should not be expected to fully agree with a
sophisticated movement ideology. Mansbridge (2001b: 243) notes that “a ‘mature’ or ‘full-
fledged’ oppositional consciousness usually describes the mental state of a current or past
activist. A minimal oppositional consciousness is more easily accessible to nonactivists.”
Ideological agreement goes beyond the experience of most nonactivists: “when we speak of a ‘mature’ oppositional consciousness, we mean a consciousness that incorporates a well worked-out, internally coherent set of ideas and beliefs...” (Mansbridge 2001b: 241). This theory provides me with an alternative hypothesis regarding women’s adoption of feminist identity.

Oppositional Consciousness Hypothesis: Women identify themselves as feminists when they both have a preference for social change regarding women’s position in society and have positive or neutral perceptions of feminism. Women do not identify themselves as feminists when they do not have a preference for social change.

(Figure 2 about here).

Figure 2 is a graphical representation of my oppositional consciousness hypothesis. In this representation, the set of women who identify themselves as feminists is identical to the set of women who have a preference for social change, which is itself a subset of the set of women who do not have negative perceptions of the feminist movement. Oppositional consciousness (operationalized as preference for social change) is the condition of feminist identification. Women who have negative perceptions of the feminist movement are a subset of women who do not identify themselves as feminists. In this model, feminist identification is unrelated to agreement with feminist ideas.

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6 Mansbridge and Morris’ concept of ideological agreement goes well beyond what can be captured through survey research. As I argue above, movement ideology is often sophisticated and nuanced, and cannot be adequately operationalized as agreement with a list of positions. Indeed, because a movement worldview can contain multiple ideological strands, a list that includes items from two or more strands will surely include positions that some activists disagree with, even if they fully support one ideological strand.
CHAPTER 2

METHODS

To test my hypotheses, I use Ragin’s (2000) fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) technique on a nationally representative sample of women taken in 1989. In the first part of my analysis, I use my full sample to determine which configurations of identity, ideology, perception of feminism, and oppositional consciousness are adopted by a significant proportion of women. In the second part of my analysis, I divide my sample by race and generation to confirm that the patterns I observe in the full sample hold across subgroups of American women.

Description of data

My data come from a public opinion poll on women’s issues, abortion, the women’s movement, and work collected by Yankelovich Clancy and Shulman (1989). The data were collected through telephone interviews of a nationally representative sample of 1000 American women ages 16 and older between 23 October and 25 October 1989. My data were collected at precisely the time that the postfeminist argument contends that America entered the post-feminist era. The ERA was defeated, an explicitly anti-feminist president was in office, and the Supreme Court’s Webster v. Reproductive Health Services ruling allowed states to place serious restrictions on women’s access to legal abortions. As such, these data are particularly suited to test the postfeminist argument and oppositional
consciousness theory as possible causes of non-identification with the feminist movement among women who agree with feminist ideology.

This data set includes items related to each of my key measures. Respondents were asked directly whether or not they identify themselves as feminists. They were asked a variety of questions about women’s work, legal rights, and home life that I use to create an index of agreement with feminist ideas. Respondents were asked several questions about their opinion of the feminist movement that I used to create an index of negative perceptions of feminism. They were also asked questions about women’s current place in society that I used to create an index of oppositional consciousness. Respondents gave basic demographic information, which I use in the second part of my analysis. Measures of prior exposure to feminism or previous participation in feminist organizations or protest are also absent. As I have argued though, only a small number of my respondents are likely to have ever been a member of a feminist organization or taken part in feminist protest. Based on Boles’ (1991) estimates, I would expect that only 3 of my 1000 respondents have done so.

In the first part of my analysis, my sample is the 992 respondents who answered all the questions used to construct my indexes. In the second part of my analysis, I use the 989 respondents who provided their race, and the 990 respondents who provided their age.

Respondents originally had the option to answer “not sure” to any question. Attempting to treat these responses as missing would have resulted in an unacceptable reduction in my sample size. Instead, I typically coded “not sure” respondents into the reference category. I believe this is theoretically defensible because for my purposes, both “no” and “not sure” are equivalent expressions. For example, respondents were asked “Do you consider yourself to be a feminist?” Only “yes” responses were coded as 1. I take both
“no” and “not sure” to be acceptable indicators of the absence of a feminist identity, and both are coded 0 accordingly. In each case below, I describe the condition of inclusion in the 1 category.

Description of Methodology

I use Ragin’s (2000) fsQCA methodology to determine the conditions under which women do, and do not, identify themselves as feminists. I use this technique because both the postfeminist hypothesis and the oppositional consciousness hypothesis concern the conditions of feminist self-identification. As they are currently formulated, these hypotheses cannot be tested using traditional regression techniques, which measure the independent effects of individual causal factors, rather than the total configuration of these factors. I use fsQCA techniques specifically, instead of traditional QCA methodology, because this allows the measures of my key concepts to vary between 0 and 1, which both provides a more rigorous test of my hypotheses and makes my models more robust by reducing their sensitivity to the choice of cut-points.

