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broadsheet

new zealand's
feminist magazine

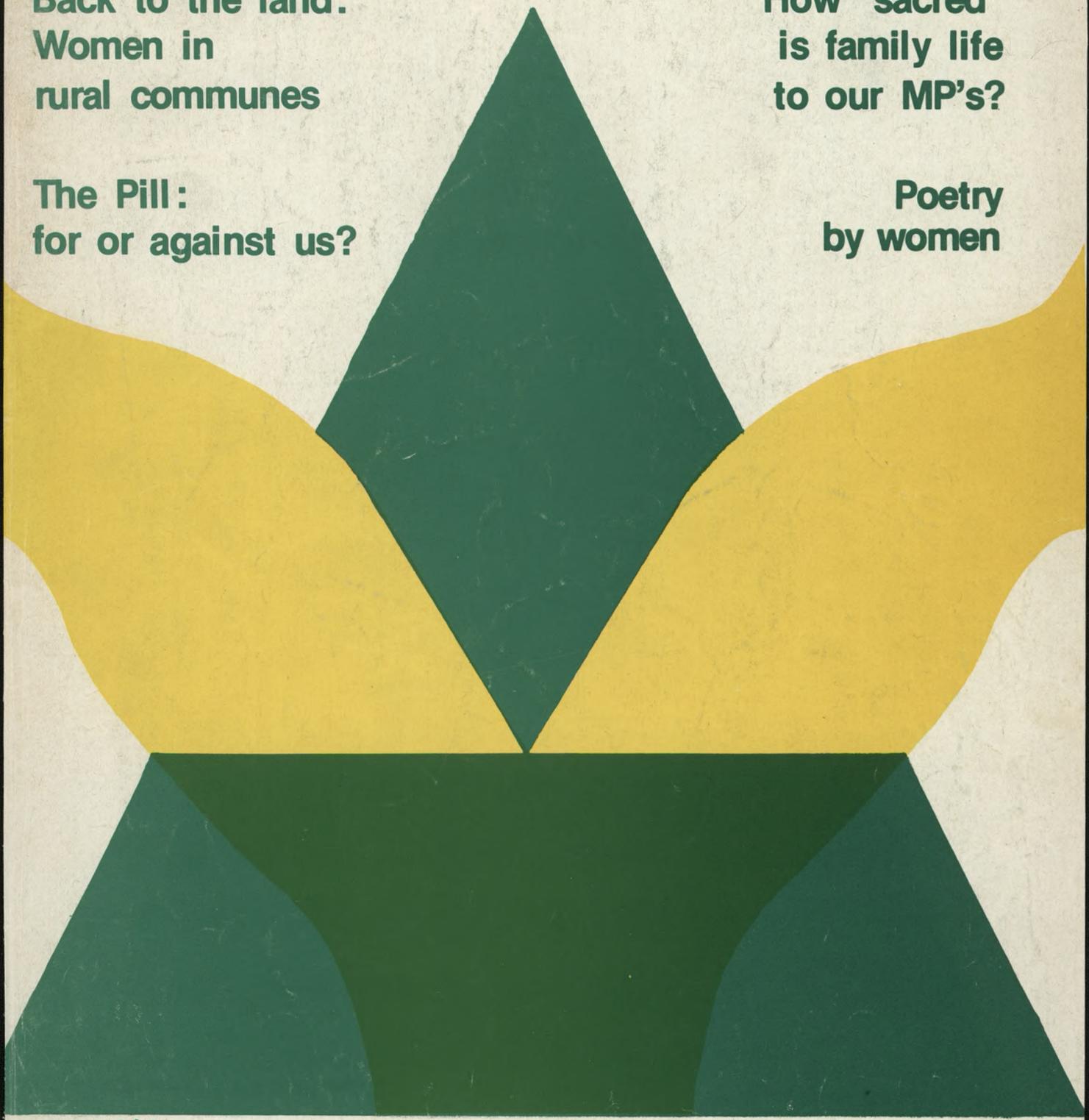
june 1976 no. 40
60c

**Back to the land:
Women in
rural communes**

**How "sacred"
is family life
to our MP's?**

**The Pill:
for or against us?**

**Poetry
by women**



Registered at the G.P.O.
Wellington as a magazine.

Alternative Contraception: Diaphragms

Broadsheet Office

Broadsheet office:

61 Victoria St West, Auckland.

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Hours:

Tuesday to Friday 9 am to 2 pm (roughly)

After two months some of the advantages of having part-time paid staff are becoming clearer. We think we have become more efficient about handling mail and certainly it has eased the work load on all who work on the magazine. Financially we are at the moment just managing to hold our heads above water and the future of the magazine appears quite secure. We have discovered that we will not be able to get any great income from advertising as most advertisers object to the magazine on one of a number of grounds.

Firstly, our circulation at 3,500 is still small, advertisers tend to put their ads in large circulation magazines like "Women's Weekly" and "Listener" or the daily papers. The directors of "Thursday" magazine, explained that part of the reason for that magazine's demise was the lack of advertising. They said that many advertisers prefer TV advertising and stated that TV has recently instituted a system of discount advertising which is apparently very attractive to advertisers.

Other potential advertisers, especially small businesses, object to the content of the magazine and to feminism itself. Such people tell us they would not like to advertise in "that sort of magazine", that we are "subversive and militant" and that they "don't want to be associated with your type".

Also, we are hampered by the fact that there are very few products or ads that we would contemplate including in the magazine. If you look through a "Thursday" or "Listener" you will see what we mean. At least, 80% of the ads are offensive to us either because they demean or stereotype women or because the manufacturer is blatantly ripping the consumer off. Maybe we will be able to sell ourselves to advertisers one day as the magazine with the most discriminating advertising policy in the business.

Photo Competition

Broadsheet will be holding another photographic competition for women following the success of the one we held last year.

Specifications:

All photos must be mounted as last year we had to do this ourselves before the photos could be exhibited.

Maximum of five photographs.

Closing date : 30 August 1976.

Photographs will be judged as the best portfolio, not individual photo. All photographs sent become the property of Broadsheet magazine, unless otherwise arranged, and entry constitutes permission for the photographs to be published.

BROADSHEET's 4th birthday issue

A prize of \$20 is offered and once again we will arrange exhibitions of the photos. In 1975 exhibitions were arranged in Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. Hopefully, this year we will be able to include Wellington as well.

Sending articles to Broadsheet

When submitting poetry enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and also specify whether you want any comments on your work or just an acceptance or rejection.

When submitting articles to Broadsheet please make sure they are typed on one side of paper only and with the widest spacing possible between lines. Please also enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

Equipment

Our thanks to those readers who have given us the items we were begging for in last month's Broadsheet. So far we have acquired a vacuum cleaner but we still need :

- scales (for weighing mail)
- a small calculator
- hole puncher
- desk with drawers
- broom
- typewriter.

Reminders

Thank you to all subscribers who have sent the extra \$2 for the increase in price; if you haven't you still can. We're always delighted to receive the extra dollars or donations. Don't forget the gift subscriptions either.

We need about 1500 large envelopes for recycling each month, so please don't throw yours in the rubbish. You can post them to us or bring them to our offices at 61 Victoria St, City. If we're not there please just poke them through the round hole in the door.

Closing dates for copy

Closing dates for copy for the next few issues are :

July	June 7 for coming events
August	no issue
September	July 20 for articles August 7 for coming events.
October	August 20 for articles September 7 for coming events.

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people

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Permission must be sought before articles may be reprinted.

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These people worked on this issue:
Seonaid Abernethy, Val Cole, Sandra Coney,
Liz Glasgow, Robyn Griffith, Camille Guy,
Rachel Landon-Lane, Anne Parsons, Rosemary
Ronald, Julie Thompson and the enveloping women.

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p9, p22 Sally Hollis McLeod.
p12 Sharon Alston

Cover: Deidre McCartin

Letters



The PM's Conference

Dear Broadsheet,

After reading the editorial on the I.W.Y. Conference in the March '76 issue I felt rather guilty and compromised about participating in such an event, but comforting myself that someone should find out what is happening in the Halls of Power, I still went. A free flight to Wellington (paid for by the Government) was also a bit much to resist.

We heard about the conference late last year and decided some of us should go and see what it was all about. Many women didn't even hear about it, and the closing date of 10 January was a time when many are away on holiday and unlikely to hear. To be invited you had to be recommended or to write recommending yourself. Four of us in Christchurch wrote in ourselves saying why we thought we should go to the conference and two of us were invited.

I described myself as an active feminist, member of Ch.Ch. Feminists, local ALRANZ secretary, and organiser of the Women's Refuge Centre here, and very interested in the women's movement generally. The others' letters were very similar, as we are all involved in much the same range of activities. Perhaps they decided a certain number of women who called themselves feminists should be invited and just picked a few of our names out of a hat.

Vast amounts of background material were sent to those attending during the weeks preceding the Conference; - a statistical profile on N.Z. women, background information on I.W.Y. and the Committee on Women, facts and figures on women in the workforce, papers on rural women, Maori women, child care, etc. etc.

I read most of it but was still unprepared for exactly what type of conference it was. I heard it described later on a radio programme as "The Women's Movement Confronts the

Establishment". But the women's movement wasn't actually there - or certainly not the younger branch of it. Most women attending were 35-40 plus with few women who would have described themselves as radical feminists (or even as feminists?) in evidence. They included I.W.Y. committee members from different cities, professional women, City Councillors, board members, N.C.W. and W.D.F.F.

The Establishment was certainly there though, which was what I wasn't quite prepared for. This first dawned on me when we split into our first discussion group, on women and the media. I suddenly realised half our group was composed of very straight looking gentlemen in conservative suits and ties. One was holding forth with such authority on the topic that I questioned who he was and found he was the head of Radio N.Z. Then it dawned on me that all these men were in positions of power and authority - often their name tags meant little to me, but looking up the list of participants I found that our gathering was graced by the presence of heads of government departments, banks, the Housing Corporation, M.P.s, Retailers Federation, unions, Monetary and Economic Council, the media and many others.

Perhaps "the Establishment Confronts the Establishment" may have been a better title. But we women were obviously there to tell these men what changes we wanted and why, in the hope that they would go back to their offices and board rooms on Monday and get stuck into it because we were nice reasonable ladies and they could see our point.

The hitch was that if they didn't agree with us how did we make them do what we wanted? We could dazzle them with our rhetoric, our reasonableness, our knowledge of "the facts", our concern for womenkind, our intelligence and capability, but at the end of it all they could choose to ignore it if they wished, because they have the power to do so.

Yes, we were asking them for some of their power in order to change a system which suits them, and why should they give it to us? And how can we wrest this power from them if asking nicely doesn't work? None of these questions were of course answered for me by this conference, but it did show up for me yet again the essential powerlessness of women within the present structure, and the fact that we must look beyond the present power structure and sources for any real change. Such conferences probably have a place in achieving certain short-term goals e.g. anti sex-discrimination legislation, but as feminists we must put our major energies into our own alternative structures and into encouraging our sisters to reach their full potential.

Did the conference raise the consciousness of those attending? In some cases, perhaps. It was interesting to see how these men reacted to what must have been an entirely new experience for many of them, i.e. participating in a conference run by women, on women's issues, having to discuss all sorts of "personal" and "emotional" topics, with the vast majority of speakers being able and confident women. Surely all this must have had some effect on them, even if it just made them scared and defensive.

This was definitely one common reaction. Others were more aggressive, some liberal and expansive; - "Of course we see your point dear", "We must let the ladies have their say". Some seemed baffled or guilty.

How did the women interpret it? Many I spoke to were rather cynical about the prospect of any real action emerging from such an affair, but were amazed that the Power Holders had actually come along and hopeful that "something would come out of it".

The P.M. himself opened and closed the conference. Seldom have I seen anyone who can mouth such polite words about the women's movement

and yet manage to convey such contempt and hostility towards it. By the end of his final speech he wasn't even trying to be polite to us - and told us that all our recommendations were already contained in the National Party manifesto anyway. There was little positive response to him either time - most women attending would have been other than National supporters I feel. One of the nicest parts of the conference for me was the spectacle of Miriam Dell ushering the P.M. into the social reception and having great difficulty in finding any women who would actually talk to him. Most moved away at his approach. Lovely!