Each of my key concepts – feminist identity, agreement with feminist ideology, perception of feminism, and oppositional consciousness – can be conceptualized as a dichotomy and represented with a letter. Women identify themselves as feminists (F), or they do not (f). Women agree with feminist ideas (A), or do not agree (a). Women have negative perceptions of the feminist movement (N), or their perceptions are positive or neutral (n). Women may express a critique of their place in contemporary society and a preference for more social change (C), or they may express no preference (c). These 4 dichotomies can be arranged into 16 configurations of values. The configuration fAnC, for
example, represents a woman who does not identify herself as a feminist, agrees wholly with feminist ideas, does not have a negative perception of feminism, and has an oppositional consciousness. These 16 configurations are ideal-types to which actual respondents belong wholly, partially, or not at all. They comprise the “property space” of feminist identity (Barton 1955; Lazarsfeld 1937; Ragin 2000). Each hypothesis I am testing predicts a specific geography of this space, with some configurations adopted by many women and others by few.

Using the notation I established above, I can formalize the postfeminist and oppositional consciousness hypotheses. The postfeminist hypothesis predicts that the property space of feminist identity will be described by \( fa + fN + FAn \) (the “+” sign here represents the logical “or”). This statement represents a logical reduction of the property space of feminist identity (Ragin 2000), and includes the configurations: fanc, fanC, faNc, faNC, fANc, faNC, FAnc, FAnC. This statement is simply a formal expression of the postfeminist hypothesis: women do not identify themselves as feminists when they do not agree with feminist ideas or when they have negative perceptions of the feminist movement; women identify themselves as feminists when they agree with feminist ideas and do not have negative perceptions of the movement. The oppositional consciousness hypothesis predicts that the property space of feminist identity can be described by \( fc + FnC \). This statement represents a reduction of the configurations: fanc, faNc, fAnc, fANc, FanC, FAnC. Table 1 shows the expanded formal representations of both hypotheses.

(Table 1 about here).

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7 The absence of a variable from a reduction statement indicates that configurations including both values of that variable are predicted. For example, FAn represents both FAnc and FAnC.
To test these hypotheses, I compare the observed distribution of respondents across configurations to the distribution that would be expected by chance alone and to the distributions predicted by each hypothesis. Table 1 lists the expected size of each configuration, if women adopted configurations totally at random. These expected sizes can be calculated by multiplying the means of each variable in the configuration by the sample size. FANC, for example, is expected to be adopted by \(0.334 \times 0.685 \times 0.190 \times 0.520 \times 992\) respondents, or about 23 women, if women adopted configurations randomly. Both hypotheses predict that fewer than 23 women will be observed adopted this configuration. Because several configurations are expected to include fewer than 5 respondents by chance alone, I use a Yates (1934) corrected chi-square test to determine whether or not the observed distribution is significantly different from the expected distribution. A hypothesis is confirmed if the observed distribution is significantly different from the expected distribution and matches the distribution predicted by that hypothesis. Both hypotheses are rejected if the observed distribution matches neither predicted distribution, or if the observed distribution is not significantly different from the distribution that is expected by chance alone.

Respondents are counted toward configurations based on their scores on several “fuzzy” indexes, which range from 0 to 1, on each of my key variables: feminist identity, agreement with feminist ideas, negative perception of feminism, and oppositional consciousness. Consider for example, a woman who identifies herself as a feminist, does not agree with feminist ideas, does not have negative perceptions of feminism, and has an oppositional consciousness. This woman would count 1 time toward the configuration FanC, which is predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis, and 0 times toward the Fanc configuration, which is predicted by neither hypothesis. If this woman had a consciousness

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8 Means for all variables can be found in Table 2. In each case, \(f = 1 - F\), and so forth.
that was mostly, but not entirely oppositional, and scored .67 instead of 1 on my oppositional consciousness index, she would count .67 times toward the FanC configuration and only .33 times toward the Fanc configuration. This woman would still mostly support the oppositional consciousness hypothesis. I next discuss the creation of each scale.

Description of Key Variables

Feminist Identification (F): Respondents were asked “Do you consider yourself to be a feminist?” Respondents who answered yes were coded as 1, otherwise 0. In my sample, 33 percent of women self-identified as feminists. This is typical of survey from this period (Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodriguez 2003), and is very similar to the figure arrived at by Schnittker et al. (2003), who found that about 27 percent of women identified themselves as feminists. Table 2 lists my key variables, their means and standard deviations, and their bivariate correlation with feminist identification. A complete list of my survey items, their original distributions, and my recoding are included in Appendix B. (Table 2 about here).