The food was incredible - a banquet twice a day - with tables laden with fish and meat dishes, salads, oysters, shrimps, deserts. All rather dazzling for a "brown rice and vege" eater like myself. Incredible waste when you think that instead of feeding already over-fed people so lavishly all this money could have been spent on women's films, books, health centres, child care ----. But --- maybe we're winning, I mused as we tucked in. Two years ago they wouldn't have asked us to dinner would they? Perhaps though we're being sucked into the system: --- a "dazzle them with shrimp cocktails and they might think we're doing something" approach.

Also all of "us" weren't invited were we? Very few known ravers anyway. I heard that Broadsheet women were very definitely not wanted, in case they proved an embarrassment.

The organisation was certainly efficient. Discussion was to be based on a draft plan of action which was prepared from the recommendations of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Women's Rights. We were divided into 3 syndicates, on Women and Employment, Women and the Care of Children and Other Dependants, and Women in Social and Community Development.

I was in the third group, which covered the Image of Women in the Media and Advertising, Social Security Benefits and Accident Compensation as they affect women, Sex Inequalities in the Access to Goods and Services, and Housing and Community Development.

The session on the media and advertising began with a very effective tape, video and poster display to demonstrate how these agencies use and abuse women. The video display included a spoof on the T.V. news, with news items about women devoting more time to describing their physical characteristics and marital status

("blonde and shapely", "housewife and mother of three") than to whatever they had actually done that was newsworthy. The end of the news was especially delightful -- "Good news for sportsmen - they'll get fine weather this weekend; Bad news for sportswomen - they'll get rain".

There was also a T.V. soap opera with men being the agonised, over-emotional morons for a change, and an ad for a car polish showing a man going into ecstasies over his shiny chrome and shrieking like an imbecile when told that X Brand polish was really good old "Mustang" in disguise.

These media displays could form the basis of a very interesting seminar - very visual and effective.

Each session began with some type of presentation, after which we divided into small discussion groups and then came together again to form recommendations. In the session on Social Security and Accident Compensation I was in the group to consider the Domestic Purposes Benefit, with Bert Walker, who was just starting to work himself up to his frenzied attack on solo parents. His great concern was that the government is spending so much on D.P.B. and retrieving so little of it back from the fathers. Because of his inability to see beyond book-balancing we kept getting bogged down in what is essentially an administrative problem instead of concentrating what little time we had on the problems of women who need this benefit and how things could be improved for them. However, our group did manage to stress child care centres, as a way of enabling those women who wish, to rejoin the work force. We didn't get much time to discuss the problem of women having benefits cut off because they have a man living in the same house though, and this was very frustrating.

In Housing and Community Planning women's specific problems were largely lost as we got into the "difficulties young couples face in buying their own home" syndrome. It was assumed that everyone lived in a couple and wanted their own little box and always would. Alternative forms of living were brushed over, which was rather disappointing to me as a commune member. It seems to me that things can never change very much as long as each woman is isolated from the support of other women, with her "own" man and kids. Therefore alternative living arrangements need to be discussed.

Perhaps they would have been if more time had been available, but there did seem to be a determination to stay at the level of where people are at present (after all, most people do live in nuclear families at present), and improve this situation, rather than to look ahead to what may be or should be. Both approaches are necessary I think.

On the first evening two women gave a slide presentation about the I.W.Y. Education Conference findings. To illustrate, they followed two women through their entire education with slides and commentary, showing clearly how education fits women for their role and limits their aspirations.

One very arrogant male complained afterwards that "we would never sell our ideas with a shoddy presentation like that". He was referring to the fact that the slide presentation had been quickly put together by women who had neither the time nor the money (nor the secretaries and other office slaves) to turn out what he, with his salesman mentality, would have considered a "professional" display. He obviously found the ideas expressed too threatening and preferred to vent his feelings on the means of presenting them.

One day such men will realise that we in the Women's Movement are no longer humbly trying to "sell them" our ideas, because our confidence in ourselves and our vision is such that these men's opinions and approval are irrelevant. Our energy will be going to helping our sisters achieve our goal - and not to pleading with the Power Holders.

Diane E. Roberts
Christchurch

Sexism in the classroom

Dear Broadsheet,

I write here an incident that happened to me in one of my classes at school. We were having a maths lesson bisecting angles and lines when the teacher said, "I feel sorry for the girls as the boys have a definite advantage in this, especially those who take technical drawing."

"I take Technical drawing," I said. "Does she? Why?" he asked incredulously, "Can girls become architects?" Then added, "Oh well anyway the boys have a definite advantage." I would like to hear your comments?

Denise Greig,
Gisborne.

Behind the news

Australian Feminist Visits NZ

Elizabeth Wheelahan, high school activist and feminist, recently visited New Zealand from Australia. CAMILLE GUY talked to her about the current situation in Australia.

Elizabeth Wheelahan, a sixteen year old Australian feminist, secondary student activist and socialist (Socialist Youth Alliance) visited New Zealand in April.

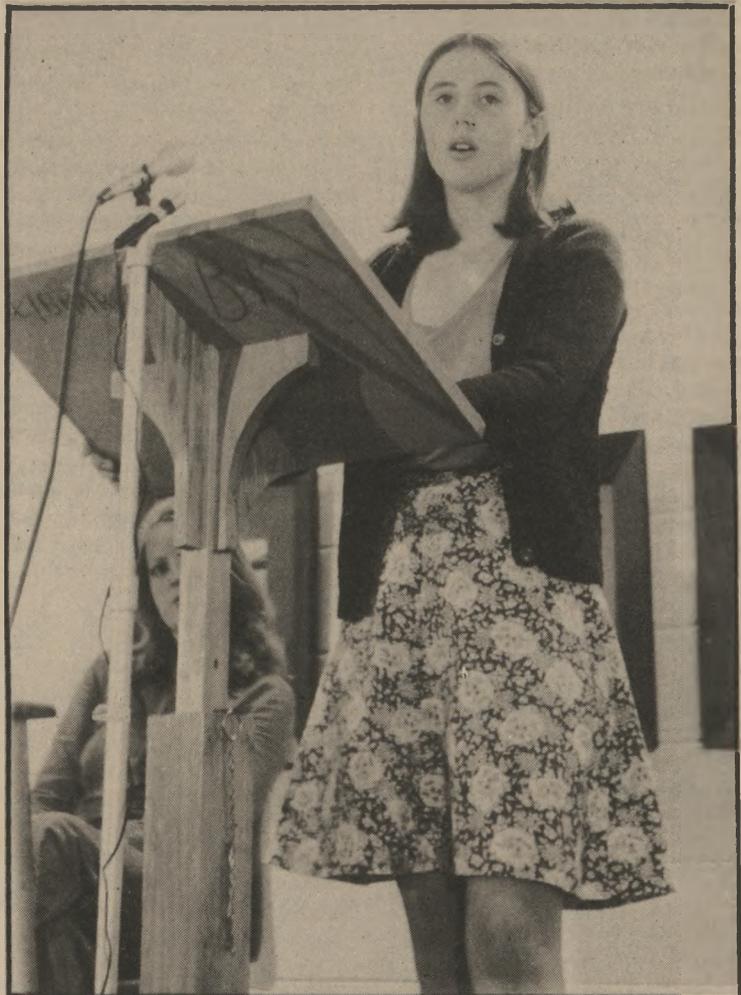
Elizabeth spoke at the Women's Centre in Auckland on April 13 and later talked to Broadsheet. Not a charismatic person and looking less than her age Elizabeth talked confidently and clearly about the changing Australian situation. She later asked about the New Zealand women's scene but few women seemed willing or confident to reply even at this small meeting. Discussing this later Elizabeth said she had thought she might come across as a loud mouth or hooligan in New Zealand because she'd heard we were very quiet.

"I haven't always been like this. I remember being very scared when I first started thinking about radical ideas and trying to put them across. I took a long time to change. But I'm very different now to four years ago. When I first spoke at a women's demonstration I was shaking so much they couldn't take a photo of me. But outside events force this kind of change. The Muldoon government should do this here because women have to make statements about what is happening. We're put in positions where we're forced to be confident."

Elizabeth told me she was congratulated in Wellington because she refused to be intimidated by a hostile male audience at Victoria University.

"I could tell that the women there wanted to ask questions but felt intimidated by the men. Some women came up to me afterwards and said they were. You have to try to be confident if you're not going to be put down by people who want to maintain the status quo."

Elizabeth described how women's rights are being attacked by the Fraser/Liberal government in Australia.



Elizabeth Wheelahan speaking at the Young Socialists national conference.

"Take the abortion issue which is of particular concern to New Zealand women who think it's easy to get an abortion in Australia. The 'Right to Lifers' (anti-abortion group) have been picketing hospitals that perform abortions and have had a big campaign over the last couple of years. In Sydney recently a woman doctor and a nurse were arrested for aborting a fifteen year old girl. If they are convicted this will alter the Judge Levine ruling which allowed women safe legal abortions on the decision of one doctor. The Harrold or Infant Life Preservation Bill was reintroduced in N.S.W. State Parliament in March. This defines a foetus as a child, makes it a felony to destroy the life of a child capable of being born alive and provides a twenty year sentence. It requires that abortions be done in public hospitals with two doctors certifying on oath, and that abortions be registered."

Elizabeth said that rape laws have been changed in Brisbane so that women can be charged with 'false complaint' if they drop the complaint." Two women have already been charged under this law which applies only to rape.

Rape crisis centres, women's health centres and women's refuges are all under heavy attack and threat of having their funds cut. In Victoria already thirty child care centres have been forced to close due to funds being cut off. The single mothers pension is under attack. Elizabeth said the Liberals say they won't give women 'handouts' as this is 'paternalistic'.

In Tasmania a women's derby planned for Easter had to be cancelled after a smear campaign.

"We've heard of vicious attacks against the women's movement there. A car driven at 60m.p.h. hit a woman activist. Another woman got into her car and found it covered in petrol and another found women's liberation badges stuck in the tube of her car tyre."

I asked Elizabeth how she relates feminism and socialism.

"I couldn't be a feminist without being a socialist and vice versa. Women's oppression is bound up with the way society is organised. The

family is one of the basic economic units in capitalist society and has to compete with other families for goods, house, education and so on. The basic cleaning and child care falls on women and the myth that women are inferior was created so that we'll accept this lot. The only way that women are going to win their liberation is by changing the economic basis of society. For instance we need free 24 hour child care so society takes the responsibility of caring for the young, old and sick and for housework off the backs of women. To do this we have to take the power and resources of society. There's no way we can be totally liberated in a society that depends on our oppression for its survival.

"Even demanding the right to control our own bodies hits at capitalism because when we win this right we won't be so tied to the institution of the family. At the moment we are tied, barefoot and pregnant.

"I come from a Catholic family and can't remember my mother being anything but pregnant when I was little. I like little kids but I don't think I'd want to have any myself. It's too much responsibility that I don't think I want to take."

I asked Elizabeth how she felt about marriage.

"Not in a million years for myself. I feel it restricts women and fashions a cage for them. The continual demands of kids leads to women

feeling inferior."

Although Elizabeth integrates feminism and socialism she supports an independent women's liberation movement fighting for feminist demands now. She believes all men are sexist to one degree or another but doesn't see sexism as the fault of individual men.

"The way men are is the result of how society is organised. They're conditioned into their sex roles. Men have no place in the women's movement but they can support it by coming to demonstrations and trying to change the attitudes of their peers."

Elizabeth says she is suspicious of men's liberation and C.R. groups for men.

"Men are in a totally different position in society. They're the leaders, the independent thinkers, the oppressors. There can't be any point in C.R. groups for them. The most useful thing men can do is to change society."

Elizabeth feels that C.R. groups are important initially for women to talk about their own individual oppression, to find they're not alone but in solidarity with other women.

"If a woman tries to change her own set up she finds she needs the support of other women. It's hard to do it on your own, to take all the strain of it."

Camille Guy

A Criminal Case

Who ripped off who here?

On the 31st March, 1974, a woman was convicted in the Otahuhu Magistrate's Court on a charge of failing to disclose to the Social Welfare Department that she was living in a de facto relationship with a Mr X.

She pleaded guilty, on the advice of a young lawyer who was assigned to her on "legal aid". The police prosec-

utor then told the Magistrate that the woman had obtained an emergency unemployment domestic purposes benefit because she was unable to work by reason of having to care for her children, which was true; that she was living as the wife of X throughout the currency of the benefit; that she was employed by a firm where she was known as Mrs X; that she continued to collect her benefit orders from a different address without disclosing to the Social Welfare Department the address where she was living with Mr X; and that she had two children. She was led to believe that she would be put on probation, but the Magistrate jailed her for four months.

The truth of the matter, which the police and the young lawyer did not explain to the Magistrate, was that Mr X had given her four black eyes, had been convicted of assaulting her, gave her some food and money now and again which was not worth any more than his board, did not help her pay the rent, went out drinking a lot and got drunk a lot and was away three or four nights a week; that she did not have a job while she was receiving the benefit, for she did not apply for the benefit until she had to give up work by reason of being pregnant to Mr X; that her reason for using a different address was not to cheat the Social Welfare Department but to ensure that Mr X did not get his hands on the benefit; and that she had not two children but three, including Mr X's baby aged 6 months.

Luckily, the woman had some staunch friends. They got her another lawyer who appealed to the Supreme Court. After a week in jail she was bailed out, pending the appeal. At the appeal it was made perfectly clear that she'd been more sinned against than sinful. The judge "sympathized" with the Magistrate's opinion that because this kind of fraud was so rife it must be severely dealt with, but was obliged to quash the sentence of imprisonment because it was not true that the woman was working, it was not true that Mr X was supporting her, it was not true that she only had two children, and it was a first offence. He put her on two years' probation.



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Order form on inside back cover.

Auckland Regional Radical Feminist Caucus

A regional Radical Feminist Caucus was held in Auckland at Easter. Some of the women who attended sent this report.

Friday: We all sat around on the grass in the sun talking about why we came, our expectations, the feminist groups we belonged to and what we were doing in them. There were women from The Women's Centre, Halfway House, The Rape Crisis Group and Broadsheet at the weekend. There were also women not connected with any particular group there, including one woman who came from Wanganui to take part in her first feminist weekend. These discussions continued through Friday evening and certain themes developed which were important throughout the weekend. Different political and theoretical perspectives were brought out in the open and at this point the splits seemed quite vast to some of us. The major split seemed to be between those who hold a lesbian/feminist separatist viewpoint and those who felt that it is worth working with and relating to men in certain specific contexts, such as partnerships including marriage relationships, education both of sensitive men and a general political campaign to raise the awareness of all men.

Other women not involved in these discussions shared feminist literature and just generally began to get to know each other. We pinned up large sheets of paper around the walls. These were used throughout the weekend as a vehicle for expression of immediate feelings and ideas and also for suggestions of what should be done next. These posters formed an exciting focus for the energies of the group at different times throughout the caucus.

Saturday: On Saturday we started exploring our ideas and feelings about what is wrong with the present structure of society and interpersonal relationships within it. We did this through experimenting with several different

media of expression and communication - painting, drama and music.

What came out of this were feelings of chaos, anger, cacophony, hopelessness, isolation, sadness, blackness.

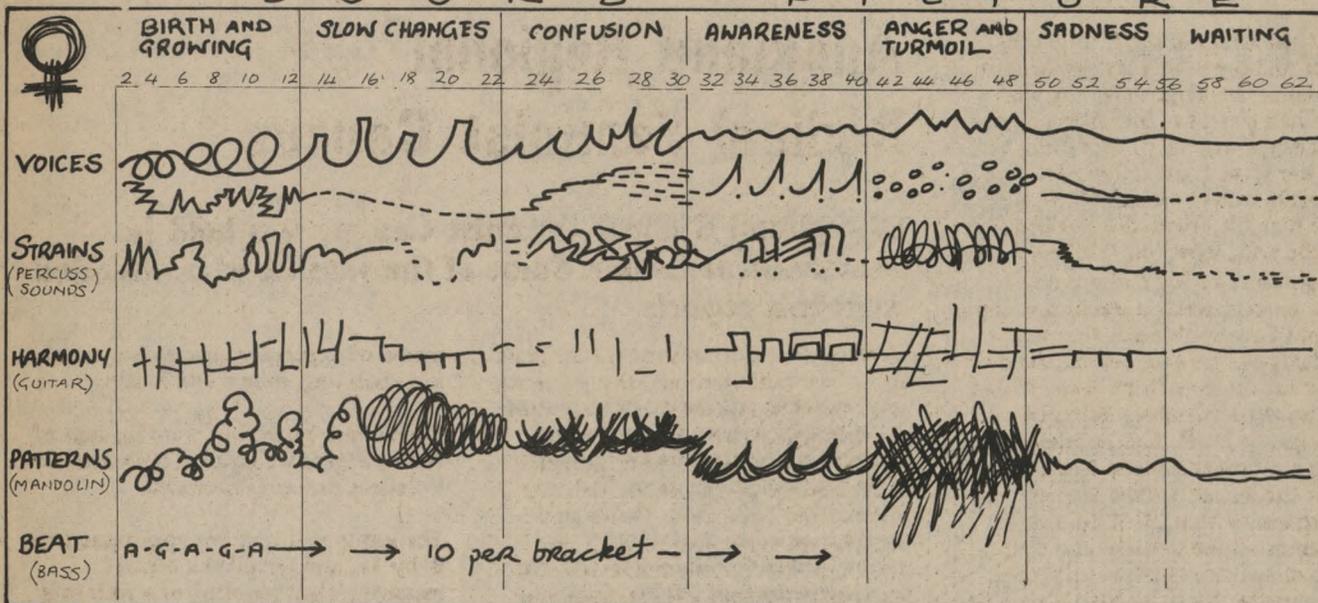
The group painting was approximately 9' by 18' and included a central massive violent painting of a male/pig/policeman crushing a woman with his boot, surrounded by various interpretations of rigid cages, chains, boxes, labels, and cannonball cocks. Our reaction to this monstrosity was to feel isolated from each other, diffusely angry, and specifically furious with the painting itself. We resolved this to some extent by later ritually burning the painting as a whole group out on the back lawn. The drama group presented an interpretation of the progression through courtship, marriage and "housewife psychosis" with "therapy" including shock treatment returning the housewife to unprotesting complicity in the female role. The drama group felt the hopelessness of being able to present only one small facet of what is wrong with the present patriarchal system, but also a very positive feeling about what they did express dramatically.

Audience reaction to this play varied from detachment to nausea to extreme anger with the male roles portrayed.

The music group produced the "sound picture" as illustrated and interpreted it with guitars, mandolin, percussion and voice. When this was shared with the whole group we all participated with stomping, clapping, words, screams, sighs and raspberries in the appropriate places.

Saturday afternoon's experience was precipitated by the fact that one

S O U N D P I C T U R E



The "sound picture" the women at the Radical Feminist Caucus produced.

woman wanted to leave because she felt isolated as a result of the divisions expressed on the Friday evening between lesbian separatists and those involved in relating to men, and because she felt that the morning's activities had further reinforced our isolation from one another. We discussed this at length and decided to stay together as a group in the afternoon. We moved almost unguided into a number of group sensitivity exercises involving movement, trust, expression and communication. Those of us involved in this can scarcely express this experience verbally, except to say that it brought us into touch with the psychic energy of women - being - together - strength. We felt a blurring of the difference between alone-ness and togetherness; for many of us there was a turning point in our feminist experience and vision. We experienced totally the reality of a dream we had of collective womanity, an experience totally removed from old patriarchal modes of communication.

Sunday: Was a day of total discussion for the group as a whole. We started in the morning and finally finished sometime in the evening. The topics we were discussing were our utopias, our visions of the future and how to get there. In the morning we found

ourselves using the language and concepts conditioned by the structure of our present realities and ideologies, using words like socialism, elitism, anarchism, power, economics. We found ourselves bogged down in the problem of means and ends, how for instance to avoid oppressing others in the struggle to free ourselves and them from oppression. We talked about the possible roots of our oppression and whether matriarchal woman dominated societies ever really existed. There were some very differing opinions expressed relating to different books or studies such as *The First Sex*, Evelyn Reed, that we had read and we came to no definite conclusions. Another related issue was whether or not men are basically, biologically more aggressive than women.* We decided that this issue could not be determined until the present conditioning of men and women had been destroyed and a new generation with different values and conditioning has grown to maturity.

*The apprehension was expressed that the research aimed at trying to prove that men are biologically more aggressive comes dangerously close to the sort of studies that have tried to prove that blacks are innately less intelligent, women innately more passive, men more inclined to pair-bonding and so on.

In view of this we decided that developing alternative value systems and ways of behaving and relating should be a top priority. We had discovered that for all of us our ideal was of whole people relating to whole people, getting away from the boxes, labels, and limitations expressed in the Saturday's depictions of society as it is.

We agreed that lesbian separatism is an essential route to developing a human culture based on emerging woman - values and woman - concepts. These can only be expressed within and flow from a collective pool of woman-experience. True, profound woman-experience can only emerge from an environment - psychic and physical - in which women's relating is not affected by patriarchal values. The depths to which male games are entrenched on our minds can only be realized, exorcised and replaced by collective woman-experience.

We also agreed to the value of working for change from within the patriarchal system, engaging in ongoing confrontation with it.

We discussed the dangers of reformism, which does not have revolutionary goals, and therefore has the effect of patching up the existing system, enabling it to channel and institutionalise dissent and enabling it to function more efficiently. We talked about

Behind the news

the capacity of the system to absorb our energies providing sops and assimilations in the form of piecemeal reforms, encouraging the complicity of women in their own oppression. We concluded that we must make it clear over and over that our aims are revolutionary and that we see specific issues, such as battered wives, rape, and abortion laws, not just as isolated instances of oppression but as rooted in the essential sexism upon which the entire society is structured.

We talked about the problem of reaching women generally and the need for continued communication via the media and through personal contact.* We know that we cannot rely on the male dominated media to put across an accurate political perspective of feminism, and therefore felt the need to further develop feminist publications such as Broadsheet and other valuable forms of communication such as street theatre, creative arts and film.

Monday: We started the day with going around the group, each woman in turn telling her impressions of the whole weekend - we were all feeling very positive and some of the comments were:

"This is the first time I've come out of a convention whatever with some sense of direction."

"It's very important for groups of women to keep coming together to nourish each other."

"The most casual and friendly and searching feminist gathering I've been too."

"There can be a danger of romanticising a weekend like this and getting high on the romanticism rather than the progressiveness of it. If we had them more often I think we would lose the romanticism and gradually get to the point where we want to do something positive. We could all learn to channel our anger into something positive to make it work for all of us."

"I felt very responsible for this week-

* The need to communicate with women in all age groups was seen as an important issue, and we planned to hold two evenings at the Women's Centre focused on older and younger women in the movement.

end, I felt pissed off with the organisation part of it beforehand. I had some very low and high expectations of it and felt very good because the highest expectations have been realized."

"The idea of getting out of boxes, and the idea of getting a women's culture going seems to have been in everyone's minds. I always seem to be fighting; I've had space this weekend not to fight."

Out of this discussion came the idea of getting a piece of land for a feminist community - see the article elsewhere in the issue for more on this.

We decided to have another weekend on 15th and 16th May to explore all sorts of ways of communicating with each other e.g. music, drama, movement, touch, painting etc.

We talked about the feminist network and the need to include women in the smaller centres. We spent some hours organising the National Radical Feminist Caucus. We anticipated that this weekend would have a similar fluid structure which would be planned collectively with the help of suggestions from the other local caucuses and from individual feminists.

Miranda Coates, Sarah Starey, Linda McGrath, Sharyn Knapp, Sharon Alston, Joy Allen, Jenny Ruth, Barbara Kingsbury, Rosemary Wood wrote this.

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Pacific Island

At the end of last year a Pacific Women's Conference was held in Suva. Janet McCallum sent us this report of the conference and of the Pacific Women's Resource Centre which is being set up there.