Agreement with Feminist Ideas (A): I use nine questions about the relative importance of different issues to construct my measure of agreement with feminist ideas: equal pay for equal work, day care, rape, maternity leave for work, job discrimination, abortion, sexual freedom, pornography, and gay and lesbian rights. In each case, respondents were asked to indicate if they thought the issue was very important for women today, or less important. These measures constitute the entire battery of questions in this section. Each measure of ideological agreement was coded as an indicator variable and combined into an index. In each case, respondents who believed an issue was very important were coded 1;
respondents who said an issue was less important or who did not know how important they thought an issue was were coded 0. Higher index values indicate agreement with more feminist ideas.

(Table 3 about here).

Table 3 shows means, correlation with identity, and item-missing α scores for each question. Some of the dilemmas of measuring agreement with feminist ideas are visible here. Over half of these ideas are very important to over 80 percent of the women in my sample. Two ideas even appear to be more important to non-feminists than to feminist women, although the difference is not significant. Only one measure independently predicts self-identification as a feminist: a belief in the importance of gay and lesbian rights. The remaining questions represent beliefs that are either already very popular or subject to disagreement among feminists; none predicts feminist identity alone. If I were to attempt to improve my index by removing questions, there seems to be no criterion for deleting items that is better than other criteria, and which would not eventually reduce my index to a single question.9 Yet if I were to use gay and lesbian rights as my only measure of feminist ideology, I would have a very poor measure indeed.

Schnittker et al. (2003) use five measures of feminist ideology, which they choose for their comparability to the measures used in other studies. Schnittker et al. (2003: 612) operationalize agreement with feminist ideas as “(1) support for gender equality in employment roles, (2) support for gender equality in family roles, (3) support for affirmative action for women, (4) support for abortion rights, and (5) Democratic political affiliation.”

In a previous draft of this paper, I created a similar scale using questions from other parts of

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9 For example, I might delete questions that appear to be negatively correlated with feminist identity, those which reduce my α score, those which are considered very important by over 75 percent of women, or those which are not significantly related to feminist identity.
my survey, but it had a lower $\alpha$ score and did not change the substantive results of my analysis. I would argue that the results I present here are not the result of the weakness of my particular measure of feminist ideology, but of the insoluble problems of measuring movement ideas in survey research that I describe above, and of the general failure of the baseline social-psychological model to adequately describe the conditions under which women adopt a feminist collective identity.

The correlation between feminist identity and agreement with feminist ideology is .066, indicating a weak, positive relationship. Women who agree with more feminist ideas are more likely to identify themselves as feminists. The mean value of my ideology index is .685, indicating a fairly high level of agreement with feminist ideas.

(Table 4 about here).

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents across index values. None of my respondents indicated that they thought that none of the issues were very important, and less than 1 percent indicated that only one issue was very important. These respondents received the 0 score on my index. In contrast, 13 percent of respondents indicated that they believed every issue was very important for women today.

Perception of Feminism (N): I selected five measures of respondents’ perception of the feminist movement: general negative perception of feminists, belief that feminists were out of touch with the average American woman, general negative perception of NOW, belief that NOW is out of touch with the average woman, and belief that feminists have made things worse for women. Each measure of perception was coded as an indicator and combined into an index. In each case, respondents who expressed a negative perception of
feminism were coded 1; positive and neutral responses were coded 0. Higher index values represent more negative perceptions of feminism.

(Table 5 about here).

Table 5 shows means, correlation with identity, and item-missing α scores for each question. The bivariate correlation between perceptions of feminism and feminist identity is -.254, indicating the expected negative relationship. Women who have more negative perceptions of feminism and the feminist movement are less likely than other women to accept a feminist identity for themselves. The mean value of my perception index was only .190, indicating that on average, women in my sample have a fairly positive perception of feminism.

(Table 6 about here).

Table 6 shows the distribution of respondents across the values of the index. 48 percent of my respondents scored 0 on this measure, indicating the most positive perception of feminism. Only 2 percent of women had scores representing the most negative perception of the movement.

Preference for Social Change (C): I selected three measures of respondents’ oppositional consciousness: belief that things are going badly for the average woman, belief that there is still a need for a movement for women, and belief that the women’s movement is still important. I base these measures on Mansbridge’s (2001a) minimal definition of oppositional consciousness, including both a critique of women’s place in contemporary society and a belief that collective action both can and should be used to improve women’s social position. Each measure of oppositional consciousness was coded as an indicator and combined into a scale. In each case, responses indicating the presence of critique or
preference for social change were coded 1, otherwise 0. Higher index values represent a more developed oppositional consciousness.

(Table 7 about here).

Table 7 shows means, correlation with identity, and item-missing $\alpha$ scores for each question. The bivariate correlation between oppositional consciousness and feminist identity is .214, indicating a positive relationship. Women who have more elements of Mansbridge and Morris’ (2001) oppositional consciousness are more likely to identify themselves as feminists. The mean value of my oppositional consciousness index is .520. Table 8 shows the distribution of women across the values of the index.