IWY was marked in the Pacific by a Pacific Women's Conference which for the first time enabled women of the area to meet and share their concerns. The conference was held in Suva from October 27 to November 2 last year. Representatives came from all over the Pacific, including Micronesia, Hawaii and American Samoa, the French territories, and Melanesian and Polynesian countries. From Australia there were representatives of Aboriginal and South Sea Island groups, and New Zealand sent representatives from the Maori Women's Welfare League, Nga Tamatoa, and people representing the various Pacific communities. There were also some visitors from the USA and Canada and Jamaican herstorian, Lucille Mair, came as a resource person to the conference.

The regional organising secretary to the conference was Claire Slatter - a Fijian graduate in politics from the University of the South Pacific, who has worked with the YWCA in Suva, and has also spent a year in Papua New Guinea tutoring in politics and engaged in research. Claire planned the conference. She also put out four issues of a newspaper, *Women Speak Out*, relating to it. Funds for the conference and Claire's position came from various voluntary and Church organisations, as

Women's Conference

well as the United Nations.

Papers at the conference covered the family and traditional culture, the education system, religion, the media, work and politics, economics, the law, health and nutrition. An important feature was the presence of delegates from the French controlled territories of New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and Tahiti, who, in speaking of the suppression of their people, gained the full support of conference delegates.

French bomb tests and their effects on the health of Pacific peoples brought forth several strongly worded resolutions, asking for WHO (World Health Organization) research into radioactive fall-out, and supporting the concept of a nuclear-free Pacific.

Another resolution, called for the establishment of a Pacific Women's Resource Centre (see other article).

Delegates also decided that a regional conference should be held every three years.

The most controversial event was the debate over a motion put by delegates of the National Council of Aboriginal Women. They asked that a telegram be sent in support of the Maori land marchers who were camped outside Parliament in Wellington at that time. Some delegates thought this was straying from the concerns of the conference. This led to a heated debate on what women's issues really were. The motion was finally passed with a considerable majority and the telegram sent.

I spoke to Claire Slatter about this debate, and other issues concerning the situation of women in the Pacific:

"The Maori question was a split one. It was an internal split in fact. There were a couple of delegates who felt confused by the whole thing and therefore hesitated to vote, or walked out, but mainly because they really weren't sure what the issues were. "It became a bitter conflict between Maoris, representing two very different stands, and two very different approaches to solving Maori problems.



One, the Maori Women's Welfare League which I think has been pushed to a more moderate stand, and the other the very radical Nga Tamatoa. Those representations are something the Maori community itself has to solve."

I understand you would like the proposed Women's Resource Centre to represent the women of the area on regional bodies. Are you hoping that your presence at this level would make up for the lack of women's influence at government level ?

"We're hoping that if we get recognition by some of the governments in the region, others would follow suit and recognise it as the voice of women in the Pacific. We may come up with recommendations through the regional forums for the establishment of women's offices in particular centres, but only if it is considered important by women in that area."

In Papua New Guinea, there is a special women's advisor to the Prime Minister, and point seven of the government's Eight Point Plan for development concerns equality for women. What has been done in other Pacific countries, for instance, the Solomon Islands?

"The Solomons' government has not set up any organisation or institution such as the Papua New Guinea government has done, but we were very encouraged by the response from the advisor to the chief minister, who sent a letter outlining the government's stand - something similar to the Eight Point Plan, about how the Solomon Island government viewed the importance of equal and full participation by its women in the total development process. They have a Women's Committee."

And did it have some government funds ?

"No. They were coming together and talking, and probing into areas of concern. It was really a consciousness raising and discovering for themselves what they wanted."

Is there any government sponsored women's advisor in Fiji ?

"No. There's never been any advisor on women's affairs, there's never been any post at all, except the Women's Interest Office which most of the Pacific Island governments have.

"But I certainly think that we do need

a voice at the top, on a national decision-making level, in the way of a political appointee to the Prime Minister, but this has never been considered.

"The only recognition, and this is a very token one at that, I think, that the government gave to International Women's Year was by sending two delegates to the Mexico Conference, but both of these were paid for by the United Nations."

Do you think there's any difference between the position of women in traditional Melanesian and traditional Polynesian societies?

"If you asked any Polynesian woman that she would laugh, because in many Polynesian societies, women hold a very privileged position, and a very overtly powerful position. Take Samoa, where women are in an extremely powerful position. Mrs Mata'afa has one of the highest titles. The matai title can go to either men or women. Samoans often see their society as being equal between men and women, but my conceptions of inequality and of role restrictions on women in Samoan society are probably very different from a Samoan's conception of her own society.

"There are some things that I, as a woman, would not accept as just, which exist in Samoan society. I haven't met any Samoan women who have spoken out against some so-called customs, which they deem to be discriminatory against women. In fact, when I was in Samoa, I would point out things, or they would point them out, and they would smile and shrug and say, 'That's fa'a Samoa' - that's it.

"But for Fijian women, I think pretty much the same situation exists. There is a difference between chiefly women and commoner women. Certainly titled women, who are of royalty, do enjoy high privilege, high status and how! I think probably they do also in rural areas at home, where women make a very big economic contribution; they are producers. I believe that really does influence or determine how much political power a woman has. If I am economically productive, I am a powerful person on my own, even in a subsistence economy.

"So that's how I see the situation at home, in the villages, where women do hold considerable power in decision-making. I think it's wrong to assume that they don't, because at the meetings men speak. And it's the same in Papua New Guinea. To assume that women are kept in the background

because they don't speak up at meetings, is very wrong. For instance, in a New Ireland village I was in last year, at meetings it was incredible. The women sat at one side and the men sat at one side and all the discussions with the area authority representatives were done by the men. But the women were listening to everything, and if at any stage they didn't agree with anything, they would stand up and have their piece, and they could in fact just completely stop the meeting by challenging something. They could make or break anything.

"I'm sure that relates very much to the fact that it's a matrilineal society, and women are the owners of the land. And that they are the producers too, and therefore have an equal status with their men in providing for the family. So they have an equal say about what things are done about the land, about its use, about produce, about any economic development. At home, where women have the same economic power, I think that they do affect decisions that are made, even though in meetings this may not seem apparent."

But this is in the traditional society?

"Yes. What worries me is the situation in urban areas. Then there are very fundamental changes, and women are left without any important position. Some of them do go to work, but when you come into the cities, you're into a whole new social system. You don't have an extended family to look after your children. Most women are then confined to the home - to looking after children, to cooking, to having to be dependent on the man's wage packet. That puts her really in a position where she's dispossessed of her power, she's subjugated to the man, who has control over his pay packet. I see that displacement as very worrying.

"And then women feel that they are bound too - to marriages which may not be working out, wife beatings and all that sort of thing. Women aren't familiar with what kind of court proceedings to take up, and whether to prosecute their husbands for beating them; and if they left them what kind of maintenance they are eligible for, and how to go about actually getting it, under the maintenance laws.

"It's so difficult for women to actually be eligible. You have to have not seen your husband for thirty days. If at all he's come to visit you, it's assumed that you're back together again, or if at all he's given anything in the way of

money, then he's supposed to be supporting you, therefore you can't take him up on the maintenance charge."

Do you think there are many differences in the concerns of women in the Pacific, and women in a place like New Zealand?

"Let's say that the concerns that New Zealand women articulate would be the same concerns that we articulate, but we are just a small group. I'd say the problems are the same, but probably fewer people at home are concerned with them, because probably fewer people are aware of concepts like the right to terminate a pregnancy, or the right to decide whether or not you want to be a mother.

"I think they're new concepts, but that with political education for women about the rights they have over their bodies, over their lives, I think these will become very real issues. But at present, a girl gets pregnant, she's unmarried, she accepts that. It never occurs to her that she can decide otherwise. Most often, people do have the child and bear the consequences. And the family most often would absorb the child into the extended family.

"I think again there are differences between the rural areas, in the traditional society where the extended family is still intact in the villages, and when it happens in the towns. And I think people would become aware there really was a problem if statistics were available about how many women die each year from attempted abortions, how many cases there are of asepticemia, and other kinds of injuries, but none of this in fact is revealed. I think the attitude of a lot of women at home is that abortion is not a problem, but they really don't know what's going on."

Can you briefly outline what stage the fight to legalise abortion is at in Fiji?

"Well, it was discussed in parliament, but as yet nothing has been done about legalising it. We're hoping it will come up in the New Year. There was a select committee set up by the senate which looked into the whole population trend, and they came up with the recommendation that abortion be legalised."

Continued on page 13

feminist diary

March 24 Addressing the Rotary Club in Christchurch yesterday, the Minister of Social Welfare, Mr Walker, criticised people who cheated the social welfare system. Mr Walker concentrated his remarks on the domestic purposes benefit, which gives support to solo parents. Women were only entitled to the benefit if they were without support; women living in de facto relationships with men did not fit into this category, said Mr Walker. He issued a warning that the department will be making stringent checks and there will be serious consequences for any beneficiary who is found to be living in a de facto relationship while drawing the benefit.

Compared to tax evaders and white collar criminals, social security beneficiaries are angels, says Mr Peter Harwood, president of the N.Z. Association of Social Workers. Mr Harwood said that his association is extremely concerned to see the Minister of Social Welfare on another witch-hunt of a disadvantaged group.

March 25 Yesterday, the Social Welfare Department conceded that it had no hard facts and figures to support the allegation that many solo parents are abusing the social security system. The Director-General Mr I. Mackay, said that compared with the 855,000 benefits paid annually, the problem was a minor one.

March 26 Barbara Sherwood was making a call from an outdoor telephone booth before dawn when a passing motorist stopped, pulled her from the booth, threw her to the ground and tried to rape her. She pulled out a .38 revolver and shot her assailant twice. The man was treated for bullet wounds in the shoulder and back and charged in the jail ward at a California medical centre on suspicion of rape. Ms Sherwood is a deputy sheriff.

April 6 In making its submissions to the Royal Commission yesterday, the

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists said that 78% of its members wanted a change in the law to enable contraceptive advice to be given to those aged under sixteen. The College backed a strong contraceptive-sterilisation policy which its members felt would limit requests for abortion.

April 17 The Italian Government has recommended June 13 to President Giovanni Leone as the date for a national referendum to allow abortion on demand.

In a paper she presented to the annual conference of the Values Party, Deidre Kent of Tauranga, suggested "he" and "she" be changed to "co", to achieve a non-sexist language. Ms Kent said language was the most powerful and insidious weapon remaining to oppress women.

April 22 Employees who have to submit to a boss's sexual advances to keep their jobs may sue for sex discrimination under the Civil Rights Act, a Washington judge has ruled. Judge Charles Richey made the ruling in upholding a finding that a male supervisor had illegally fired a female subordinate who spurned him. While the case before him dealt with a male boss and a female employee, Judge Richey said his ruling would also apply if the sex roles were reversed.

April 27 The Auckland Medical Aid Centre received a vote of confidence from the General Practitioners' Society yesterday, during the presentation of their submission to the Royal Commission. Dr D.F. Minnitt said the Centre had taken the profit motive out of abortion, and that this country had been spared the unedifying spectacle of commercialisation of abortion and trafficking in human misery which has occurred in other countries.

April 30 A federal judge has ruled that American Airlines discriminated illegally against 300 of its air hostesses

by making them resign when they became pregnant and refusing to rehire them. The decision may cost the airline up to \$15 million in back pay.

May 5 The Minister of Social Welfare, Mr Walker, yesterday talked of an ultimatum for de facto beneficiaries on domestic purposes benefits. He spoke in Christchurch (to the women's section of the Christchurch branch of the National Party) of an undetermined two week period beyond which he would "begin looking at names of several hundred people who, it was claimed, were illegally receiving the benefit."

May 6 The Government has asked the Committee on Women to monitor progress on recommendations arising from the recent conference on the role of women. The Acting Prime Minister, Mr Talboys, said that the Government wanted to ensure the recommendations were processed without delay. They were convinced of the need for a continuing source of advice on the role of women in the country's social and economic development, and the permanent location of an advisory body on women would be considered as part of the overall review of planning structures at present being carried out, said Mr Talboys.

May 7 Combined women's groups who saw the Minister of Health, Mr Gill, at Parliament yesterday were told that changes to the Hospital Amendment Act would remain a conscience vote in Parliament. A spokesperson from NOW, Ms Deidre Milne, said the Minister had told them that in making any changes to the present laws on abortion, he would not like to see the findings of the Royal Commission being pre-empted.

May 8 The ordination of women to the priesthood of the Anglican Church was approved by a substantial majority at the General Synod in Nelson yesterday.

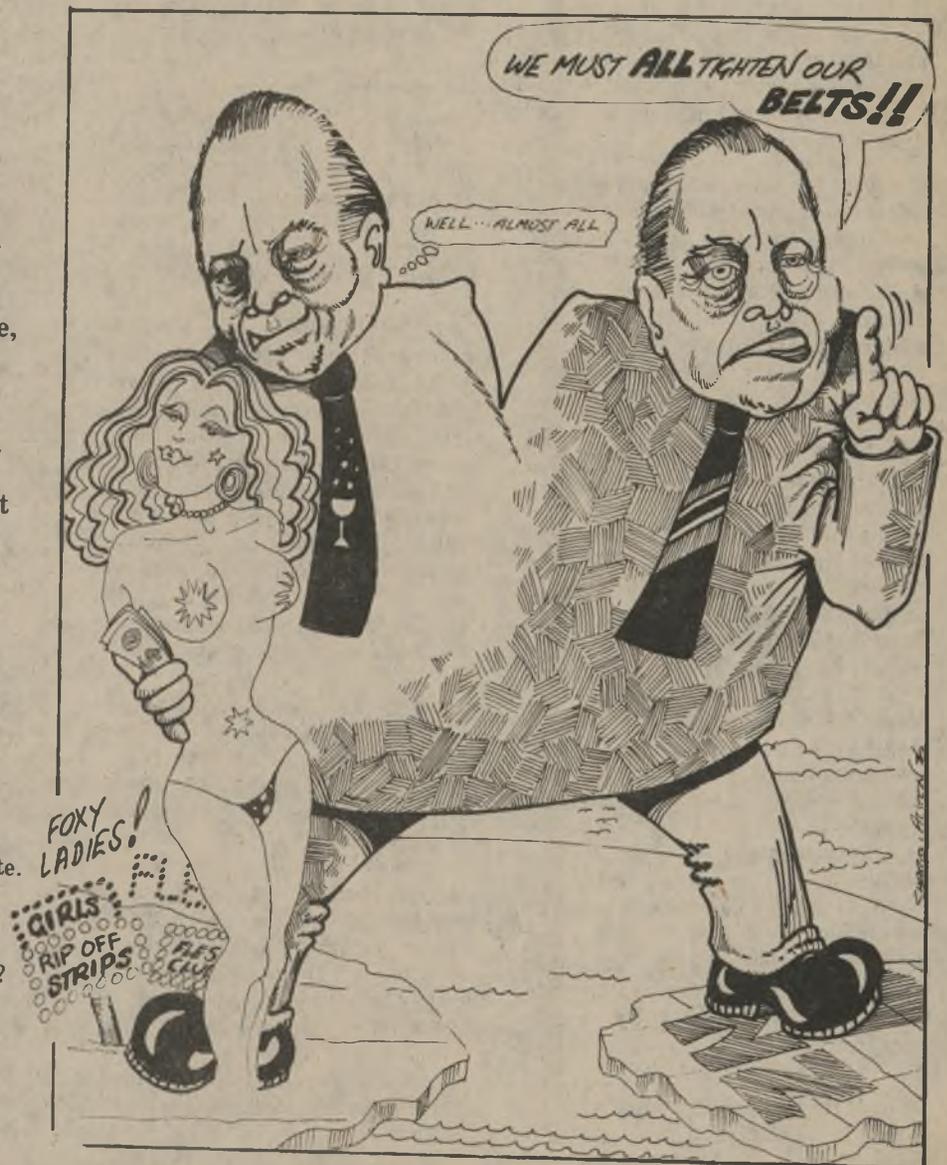
Editorial

While feminists agitate for change, politicians emphasise their support for the continuation of the nuclear family as the basic unit of society. Recent events have called into question the sincerity of their views.

Animal Farm 1976?

None leap to the defence of "home and family" sooner than our male politicians. Some of them have even beaten Ms Bartlett to the gun - for example, Bert Walker, who has moved from censoring sex on the air-waves to censoring solo mothers in their bedrooms - but Rob Muldoon has never been slow on the trigger. He does not want to see more women M.P.s in Parliament, ostensibly for fear that they will neglect the "homes and families" of the nation, which is their sacred duty to guard.

The sincerity of this stance is called severely into question when we see how much effort M.P.s themselves put into family life. M.P.s are notorious for leaving wives and families alone for long periods in the electorate. They may well be over-worked - if so, why do they not pass legislation to increase the number of M.P.s or provide more assistance for M.P.s? Is it possible that they prefer to stay in Wellington, where the nation's business can be conducted simultaneously with more private affairs, perhaps with women not tied to the sacred "home and family".



Pacific Islands Women's Conference continued from page 10.

Was this because of their attitude to abortion, or because of the pressures of population?

"As I remember from the select committee's report, the idea was put forward that abortion should not be seen as a method of population control, not as a preferred method, but as a last resort. The case for abortion was based more on the extent of suffering that is being caused women, and the statistics on how many women in fact put themselves through some kind of abortion."

Do you think there's a possibility of legalisation?

"It's a new thing for it to come out from the senate, but I think that the opposition at present is against it. We haven't really done the assessment-going round to all the individual members, which is what I'd like to do, just to find out their response. I hope we can do that this year, because we want to push that through and get it legalised. I think opposition would certainly come from the religious, the Catholic religion especially, but they're not particularly strong."

The Pacific Women's Resource Centre

A Pacific Women's Resource Centre will be set up in Suva as a result of last year's Pacific Women's Conference. Activities should begin this month with the appointment of a co-ordinator whose task will be to collect all the available information and research concerning women in the area.

The Centre will be involved in collecting and disseminating information; research; compiling a "skills bank"; and running training programmes. One of its main functions will be to represent the views of Pacific women on social, economic, environmental and legal issues.

A regular newsletter is planned, to give progress reports on the centre, news affecting Pacific women, and research findings. It will be sent to contact people and organisations throughout the region. As well, in areas where there is illiteracy, the centre plans to make use of other media by preparing programmes for radio.

Once the co-ordinator has made a start on collecting the information in the first year of operation, the centre staff will be expanded to include research assistants who will begin to work on topics indicated by gaps in the material already available. They will also work on questions suggested by the conference. These include: the relationship between domestic violence and alcohol; the means of conducting nationwide education programmes; women's health; malnutrition; legal aid and other forms of health for one-parent families; the effects of radioactive fallout; and programmes to encourage breast feeding. An important task will be to provide background information to support recommendations or submissions at regional and international forums on matters affecting women.

By the third year, the centre should have built up a "skills bank" of women who are available to conduct these programmes which will be in response to locally felt needs. They will aim to teach participants not only the specific skills, but also how to set up and run training centres in their own areas.

New Zealand delegates at the conference voted in support of the centre's establishment. Claire Slatter feels that New Zealand women could be involved in the activities of the centre.

"I think they could help towards it. Whether they would find it useful or not, I'm not sure, because basically its focus would be the situation of Island women. I think they would be able to assist it with any kind of studies they have; any research, any research officers they could volunteer. I'm sure the information we collect would be tremendously useful for them. For instance, if things are discovered through our research they may be able to assist us by implementing or taking these submissions further, through their own political structures. For instance, migrant education or the interests of migrant women workers, and whether you work through unions to bring about changes, or through legislative changes, education boards, schools, the Education Department or whatever. We would hope that in the various nations of the Pacific, people would decide how best to work on proposals that come out of the centre."

Any enquiries about the centre may be sent to: Ms Joan Yee c/- Y.W.C.A.

Box 534 Suva, Fiji.

Sometimes an M.P. (and especially a P.M.) can justify leaving home and family even further behind, to pursue the nation's business in foreign capitals. Currently devoting himself to foreign affairs is our Prime Minister. At home he exhorts us to tighten our belts, and attempts to force us to save by cutting subsidies on bread and milk, hounding solo mothers, deporting Islanders, keeping young people at school by increasing unemployment yet cutting our relief teachers - and so on. Yet when we open our newspapers we read that Mr Muldoon and his party of twelve ran up a bill of \$500 at the Crazy Horse Strip Club in Paris. This does not include food - the party dined at a floating restaurant on the Seine before going on to their evening's titillation.

So much for Muldoon, the penny-pincher and family man. We save the government money by paying higher prices for basic necessities - Muldoon and his flash companions waste it on luxuries overseas. We accept sexist discrimination at home, so that "home and family" may be preserved, and then we see that Muldoon holds family life in such reverence that as soon as he gets away from home he pays big money to see women strip in public. The only difference between the Crazy Horse in Paris and the sleazy "Pink Pussy Cats" and "Taboos" of New Zealand is in the wealth of the clientele and the corresponding extravagance of the show. But the local grubby raincoats and the Parisian hand-tailored woollen suits cover the same lecherous and sexist sensations.

Perhaps "home and family" men are living a lie. Perhaps they are all "dirty old men" under the skin. If they don't have any basic decency, perhaps they could have the decency to be consistent, and not have one standard for the people at home, and another for themselves. We would prefer, to paraphrase the old proverb: "Pig say, pig do" - not "pig say, pig do the opposite."

One of the problems with IWY was that it used up so much valuable woman energy. Our feminist resources were stretched to their limit often being pulled in several different directions at the same time. The author of this article, BARBARA HOLT, says "it was like being on a treadmill at times."

'75	AN ACCOUNT OF
	ONE WOMAN'S I.W.Y.

I think it may be too early to evaluate IWY in terms of lasting gains, but the immediate results are evident. The men I work with are now in the habit of saying (in February 1976) "As it's Women's Year we'd better let you do it" or "We'd better have a woman on it" when some interesting new job has to be done by one of us.

The year finally did get through to nearly everyone, I believe, after a late start made up for by good press coverage of the very determined efforts of some committed feminists to make the year a success.

To me, the disadvantage was that the time-scale was set by the calendar and not by planned use of our available resources. The problem was that non-IWY events like the General Election, new jobs and people had to be fitted in somehow. It was like being on a treadmill at times.

One question that I am asking myself now, is whether the effort I was expected to put into IWY by the Government and others justified my own pain and suffering. The lesson I think I have gained is that it was not. It is one thing for wives or widows of men with high incomes, with a need for some outside interest, to take up women's issues and to work at them with gusto; for single women, as Charlotte Bunch pointed out in a recent issue of Broadsheet, feminism is much more likely to be a bread and butter issue which lasts forever and a day. For this struggle it is necessary to pace yourself, rather than move at the pace required by others.

My feminism, although undoubtedly given birth to by that of my mother, took a more radical turn in 1964, when I was living in London. I became one of the founding members of a small group of women calling themselves the Minorities Research Group. It sprang up in response to a need discovered by the Homosexual Law

Reform Society for some women to talk to each other about their sexual identity. I was an active member of this group for about two years.

When I returned to New Zealand to live in 1972, I became a member of NOW and SROW in Wellington. I found them to be very like the MRG, except that they contained a higher proportion of women who believed that feminism was compatible with heterosexual relationships. I am heartened by these groups, and have enjoyed my membership of them.

In 1973, I had spent many hours working on a Public Service Association women's rights committee and NOW activities in connection with the Select Committee on Women's Rights. Persuaded to be on the Labour Party's ticket for the Wellington City Council elections in 1974, my public service career and personal life took a back seat.

I worked hard at the campaign and was moderately successful in the October election, topping the list of unsuccessful Labour candidates (twelve). This result was probably in part due to publicity I received from a new job I took in September 1974, as executive training officer and secretary to the Trade Union Training Board, seconded from the staff of the Federation of Labour.