(Table 8 about here).

Description of subgroups

To ensure that the results of the analysis on the full sample are not being unduly influenced by a single subgroup of women, I split the sample by race and generation and re-test the hypotheses on these sub-samples. I create sub-groups of white women and women of color, and of women who politically came of age (Mannheim 1952) before, during, and after the height of feminist protest during the 1960s and 70s. Scholars have noted that white women (Harnois 2005) and women who came of age during the height of feminist protest (Peltola et al. 2004; Schnittker et al. 2003) show a greater correspondence between agreement with feminist ideas and feminist self-identification than other women. Although my theory differs substantively from those that link feminist identity to ideological agreement, it is worth determining if it is similarly limited in its scope of application. The sub-sample mean for each of my key variables is shown in Table 9.
Race: Harnois (2005) argues that the process of feminist identity-formation may be different for white women and women of color, and cautions that theorists should not assume that women of different races adopt feminist identities for the same reasons. Harnois notes, for example, that white women who identify as feminists are more influenced by their agreement with feminist ideas than are women of color. Scholars using nonrandom samples have sometimes found that black women are less likely to self-identify as feminists than are white women (Myaskovsky and Wittig 1997; Reid and Purcell 2004). Scholars using representative sampling techniques find that women of color are actually more likely than white women to adopt a feminist identity (Hall and Rodriguez 2003; Hunter and Sellers 1998; Kane 2000; Schnittker et al. 2003). In my sample, 43 percent of women of color identify themselves as feminists, compared to only 32 percent of white women, as seen in Table 9.

Women were asked what race they are. Women who answered that they are white were coded as “white.” Women who gave another answer were coded as “women of color.” Women who did not answer were coded as missing. My sample has 832 white women and 157 women of color. I created an indicator variable for race in order to test its bivariate correlation with each of my key variables. White women were coded 1; women of color were coded 0. Women of color in my sample are more likely to identify themselves as feminists, and have a stronger average preference for social change than white respondents. These results are shown in Table 10.
Generation: Schnittker et al. (2003) and Peltola et al. (2004) find that women who came of age during the height of feminist activism in the 1960s and 70s show a closer connection between feminist identity and agreement with feminist ideas than women who came of age earlier or later. These women of the middle cohort – or “feminist generation” – are the only cohort of American women to show a significant correlation between ideology and identity in Schnittker’s and Peltola’s analyses.

Women were asked how old they were. Women who answered that they were 16 to 34 were coded as being in the younger cohort, who came of age after the height of feminist protest. Women who answered that they were 35 to 49 were coded as being in the middle cohort. Women who answered that they were 50 or older were coded as being in the older cohort, who came of age before the height of feminist activism. My cohorts are approximately the same as those used by Schnittker al. (2003).\textsuperscript{10} My sample had 408 younger women, 276 women in the middle generation, and 306 older women.

I created two indicator variables for political generation to test for bivariate correlations between generation and my key variables. These results are shown in Table 10. Younger women agree with more feminist ideas than the middle generation; older women agree with fewer ideas than the middle generation. This linear effect suggests that feminist ideas have become more popular over time due to cohort replacement. Younger women have significantly fewer negative perceptions of the feminist movement than the middle generation. Younger women possess more elements of oppositional consciousness than the middle generation; older women possess fewer of these elements. This linear effect suggests

\textsuperscript{10} The age variable in my data was coded to capture membership in five-year age-blocs. As a result, the overlap between my middle cohort and Schnittker et al.’s is not perfect.
either that successive generations of women have become more oppositional, or that women become drop elements of oppositional consciousness as they age.

Although I use these sub-group distinctions primarily to confirm the findings of my full model, these descriptive findings also offer further evidence against the postfeminist argument. As I note above, the postfeminist argument contends that by the 1990s, young women and women of color in particular have rejected feminist ideas, feminist identity, and have strong negative perceptions of feminism. These findings flatly contradict that component of the postfeminist argument.
CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The results of my analysis are shown in Table 11. Configurations that are observed to be larger than expected by chance are shown in bold. My Yates (1934) corrected chi-square test indicates that my results are significantly different from those that would be expected by chance alone. Each hypothesis can be judged by comparing its predictions to the observed configuration sizes.

(Table 11 about here).

Among women who do not identify themselves as feminists, the postfeminist hypothesis predicts that six configurations will be larger than expected by chance: fanc, fanC, faNc, faNC, fANc, and fANC. Of these, only three are observed to be larger than expected: fanc, faNc, and fANc. These three configurations are also predicted to be larger than expected by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis. That fanC, faNC, and fANC were smaller than expected indicates that the absence of oppositional consciousness is a condition of non-feminist identification, a condition not predicted by the postfeminist hypothesis.