I had been three months in this job when IWY began. By then I had discovered that I had been appointed by an organisation which, although it had no desire to see me further feminist goals, was prepared to accept any accolades for having appointed a woman (token or alibi as the French call it) to its staff.

In November they had not responded well to an invitation for me to be part of the working party of the Committee on Women, and they had requested that I withdraw my nomination for the Labour Party's candidacy for Porirua, because this was a challenge against a sitting member (Dr. Wall) and it gave rise to the charge that I was "splitting the Labour movement".

The following extracts from my diary and correspondence show how my IWY went:

January : Ten days of rest at WEA summer school at Kawhia shattered by visiting speaker Toni Church nominating me for school committee. Did not refuse for fear of being thought a shirking feminist. Same month, before return to work, persuaded to offer myself to Labour Party for East Coast Bays electorate as General Election candidate (to forestall old cry that women do not come forward).

February : Informed employers (FOL) was nominated for candidacy, and was told, if I accepted, security of employment was "on my own head". Went ahead, as PSA had just negotiated for me the right to return to public service within one year of leaving it. Lost candidacy to younger male person. Took male political science student as flat-mate.

March : (From letter to an Auckland friend who wanted to be billeted with me for the Convention in June): "I am going to the States on a US State Department grant for an IWY seminar to be held in several major cities. It is a multi-regional project, covering 25 countries and 29 participants, and I am the NZ participant. It lasts six weeks so I won't be back until June 23, the week after our convention. I got it with Committee on Women endorsement and very largely because I am (had to be) aged between 25 and 40 and known to Ms Dell's committee. Also possibly because I work for the FOL, belong to feminist groups and the Labour Party, which is establishment these days. All of this is conjecture, of course. I just got a ring out of the blue. It may also have something to do with the US Embassy liking to send trade unionists to the US to keep them out of Russia Skinner says. He has had four of these grants. I have a hectic six weeks before I leave, giving talks at NOW and Labour Party seminars at weekends. No doubt we will all be relieved when it is not IWY."

April : (From letter to sister): "Spent last weekend at Labour Party seminar where delivered paper on "The Labour Party and Women", which I sweated blood over the week before (literally, as I had my period). My Hamilton billeter (from last year's convention) asked me to put her up for a week while she went to a course. I slept on the floor and took her to a meeting of new organisation just started called WEL.

Resisted urge to serve on committees but accepted invitation to be on four convention committees - steering (NOW representative), trade unions, training and social activities. Seemed only fair to make some contribution as would miss the actual convention.

Spoke at Young Socialists' meeting to welcome Nan Bailey, young, black feminist from Washington DC on behalf of NOW. Made many arrangements for and chaired NOW's seminar on "Women in Employment". Received friendly congratulations on trip from Grace Hollander, president National Council of Women, Rosemary Seymour, Waikato University, and Toni Church in Australia who wrote, "IWY women have to develop thick skins."



Photo: Leigh Missen.

Wrote to my mother overseas: "I also have all sorts of job worries, including a real power pressure point being applied by the university's Industrial Relations Centre, peculiar behaviour by Jim Knox who seems to want to fall out with me, and the absence of support or interest by Skinner. The FOL Conference the week before I go, will be very educational for me. Sonja Davies may have some chance for the executive which would certainly be a big advance and make things better for me.

"Saw press report of speech by Dorothy Winstone on IWY - typical of some that are being given by exhausted women activists. Stressed that women need to get into things more and stop depending on men. I think you are wise not to be here for IWY as it is very exhausting."

From another letter to sister: "I am very tired and can't see much let-up. Being in public view in NZ is crazy. Everyone thinks they own you. I get calls from all sorts of people who think I have the ability to help them. Probably the American trip will at least be some let-up."

May : Found out at eleventh hour before leaving that my employers would pay me for the six weeks I would be away (after letting my part of the flat to cover expenses).

10-18: In Washington DC one week to study **Women in Politics**. Met full-time worker for Women's Lobby Incorporated who knew NZ chiefly for Professor Liley's evidence in their abortion cases - ("Please try to keep him at home").

With a few like-minded members of our group, escaped the official programme of Hubert Humphrey and other established politicians to hear Betty Friedan debate with Congresswoman Marjorie Holt at Kennedy Center, "Where is the Women's Movement Heading?". This was a "Town Meeting" attended largely by low-income housewives (by appearance) who questioned Friedan and Holt on their views on racial desegregation (busing) and volunteer labour of women.

Friedan was for the former, against the latter, her opponent was the reverse. The most support seemed to be felt for Friedan's views, which included the idea that women had won their battle for equality with men now and could work alongside them as equals. Both women supported the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) campaign, Friedan suggesting that opposition came from large insurance companies and other vested financial interests. Holt, a lawyer earning 42,000 dollars in Congress, expressed the view that the volunteer labour of women earned them high respect. Refreshing to find this issue discussed as we campaigned for payment for councillors in Wellington. Much more could be said about volunteerism in NZ by women.

The days of rest at WEA summer school at Kawhia shattered by visiting speaker Toni Church nominating me for school committee. Did not refuse for fear of being thought a shirking feminist.

18-22 Boston- (5 days) Women in Education.

Enjoyed sharing room with Sara Dowse from Elizabeth Reid's department in Australia. With Pam Sharratt from South Africa, we sat in on committee women at North-eastern University, to hear women staff members press for affirmative action on appointments.

Saddened by racism at Third World Women's Social evening held for us - black, Spanish-speaking and native American citizens' group formed to help themselves without assistance from white women. They were mainly teachers, social workers and union organisers.

22-27 New York (6 days) Women at Work, Nationally and Internationally. Impressed by middle-aged married, first women's bank president, heard how and why bank is opening. Listened with much frustration to male secretary explain how International Lady Garment Workers' Union functions for mainly female members. Introduced to representatives of a coalition of women's organisations (mainly of

minority groups - gay, academic, young Jewish, Persian, in Prison women, etc) formed for IWY. Shared room with journalist member of our group from Hungary whose views coincided with mine on most topics.

27-28 Detroit (1 day)

Mind-blowing day meeting founders of First Feminist Credit Union and first president of Coalition of Labour Union Women, both extremely good to me in providing information about how they got started.

28-29 Madison (1 day)

Again generously given time and drive to airport by a Director of NOW who is also a Professor of Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin (Extension Department). Was told about the struggle of black and gay women to get representation in NOW's national body.

June 1-5 Minneapolis-St. Paul Women in the Arts

Our group members were asked: "Has your consciousness as a woman changed as a result of your experiences so far?" by a male expert in cross-cultural communication, but were given no time to reply. This was question number three, general questions about our impressions of the US preceding it. I tried but failed (without group support) to get the question discussed. Would have mentioned the woman student carpenter's labourer I saw in Madison as thrilling me.

In Minneapolis a few women journalists thought they were making advances, now that the women's pages were called "Family Affairs" and some of them had been promoted to editorships in general areas. However, one stressed she was on verge of marriage break-up owing to long hours needed at work.

June 5-11 San Francisco Women and the Community.

Took part in full discussion with US and overseas women on pros and cons of volunteerism (being discussed everywhere in US it seemed). Talked also with women working in agencies which place women in unusual occupations, management and apprenticeships, with the aid of Government grants.

Spent one day with president of San Francisco's "white" NOW and attended their large monthly meeting (about 200 women and a few men) - very tightly organised. It included training session lasting three-quarters of an hour on the "Menopause" - the object being to make it an "OK word this year". Heard Prostitutes Convention announced (another topic much discussed in the US) - legal changes being sought to make a woman no more liable than her client.

First real split in our group emerged clearly here in San Francisco, women from Asia and Africa coming out for voluntary work and against the term liberation. Access to water was stressed as the primary need of most women in Africa to give them more leisure. Educated, wealthy, black women from Africa showed fear of revolutionary zeal of black American women.

11-14 Denver, Colorado Women and the Law

Women from Moslem countries most interested in comparing their respective divorce laws, all based on the Koran but differing to some extent. Depressed to find that most were keen to claim they had the true Koran version (which seemed very insulting to women.) Those from poorer countries (including Fiji) also keen to talk about the causes of prostitution.

14-19 Washington, D.C. - Evaluation Session

Most of our group revealed their lack of sympathy for the US struggle to create equal opportunity in the employment field. Most, indeed, revealed their lack of sympathy for the whole American way of life. Found myself practically the only one able to say I had found any inspiration in the things I saw and heard.

19-21 Mexico City-Tribune

Met up with some of NZ delegation and attended opening sessions of Tribune, dominated by large numbers of Latin American women. As usual the abortion controversy aroused strong feelings. An elderly British woman tried to force through a motion supporting free abortion, which few could understand, even those wanting to support it. Met the representative of a New York group called Catholics for a Free Choice which seemed like something we could start in NZ.

July: Returned to NZ in determined, though exhausted, frame of mind, gave interviews to "Evening Post" and "Midday Report" (on radio). Collapsed with flu one week later.

Co-opted to PSA's Women's Committee (in advisory capacity only) to look at State Services Commission's proposals for removing all sex discrimination in the State Services. Not as generous as all that, although better than the PSA had asked for! Still a lot to be fought for in child-care, maternity leave and re-training.

Invited to Women of the Year Luncheon of Save the Children Fund, heard Miriam Dell ask how many members had read the Women's Rights Report. Not surprised to find that only a few of the invited guests had.

Felt very frustrated by inability to bring to attention of my board the Women's Trade Union Training Programmes I had picked up in the US. No report on my trip was asked for, except by Ms Dell's Committee on Women. Gave copy of long report to board members, only comment from one being that, after reading it, he could not justify my having been paid while on the trip. Saw a difficulty in continuing to work for people whose views I despised.

August: (From a letter) "I have not really felt well or energetic since my return from the US seven weeks ago. IWY is still taking its toll here. Last Saturday, I went to the Wellington and Porirua Regional Committee's day on the Women's Rights Report. Would not have bothered but feminists were actually rung and asked to go as "resource" people. A pleasant day meeting old friends but uphill work educating those who had not helped to write the report by writing submissions. Felt I ought to

"I am very tired and can't see much let-up. Being in public view in New Zealand is crazy. Everyone thinks they own you."

be paid for this sort of work in future.

I've been invited onto a committee or working group planning part of the Education Department's IWY seminar. It meets in work time. I know better than to ask if I can attend officially this time."

Applied for job as secretary for Committee on Women. Heard that 40 or so others had applied (presumably also all those others wanting to be paid for what they are expected by Government to do - write submissions etc.) Need for more jobs to be established in this area is obvious, to me anyway (US women become "affirmative action" officers).

Suddenly made treasurer of Wellington NOW when previous one went overseas. Invited to meeting convened by Sonja Davies to discuss her ideas for Working Women's Councils, how they would serve the needs of both wives of trade unionists and working women. Not sure that I have any energy to put into this venture but would like to see it successful. Surprisingly, accused by an FOL executive member of interfering in affairs of his union because two women on its executive put forward well-worded resolution from Women's Rights Report. Given two months notice by Trade Union Training Board. Skinner offered me the right to an enquiry chaired by

Continued on page 21

Gave copy of long report to board members, only comment from one being that, after reading it, he could not justify my having been paid while on the trip. Saw a difficulty in continuing to work for people whose views I despised.

Feminists are well aware of how role-playing in the nuclear family oppresses women. There is little literature on the situation of women attempting alternative life-styles. This article looks at what happened to the women in one rural commune near Auckland.