Among women who identify themselves as feminists, the postfeminist hypothesis predicts that two configurations will be larger than expected by chance: FAnC and FAnC. Of these two, only FAnC is observed to be larger than expected, and it is also predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis. Additionally, the postfeminist hypothesis predicts that the FanC configuration will be smaller than expected by chance, but it is observed to be larger than expected. The postfeminist hypothesis cannot account for women who do not
agree with feminist ideas and identify themselves as feminists, because it admits of no other basis for feminist identification.

The oppositional consciousness hypothesis predicts that four configurations of non-feminist identity will be adopted by more women than would be expected by chance: fanc, faNc, fAnc, and fANc. Of these, only three are observed to be larger than expected: fanc, faNc, and fANc. Both the predicted and observed configurations, however, can be reduced to the logical statement fc. The oppositional hypothesis predicts that two configurations of feminist identity will be adopted by more women than would be expected by chance: FanC and FAnC. Both of these configurations are observed to be larger than expected. These configurations can be reduced to the logical statement FnC. The complete property space of feminist and non-feminist identity can be represented by the statement fc + FnC, as predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis.

The results of my analysis confirm the oppositional consciousness hypothesis. I reject the postfeminist hypothesis. The oppositional consciousness hypothesis accurately describes the observed distribution of respondents, and the results are significantly different from the distribution that would be expected by chance alone. Women identify themselves as feminists when they posses elements of Mansbridge and Morris’ (2001) oppositional consciousness and do not have negative perceptions of feminism.

In splitting my model by race, the results of the full model are largely confirmed, although only for white women. The results of this model are shown in Table 12. Women of color’s ideas, identities, and beliefs appear to be structured similarly, but I cannot reject the hypothesis that this appearance is due to chance alone.

(Table 12 about here).
In dividing my model by generation, my results are again largely confirmed. Only the results for women who came of age during the height of feminist activism are statistically significant. These results are shown in Table 13. The results for the younger and older cohorts appear to be identical to the results of the full sample, but I cannot reject the hypothesis that these results are due to chance.

(Table 13 about here).

In the middle cohort’s sub-sample, in contrast to the full model, the configuration fanc is smaller than would be expected by chance alone, and the faNC configuration is larger than would be expected by chance. These results are still much closer to those predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis than those predicted by the postfeminist hypothesis; however, women who came of age during the height of feminist protest represent the only subgroup of women in my sample who disproportionately adopt a configuration combining oppositional consciousness and negative perceptions of the feminist movement or oppositional consciousness and non-feminist identity. That the results for the middle cohort differ from the results of the full model suggests that women who came of age during the height of feminist activism are not unduly influencing the results of the full model.

(Table 14 about here).

Table 14 summarizes my findings, comparing the results of the full model to each of the sub-samples. Overall, I find a great deal of apparent similarity across models. Three of the five sub-sample models had non-significant findings, however. This may be due to insufficient sample size. Chi-square tests with 15 degrees of freedom set a high bar, which may be difficult for smaller samples to surmount, particularly when so many cells are expected be smaller than 5. Unfortunately, I cannot reject the hypothesis that these non-
findings, whatever their appearance, are due to chance alone. I am not led to believe though, that a single sub-group has unduly swayed the results of the full model.

Although the configuration fAnc is smaller than expected by chance alone, the results of the full model reduce to the expression predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis: fc + FnC. This confirms the oppositional consciousness hypothesis, and leads me to reject the postfeminist hypothesis.
CHAPTER 4
DISCUSSION

Why do some women call themselves feminists while others do not? The results of my analysis reveal that some women call themselves feminists because they possess what Mansbridge and Morris (2001) call oppositional consciousness: a critique of women’s place in society today, and a belief in both the importance and ability of women as a group to change their place. These women reject negative images of feminism and the feminist movement, but may accept no more of the ideas of the feminist movement than are widely held by their contemporaries. Other women do not call themselves feminists because they have a non-oppositional consciousness. They may believe women’s place in society is just, natural, or inevitable; or they may believe that it is impossible or improper for women to work together to change their place. These women too may agree with many feminist ideas, yet still not call themselves feminists. It is those women who have adopted an oppositional consciousness who also adopt a feminist identity.

Each of the sixteen possible ideal-type configurations was adopted by some women. My data, like all cross-sectional data, provide a single snapshot of a dynamic process of adoption and rejection that occurs throughout women’s lives. Women can call themselves feminists or not; agree with more or fewer feminist ideas; have negative, neutral, or positive perceptions of feminism; and have consciousnesses that are more or less oppositional. These decisions inform and constrain one another, such that women’s choices disproportionately cluster in five particular configurations of identity and belief, the five configurations
predicted by the oppositional consciousness hypothesis. Women do not adopt only those configurations, nor do I have any reason to believe that they always retain them once adopted. Instead, I believe that these configurations represent structured sets of belief that women are more likely to adopt, and to retain for a longer time once adopted, than other configurations, which women are less likely to adopt and which they abandon more quickly.

Women can change configurations without changing whether or not they identify themselves as feminists. A woman with a non-oppositional consciousness who views the feminist movement negatively and does not agree with many feminist ideas, for example, could begin to view the movement more positively or to agree with more and more feminist ideas, without identifying herself as a feminist. Some changes seem to motivate, almost necessitate others. A woman who develops an oppositional consciousness, for example, seems unlikely to go long without also beginning to identify herself as a feminist. That the configuration fAnc is adopted by fewer women than predicted by chance alone suggests that such a configuration is somehow unstable, and that such women will soon reject some of these ideas, develop a more negative perception of the feminist movement, or develop an oppositional consciousness and a feminist identity. If agreement with feminist ideas matters at the individual level, it appears to be in this way: women who agree with feminist ideas must soon take up a position on the movement itself and their own relationship to it.

Women’s dynamic, changing sets of belief cause them to adopt, hold to, and reject these ideal-type sets of attitude and identity. I would argue that those configurations that are adopted less than would be expected by chance represent sets of attitudes that imply an internal contradiction that make them more difficult to sustain. This contradiction is not necessarily logical, but emotional or affective. A woman can agree with every measurable
idea of the feminist movement, and not call herself a feminist, and there is no contradiction. Yet for women who believe in the necessity and efficacy of collective action, to not call themselves feminists presents a contradiction. Likewise, for women who call themselves feminists, not to believe in the importance or ability of the feminist movement to improve women’s lives represents a contradiction. One change motivates another, to relieve the tension by either accepting identity and consciousness together or rejecting both. This suggests that, as Mansbridge (2001a; 2001b) theorizes, identification with a movement is only one component of a larger oppositional consciousness, which encompasses other beliefs and affective components.

Individual women’s agreement with feminist ideas appears to be unrelated to these women’s decision to adopt or reject a feminist identity. I argue that this disconnect is due to two main factors. First, by the late 1980s, many feminist ideas had achieved widespread public support (Ferree and Hess 2000; Hall and Rodriguez 2003). Second, there is disagreement, even among serious feminist activists, about which feminist ideology is most correct, meaning that most women who identify themselves as feminists disagree with some feminist ideas (Armstrong 2002; Ryan 1989). While it is true that many self-identified feminists agree with many measurable feminist ideas, these factors all reduce the statistical and theoretical importance of the coexistence of ideas and identity in these women, by locating feminist ideas in women who do not identify themselves as feminists and by locating ideological disagreement among feminists.

I argue that these causes represent more general scope conditions that limit what types of movements are likely to have supporters whose identification with the movement itself is determined by their agreement with the movement’s ideas. The first condition listed
above suggests this is connection is unlikely to be found in any movement that has achieved widespread support for its ideas. Rochon (1998) argues that this occurs in the second stage of movement success, when ideas that were successfully made controversial in the first stage become commonplace. The second condition suggests that movements that produce ideological disunity are also unlikely to create a strong connection between movement ideas and movement identity.

Which movements are expected to create ideas that lead to identification with the movement itself? Perhaps first, these movements must cultivate identities that are more individual than collective (Thoits and Virshup 1997). Individuals may adopt personal identities as the result of having previously adopted certain ideas. Collective identities emerge from oppositional consciousness (Mansbridge 2001a; 2001b) and only later produce thoughtful ideological agreement. Next, the movement itself must have achieved early success without yet passing any of its ideas into the mainstream of American thought (Rochon 1998). Only when an individual who agrees with a movement’s ideas can see that those ideas set them apart from their peers is that individual likely to adopt a individual movement identity. Finally, the ideas of the movement must represent a single, unified ideology. If movement ideas form several competing ideologies within a broader movement worldview, then identification with the movement is likely to be associated with disagreement with most ideas that fall outside of the individual’s chosen strand of movement ideology.

My findings here are consistent with the results, if not the interpretation, of most other empirical studies of women’s feminist identities, which find that ideological agreement is not a pre-condition of self-identification as a feminist (Jacobson and Koch 1978; McCabe
My findings also represent a major advance in the theory of such investigations. Unlike many previous scholars, I accept the evidence that agreement with feminist ideas does not lead to feminist self-identification, and offer a valid explanation for this disconnect. I disprove the widely held postfeminist argument that the disconnection between women’s ideas and identities is caused by negative perceptions of the feminist movement. I use survey data to test and confirm a hypothesis based on Mansbridge and Morris’ (1998) theory of oppositional consciousness, which was initially developed using qualitative field research. In doing so, I hope to encourage other scholars of feminist identity to build on this theory, rather than continuing to attempt to prove what ultimately cannot be proven.