Back to Nurture

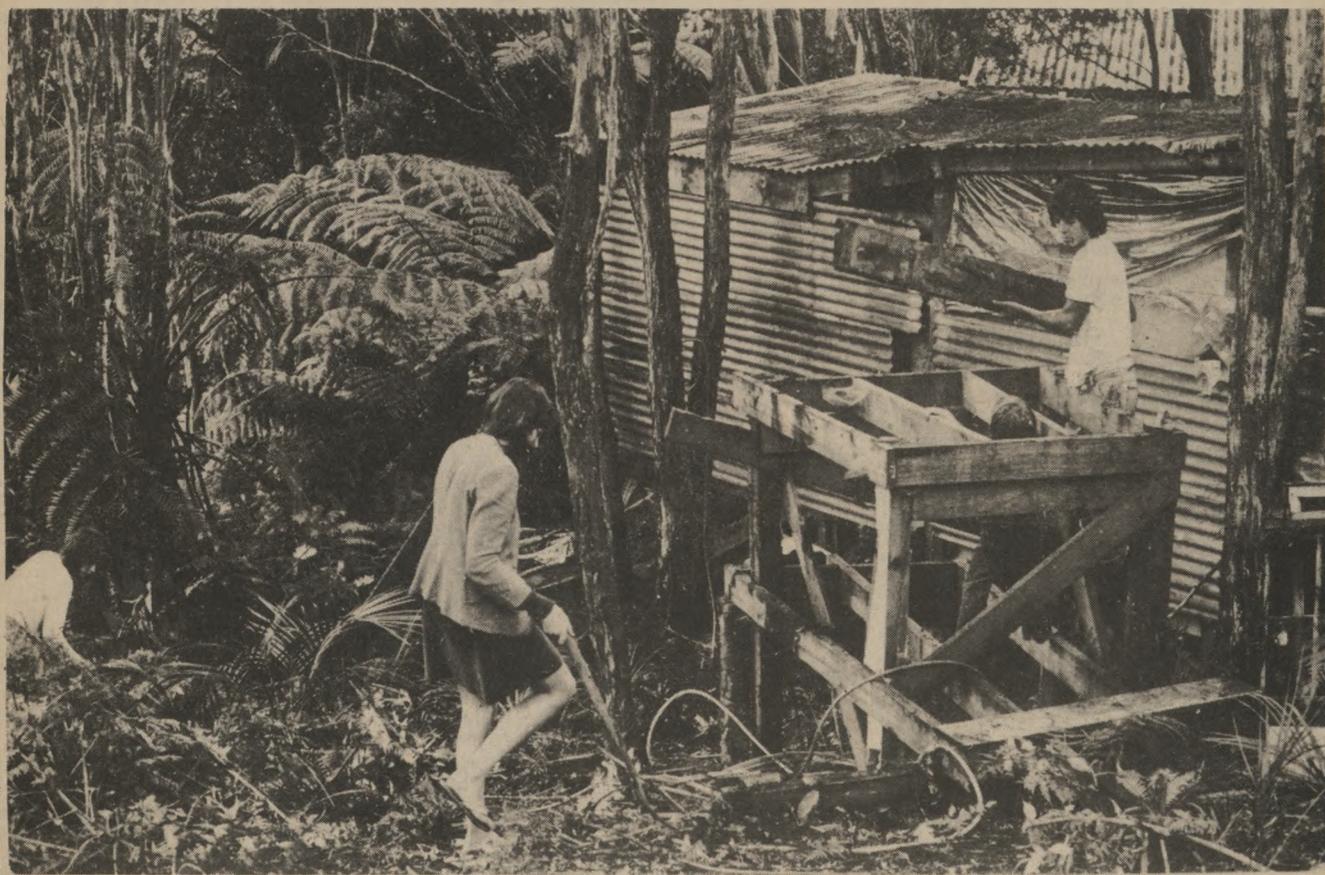
Eschewing the life-styles of their parents, both the radicals and the hippies of the sixties set off, with ideals intact, to the promised land of communal living.

The hippies picked up the plough and set off in search of the agrarian counter-culture, but took with them their industrial-age conditioning and reactionary, sexist role-playing. This elitist, middle-class, rural drift means liberation for the men, but serfdom for the women. Women tend the needs of their men: the men are the macho providers. The he-man strides in from a hard day to the tender ministrations of his loving lady.

Photo: Sally Griffin

The hippie movement appears to have crapped out because, in spite of outward appearances, it is still concerned with maintaining the status quo - albeit, the "hip" status quo. That absolutely chauvinistic book, "In Watermelon Sugar", is worshipped by the hippies in Auckland: the women are lying on their backs or doing the dishes and menial chores, solely for male pleasure.

Hippies, with their misogynistic Messiahs and sixties "On the Road" mentality, set off in search of tribal cultures, in which they, the men, are freed, bowing only to the Great Spirit in the Sky. While the men are on top of the mountain communing with nature, the women are back at the out-buildings, sweeping a dirt floor with



straw brooms and wondering if they should have gone against the men and had the children immunized against whooping cough and diphtheria.

There appears to be a widening gulf between hippies and radicals - with the hard-line, working radicals against the ethereal, organic, laid back hips.

Many "hippies" have come straight from the archetypal, middle-class family, through a sixth form education and university, without ever experiencing life in the work-force. Their, and their parents' attitudes to the proletariat are interchangeable - like "Time" and "Newsweek". A group of people who seem "hip" can often surprise by their reactionary views towards strikes and labour disputes, and the struggle of the proletariat and of women against the oppressors. Because the commune movement is isolating itself from society, it is not experimenting with solutions to the sufferings and problems of ordinary working people.

Because of this communes are often ecologically liberated, but sociologically retarded. The irony of communal living is that while it is intended to expand people's consciousness it has in fact backfired; people become involved in ego battles and personality clashes. Communes often become introverted, with an over-indulgence in exploring inter-personal relationships, while forgetting or disregarding the feelings of their neighbours outside the commune.

To us, communes are where we should be trying to put into practice the revolutionary principles we've learned. These principles derive from our capitalist economy and class society. Male chauvinism is intimately linked and bound up with the way society functions. Some women think we can have equality under capitalism and try to work for change within the system, but it is in the nature of capitalism that some people are oppressed. We must progress to socialism to end women's oppression. It is essential both to socialism and to feminism that we work on the principle of absolute equality between men and women.

However, even radical men, although they may be more aware, do not always welcome change, especially if "the little woman" is there to do the dishes, cook the meals and wash his red flag/shirt.

In 1970 we joined the refugees from the cities and formed a rural commune.

Originally, some of us wanted to introduce a few rules

While the men are on the top of the mountain communing with nature, the women are back at the outbuildings, sweeping a dirt-floor with straw brooms and wondering if they should have gone against the men and had the children immunized against whooping cough and diphtheria.

and guidelines, but others got up in arms about this; the whole basis was to be individualism. There is a difference between anarchy for the common good and anarchy for the sake of oneself. People who say "Far out, man. Do your own thing", imply that we can function as isolated individuals; that we aren't social creatures. "I'll look after myself, you look after yourself". Such people are often attracted to the commune movement because they see it as offering an individual escape from the rest of society. And rampant individualism allows the stronger and more voluble to dominate.

If we could have had an ideological programme, basic guidelines for the commune, we could have dealt with sexism as it occurred. We could have put our foot down in the beginning and demanded equal time in erecting buildings, with equal time for the men in caring for the children, hauling water, doing the laundry, preparing meals etc.

Initially we were forced into sexist role-playing through hardship. There was so much work to be done, hard manual work, the constant repairing of the commune's ancient vehicles, cutting and stacking timber, digging foundations, the construction of buildings. None of the women was experienced in anything other than the "womanly arts", although none of us was a stranger to hard work.

You can't do a lot of scrub cutting when you're breast feeding a baby.

The men were stronger, with a lifetime's experience in car mechanics and carpentry. There wasn't time for the men to teach us or guide us into the work; but the men all agreed that even though we were role-playing, the women would have just as much status (as child minders etc.) It was just necessary for the good of the commune and to get things done faster. We women didn't mind doing the cooking and housework because we weren't able - because of the children - to spend a day in the bush. However, our primitive facilities made being "housewives" no picnic; nothing was ever clean, no matter how we tried. A sudden rainstorm onto the dinner you're cooking is not guaranteed to make you top of a popularity poll.

After six months, the women had nothing to show for their work, while the men had the frame of a beautiful building erected. Then, they turned around and said:

"Look what we've done!!"

Even radical men, although they may be more aware, do not always welcome change, especially if "the little woman" is there to do the dishes, cook the meals and wash red flag/shirt.

Meaning the men only, of course. Some of us were horrified, we shouted at them, and cried whaddy mean, we've been helping you to do this, we were partners in this too !!!

At that stage the women had only been doing the donkey work, like scraping paint off old beams, pulling nails out - all the shit work. We hadn't actually been building, so we got a bit pissed off and decided we wanted a bit more to do, and more say in the design and construction. One of the men was indignant and even said - well you women haven't done any work on this commune anyway, what right have you got to have any say on the design, or how the building is to be built.

The women tried to get more involved in the actual construction but we needed somebody to teach us the rudiments of carpentry and construction.

Then someone in the concreting business gave me the idea for a co-operative concrete gang, and after discussion with the others we started it. This was an unqualified success from the start. The whole lot of us, dogs, women, children, and of course, the men, all worked together, and earned enough money to pay off the land. Because the men were also new to it we were all on the same level.

There was no discrimination; we all got equal pay. As we did more and more jobs, one man turned out to be the best screeder and finisher, one woman turned out to be the best bull floater and finisher, two of the women were good rakehands, and two of the men were reliable barrowhands. That's something most women can't do, I'm sorry to say - lift a wheelbarrow full of concrete. Being on the concrete gang was great fun, we all worked well together and equally, and we all shared the common goal of wanting to earn enough money to make our land freehold.

However, back on the commune things were not going so well.

An ideal commune situation is to have people who guide others, and show them what to do in certain situations, but do not dominate in any other way. They pass their knowledge on to the others in the group, and once the knowledge has been distributed, the "boss" is no longer needed. As everyone has different knowledge to impart, everyone at some time is the dominant figure.

The guys in our commune were chauvinistic in that they would not pass on their knowledge; they were reluctant to - and this is how society works - our male-dominated society - men will not pass on their knowledge to women. Perhaps they are afraid that once they pass on what they

know, they will become superfluous - except as breeders!

Each profession safeguards its 'secrets' doctors will rarely tell a patient exactly what is wrong with her or him - this is what is really meant by "professional secrets"!

Instead of women depending on men to teach them carpentry, etcetera, they will have to learn these things themselves. If we women on the commune had all been allied to the cause of feminism and gotten together to develop a common front we would have survived. Instead individual sniping went on, women occasionally even aligning themselves with their men against other women (and men).

Women do have a lot to teach men; the traditional "feminine" things - such as child care, care of food - preserving, baking, cooking, and in our commune: gardening. When the chores such as carpentry and the weekly washing are interchangeable then we will have the true basis of socialist revolution.

The only time we ever really talked about the land and our problems was when we got back into town for a few months, and were away from such close living with each other. With all the modern conveniences such as running water and washing machines we had the time to stand back and look at our situation objectively. When we got back onto the land, the hardships overcame us. We were just scraping a frugal living from day to day. It was easier to communicate and tell your problems only to your mate when alone, and not during the day with the people you were working with. We did talk together, but never the women alone, and we certainly never sat down and discussed feminist ideals.

Most of my life at the commune was spent at the hut, hauling buckets of water, gardening, and preparing the firewood for that night's dinner, I'd then go down to the barn and do a few hours work of things I've mentioned before, like scraping paint off old timber. We used to talk a lot, when we met together during the day's work but mostly it was laughing and telling jokes to relieve the tedium and hard work we were doing. We were not going to join together and have a discussion on feminism, which might shake the tenuous justification we felt for what we were doing. In China, even in the fields when they're hoeing, they have ideological discussions, and using Mao's book they question what they are doing and their motivations.

We discussed a lot but it was bourgeois philosophising: the pongas with their delicate fronds patterned against the sky, how good it was to go fishing a lot, and how

beautiful the beams of the building looked, reaching up to the sky. Writing poetry about the hills and the Maori spirits in the bush, and not a word about the needs of people or how they felt.

At the moment we are away from the land, because of the bad weather it is not practicable to live out there, but when we do all go back and live there it won't be as a rural commune so much as a communal village - a co-operative. Ideologically we are too diverse, and the place will not work as the typical idyllic commune one reads about in the trendy journals.

We have the communal centre for washing, cooking, entertaining, but we will sleep as separate families.

Because of individualism and personality clashes, the commune has tended to become a group of man/woman units, perpetuating male/female role-playing, instead of a group of equal individuals all playing a part in questioning the direction of the commune.