I am able to solve this long-standing puzzle by turning to the social movements literature to fill in theoretical gaps left by the mainstream sociological approach to the question of feminist identity. I hope as well to have contributed to this literature through my efforts. A collective identity among movement supporters can be one enduring consequence of movement success, one that is – and should be kept – conceptually distinct from public support for movement ideas. Not only participants, but supporters as well, are affected by involvement with social movements, even if that involvement is limited to taking a new movement-based identity into one’s self, and the nature of this effect should be studied. Collective identity is only one component of a larger oppositional consciousness that can remain widespread in supporters even when a movement faces strong opposition. That collective identity appears to signify a broader commitment to a movement’s ideals, if not all of its specific ideas, suggests too that supporters may engage in currently unmeasured forms
of ideologically structured action (Zald 2000) that should be investigated further. Finally, I hope that social movements scholars will continue to address questions that arise outside their subfield, when those questions touch on concepts relevant to social movement studies, in the terms that those questions are originally posed.
TABLE 1

Comparison of postfeminist and oppositional consciousness hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>Expected size</th>
<th>Postfeminist hypothesis</th>
<th>Consciousness hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fanc</td>
<td>80.893</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanC</td>
<td>87.772</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNc</td>
<td>19.015</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNC</td>
<td>20.632</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnC</td>
<td>190.741</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANc</td>
<td>41.321</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANC</td>
<td>44.835</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FanC</td>
<td>40.508</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNc</td>
<td>43.953</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNC</td>
<td>9.522</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAnC</td>
<td>10.331</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAnC</td>
<td>88.029</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANC</td>
<td>95.515</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANC</td>
<td>20.692</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: F = feminist identity (f = not feminist)  
A = agrees with feminist ideas (a = not agree)  
N = negative perception of feminism (n = neutral/positive perception)  
C = oppositional consciousness (c = not oppositional)
TABLE 2

Means, correlation with identity, and Cronbach’s α for key variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correlation with identity</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feminist identity</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement with ideas</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.066*</td>
<td>.5251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perceptions</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>-.254***</td>
<td>.6032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional consciousness</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.214***</td>
<td>.2691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Correlation is significant, p < .05.  
*** Correlation is significant, p < .001.
TABLE 3

Means, correlation with identity and Cronbach’s α for items in agreement with feminist ideas scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correlation with identity</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay for equal work</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>.512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day care</td>
<td>.907</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>.890</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity leave for work</td>
<td>.840</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job discrimination</td>
<td>.825</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Freedom</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornography</td>
<td>.468</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian and gay rights</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>.069*</td>
<td>.454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* * Correlation is significant, p < .05.
TABLE 4

Frequency distribution and fuzzy values for agreement with feminist ideas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of issues</th>
<th>N of respondents</th>
<th>Fuzzy score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>.625</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 5

Means, correlation with identity, and Cronbach’s α for items in negative perceptions of feminism scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correlation with identity</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative impression of feminists</td>
<td>.299</td>
<td>-.299***</td>
<td>.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminists are out of touch</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>-.124***</td>
<td>.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative impression of NOW</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>-.124***</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOW is out of touch</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>-.101**</td>
<td>.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminists have made things worse for women</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>-.110***</td>
<td>.591</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: ** Correlation is significant, p < .01.
*** Correlation is significant, p < .001.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of perceptions</th>
<th>N of respondents</th>
<th>Fuzzy score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 6

Frequency distribution and fuzzy values for negative perceptions of feminism scale
TABLE 7

Means, correlation with identity, and Cronbach’s α scores for items in oppositional consciousness scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correlation with identity</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s movement is still improving lives of women</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>.096**</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still need strong women’s movement</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.212***</td>
<td>.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things going poorly for women today</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: ** Correlation is significant, p < .01.  
*** Correlation is significant, p < .001.
TABLE 8

Frequency distribution and fuzzy values for oppositional consciousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of items</th>
<th>N of respondents</th>
<th>Fuzzy score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 9
Comparison of means of key variables by race and generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full sample</th>
<th>White women</th>
<th>Women of color</th>
<th>Younger generation</th>
<th>Middle generation</th>
<th>Older generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feminist identity</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement with ideas</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>.618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perceptions</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.194</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional consciousness</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td>.574</td>
<td>.540</td>
<td>.539</td>
<td>.477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of respondents</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 10

Means and correlation of race and generation with key variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Correlation with identity</th>
<th>Correlation with A</th>
<th>Correlation with N</th>
<th>Correlation with C</th>
<th>Σ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White race</td>
<td>.841</td>
<td>-.087**</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>-.093**</td>
<td>989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger cohort</td>
<td>.412</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.013**</td>
<td>-.065*</td>
<td>.065*</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older cohort</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.219***</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>-.114***</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Correlation is significant, p < .05.
** Correlation is significant, p < .01.
*** Correlation is significant, p < .001.
### TABLE 11

Results from full sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>Expected Size</th>
<th>Observed Size</th>
<th>Observed – Expected</th>
<th>Consciousness Hypothesis</th>
<th>Postfeminist Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fanc</td>
<td>80.893</td>
<td><strong>83.660</strong></td>
<td>+ 2.767</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanC</td>
<td>87.772</td>
<td>78.315</td>
<td>- 9.457</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNc</td>
<td>19.015</td>
<td><strong>33.030</strong></td>
<td>+ 14.015</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNC</td>
<td>20.632</td>
<td>19.620</td>
<td>- 1.012</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnc</td>
<td>175.791</td>
<td>165.732</td>
<td>- 10.059</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnC</td>
<td>190.741</td>
<td>179.093</td>
<td>- 11.648</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANc</td>
<td>41.321</td>
<td><strong>59.758</strong></td>
<td>+ 18.437</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANC</td>
<td>44.835</td>
<td>41.792</td>
<td>- 3.043</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanc</td>
<td>40.508</td>
<td>35.807</td>
<td>- 4.701</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FanC</td>
<td>43.953</td>
<td><strong>50.144</strong></td>
<td>+ 6.191</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNc</td>
<td>9.522</td>
<td>6.031</td>
<td>- 3.491</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNC</td>
<td>10.331</td>
<td>6.019</td>
<td>- 4.312</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Anc</td>
<td>88.029</td>
<td>81.388</td>
<td>- 6.641</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAnC</td>
<td>95.515</td>
<td><strong>129.063</strong></td>
<td>+ 33.548</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANc</td>
<td>20.692</td>
<td>10.365</td>
<td>- 10.327</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANC</td>
<td>22.452</td>
<td>12.185</td>
<td>- 10.267</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Pearson $\chi^2$ (df, 15) = 47.843.  $p < .001$

Yates-corrected $\chi^2$ (df, 15) = 43.995.  $p < .001$
# TABLE 12

Results from sample of white women and sample of women of color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>White women**</th>
<th>Women of color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>Observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanc</td>
<td>71.614</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanC</td>
<td>74.562</td>
<td>66.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNc</td>
<td>17.289</td>
<td><strong>29.202</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNC</td>
<td>18.001</td>
<td>16.623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnc</td>
<td>153.332</td>
<td>145.383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnC</td>
<td>159.644</td>
<td>150.468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANc</td>
<td>37.017</td>
<td>52.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fANC</td>
<td>38.541</td>
<td>35.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanc</td>
<td>32.917</td>
<td>28.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FanC</td>
<td>34.272</td>
<td><strong>40.842</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNc</td>
<td>7.947</td>
<td>5.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNC</td>
<td>8.274</td>
<td>4.591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAnC</td>
<td>70.479</td>
<td>64.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAnC</td>
<td><strong>73.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.923</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANc</td>
<td>17.015</td>
<td>8.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANC</td>
<td>17.716</td>
<td>8.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Σ</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson χ²</td>
<td>41.216***</td>
<td>6.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yates χ²</td>
<td>37.300**</td>
<td>3.590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: ** Test is significant, p < .01.
*** Test is significant, p < .001.
### TABLE 13
Results from younger, middle, and older generation samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>Younger generation</th>
<th>Middle generation*</th>
<th>Older generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expected</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanc</td>
<td>30.248</td>
<td>30.896</td>
<td>18.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fanC</td>
<td>35.501</td>
<td>33.179</td>
<td>21.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNC</td>
<td>7.378</td>
<td>7.311</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnc</td>
<td>74.117</td>
<td>71.706</td>
<td>48.901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fAnC</td>
<td>86.99</td>
<td>81.419</td>
<td>57.238</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fanc</td>
<td>18.078</td>
<td>17.541</td>
<td>14.051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaNC</td>
<td>3.074</td>
<td>1.672</td>
<td>2.345</td>
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<td>3.608</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>408</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson χ²</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30.669*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yates χ²</td>
<td>10.357</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.081*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Test is significant, p < .05.
TABLE 14
Summary of results from all models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Configuration</th>
<th>Full sample ***</th>
<th>White women **</th>
<th>Women of color</th>
<th>Younger generation</th>
<th>Middle generation *</th>
<th>Older generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fanc</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>fanC</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>faNc</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faNC</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FanC</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANc</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FANC</td>
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Pearson $\chi^2$ 47.843*** 41.216*** 6.547 13.394 30.669* 9.327

Yates $\chi^2$ 43.995*** 37.300** 3.590 10.357 25.081* 6.632

Notes: * Test is significant, p < .05.
** Test is significant, p < .01.
*** Test is significant, p < .001.
FIGURE 1

Postfeminist model of the social space of feminist identity
FIGURE 2
Comparison of classical and ideological erosion
REFERENCES


Buschman, Joan and Silvo Lenart. 1996. “‘I’m Not a Feminist, but...’: College Women, Feminism, and Negative Experiences.” *Political Psychology* 17: 59-75.