Miriam Cameron and Robyn Griffith

Continued from page 17

him "to clear your name". Declined on grounds that charge was beneath my contempt and I had been about to resign anyway. Male flatmate had already sensed my mounting tension and moved out.

September: Attended WEL luncheon and clapped loudly when Rowling announced he would introduce anti-discrimination legislation, only to hear him explain to enquirers that he could not say when.

Asked to lead workshop on employment at YWCA seminar "Women in Politics". Impressed by increasing militancy of women from all income groups. Began attending NOW planning meetings to organise election meeting.

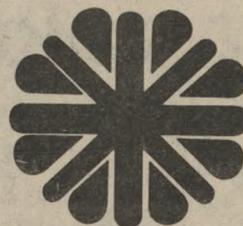
October: Spoke at PSA lunch hour seminar on need for public service affirmative action programme. Went to all day seminar on "Women into Management" at Victoria University arranged by National Advisory Council on Employment of Women. Took up appointment as staff training officer with States Services Commission. Decided that paid career must begin to take precedence over political activities. Resigned from Education Department's IWY conference planning group. Decided against accepting invitation to Levin's IWY seminar (a Saturday).

November: Resigned from job as treasurer of NOW, after its political meeting at which candidates were asked questions on employment.

Resigned from PSA's Committee on Women and sub-committee on child care. Managed to attend only one showing at the IWY Film Festival, very poorly attended. Decided against going to Wainuiomata weekend camp for Radical Feminists (although I consider myself to be one).

December: Decided to stay on local residents'

association committee (which expected me to deliver City Council questionnaires this month) mainly because its meetings were refreshingly free from references to the plight of women. Fought down temptation to go to Auckland WEA camp where the subject to be discussed was "Women's Role". Made resolution to write article for Broadsheet instead which might help me and others to reflect on IWY.



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**The Pill and IUD, far from liberating women,
actually oppress us in some ways.
Mechanical means of contraception, although
little used today, are safer for our bodies.**

"Just take a PILL every day"

Most women now under thirty have never seriously used mechanical types of contraception. Occasionally we might have struggled with condoms or diaphragms when we've just had babies or between Pills but mostly we've thankfully accepted our Pills and IUDs and wondered how our mothers ever managed to get by without them. The way in which mechanical contraception works is both its worst and best points. The worst part - the messiness and disruption to intercourse - has overshadowed

the good point; that it does not harm our bodies in any way.

When the Pill was first marketed it was hailed as "the great liberator" for women and many tracts and speeches eulogized it as the greatest step forward ever for womankind. At last, we had really effective control of our reproduction. The Pill manufacturers bombarded the public and doctors with pro-Pill propaganda so effectively that today a doctor rarely suggests any other form of contraception to patients. As the years went by many side-effects which had initially been dismissed as psycho-somatic have been recognised as legitimate and are now listed in medical texts and drug catalogues. In response to this recognition the IUD was promoted as an alternative for women who found Pill taking difficult or distressing.¹

It is now clear that the availability of these two extremely effective (in terms of preventing pregnancy) methods of contraception, far from being the great liberators they were hailed as, are actually oppressing many women.

It is rare today for a woman to meet a man who regards contraception as any concern of his at all. Contraception has become women's business. In past years, the use of mechanical means of contraception required a certain degree of co-operation and responsibility from the man. Men bought condoms and carried them in their pockets. Men often automatically expected to use them, particularly in casual or pre-marital sexual relationships. Withdrawal, with all its drawbacks and failure rate, required co-operation, responsibility and self-sacrifice of the man.

A man today not only expects the woman to have taken care of contraception, but expects a certain kind of contraception i.e. the Pill or IUD. He resents the "inconvenience" of the condom or diaphragm. This resentment puts yet more pressure on women to take risks with their bodies for the convenience of men. Following on from this attitude men will often take no responsibility for an unwanted pregnancy, regarding it to be the fault of the woman alone. This emphasis on the woman as the partner responsible for contraception may make it extremely difficult to get men to resume their share of the responsibility when effective male contraceptives are, hopefully, developed in years to come. A whole generation of men is growing up who don't even bother to enquire whether a woman is using contraception, so strong is their assumption that it is none of their business.



It may be many years before we truly know just what the Pill and IUD's do to our bodies. We sometimes forget that the Pill has been around for sixteen years only and the IUD for an even shorter time. We are yet to see what will happen to women who have been taking the Pill for thirty years when they reach menopause or what effect the Pill may have had on children born to women who have been previously on the Pill for some years. In the meantime, women are expected to tolerate unpleasant and often debilitating side-effects. Often these side effects go unrecognised, either out of ignorance of their cause, or out of the uncomplaining, unquestioning passivity and acceptance of doctors' authority encouraged in women. Some of us will go back to the doctor over and over again when we are unsatisfied with our medical care, even seeking a new doctor or reading material on the subject for ourselves. But others will not recognise that that loss of interest in sex, tiredness or depression have only come on since taking the Pill or will believe the doctor when he says not to worry or prescribes other medication.

A recent medical report I read detailed a study that had been done of women using IUD's. It was discovered that on average the menstrual loss of women with IUD's became three times that of women without them. The proposed remedy was for women with IUD's to take aminocaproic acid to cut down the bleeding, which it did. The report ended:

"Among the 63 women in whom aminocaproic acid was used, 49 had mild to moderate side-effects. Nausea, headache and dizziness were most common. Three patients were unable to continue using the drug because of the side-effects".² (my emphasis)

First we have a foreign body inserted, then we are given a chemical to counteract its side effects, but this drug has its own side effects so the problem is compounded. This is typical of what women are expected to tolerate in order to be "responsible" about controlling their fertility.

Feminists have long advocated "choice" for women: now we must make very clear that this choice includes the right to use effective methods of contraception, AND the right not to.

We must make clear, particularly to the Royal Commission on Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion, that there are other alternatives to every woman in the country being on the Pill and that these may be preferable for many women. But a real choice is impossible until we have free, easily available, safe, early abortion and menstrual extraction.

Menstrual extraction was developed by women in US feminist health clinics but little is heard of it and its use appears to be extremely limited. Lorraine Rothman, one of the pioneers of this method, showed us the equipment in New Zealand as long ago as 1973 but researchers and the medical profession evince little interest in it. Maybe, this is because in most countries the abortion battle is not yet won and menstrual extraction falls into the grey area of "when is an abortion

not an abortion". Maybe it hasn't been taken up by the drug companies and medical profession because the equipment costs next to nothing and the procedure can be performed by lay people.

Feminist self-help groups experimenting with menstrual extraction have found it to be too painful to perform as a regular monthly procedure as was originally intended, but if it was available for use on women with periods overdue a week or two, it would be acceptable to many as a means of fertility control. Until we have menstrual extraction and abortion to fall back on, women cannot seriously consider using less effective but safer methods of birth control.

Recent findings have shown that the alternatives have been expounding are the safest for women. Dr Christopher Tietze³, one of the early proponents of the Pill, has recently released a detailed study of the safety of the various methods of birth control. His study shows that safety with different methods varies with the age of the woman. For instance a young woman (20-24) can take the Pill relatively safely; the risk of death is 20 times greater if she is in the 40-44 age-group. His study shows that women of ALL ages who use the diaphragm and condom, backed by early abortion, risk death less than by using any other method. The figures for Pill deaths are alarmingly high; if one million women took the Pill from age 25 to menopause, 1,930 women, or nearly 2% of them, would die. This figure is so high, because of the increased risk to women over 40 of heart attack (a woman over 40 with the "risk factor" of the Pill is four times as likely to suffer a heart attack as a woman with no risk factors. Other risk factors are cigarette smoking, high blood pressure and obesity. Women with two risk factors face ten times the danger; three or more risk factors increase the risk to 78 times).

These findings make the need for changes in New Zealand's abortion laws even more urgent. The greatest bind for women is that today many people consider there is no excuse for an unwanted pregnancy. At a function I spoke at recently, a woman said to me "There's no reason for a woman to get pregnant. All she has to do is take a Pill every day." A woman who gets pregnant while using an effective means of contraception is considered to be a "better" person than someone who gets pregnant while using none at all. Indeed some submissions to the Royal Commission on Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion advocated that contraceptive failure become grounds for an abortion; even feminist groups have submitted this. I think this demand should be examined carefully because although it seems to widen the grounds for abortion it implies that a woman who is willing to take serious risks with her body by using an IUD or the Pill is a more responsible person than a woman who refuses to do so. Abortion is regarded as a "necessary evil" as a backup to reliable contraception and many people, even pro-abortionists, stress that abortion should never be used as a method of contraception.

We must stop pushing for abortion as a back-up to failed contraception and start arguing for it on the only

platform that is supportable for feminists; as a basic right for women. It is very easy to fall into the trap that the anti-abortionists have laid for us and start arguing that abortion in terms of their reality. I have heard even ardent pro-abortionists make statements like:

"Nobody likes abortion".

"We aren't pro-abortion".

"Abortion is not a matter to be treated lightly".

and getting rattled by statistics which show that liberalised abortion laws can lead to an increased incidence of abortion. If we believe that abortion is a basic right for women we should not be disturbed to know that women are having them. Tietze's figures show that abortion saves lives — women's lives.

Tietze states that a woman of 25 who used no method of contraception for the rest of her life could expect to have as many as 19 abortions during the rest of her fertile life. He went on to state, that it is "unlikely that even 19 abortions could increase the risk of death. It is more likely that the woman might become sterile. There is no evidence yet that this happens after a series of correctly performed early abortions".

While so many social and moral judgements are attached to the abortion issue the question of women relying solely on abortion for contraception will remain academic for most women. However, if abortion was readily accessible, for example, at a general practitioner's surgery or out-patient clinic, more women could choose a less reliable, but less harmful method of contraception knowing they had a back-up service if it failed. Feminists should get no satisfaction from the high figures for Pill and IUD usage in New Zealand; they are not a measure of our "liberation" but of our bondage to archaic laws and fear.

Sandra Coney

1. "Follow-Up", Broadsheet No 37, March 1976.
2. "Aminocaproic acid lowers blood loss in women with IUD", Modern Medicine of New Zealand, April 5, 1976, p33.
3. "The Choice of Risks", The Sunday Times (UK), February 15, 1976, p14.

Contraception is rarely easy; in our efforts to protect ourselves we often endure much discomfort, fear and pain. This is the account of one woman who has persevered at being "responsible" about contraception.

It seems I've reached the end of the line as far as finding a suitable form of contraception is concerned. Having tried them all, what's next?



Tubal ligation for me? Vasectomy for my partner? Both of these seem too permanent a step to take at this point, though if we are to drag on through years more of fear of pregnancy, reduced libido, general inconvenience, severe side effects, and a continual restraint on my whole sexuality and approach to sex, then we might just as well go ahead now. If we could

My contraceptive history began eight years ago with 'The Pill', prescribed by the doctor only after we insisted we were about to get married. For some time, the pill seemed fine (I didn't think to look for side-effects, though those early years were filled with bouts of depression) but doubts began to arise once I started reading about the more harmful effects. When I found that I'd been on a pill for 6 months after it had been withdrawn from the market my mounting disquiet was confirmed. Besides it seemed sensible to return the body to its normal metabolism and reestablish a regular monthly cycle prior to trying to conceive.

It took a while to establish a regular system of inserting the diaphragm as a nightly routine, but even then, I often had doubts about its safety since intercourse often took place as late as 10-12 hours after insertion. Would the spermicidal cream be effective then? Alternatively one would have had to break the spontaneity of early morning intercourse to re-cream the diaphragm! We used the diaphragm for a year, nevertheless.

As it turned out, my menstrual cycle which had always been regular and of 'normal' duration and intervals never seemed the same again. It took over 6 months to conceive partly because I didn't seem to necessarily ovulate during the cycle (temperature charts over 6 months showed only one possible ovulation).

I guess that the first pregnancy afforded the only truly

problem free sexual activity in the six years I'd been having intercourse.

The question of contraception arose only two weeks after the birth. I was advised, while still in the hospital, to use condoms until the six week check-up when I could be provided with a more permanent measure. Condoms were (and still are) hell. An interruption of the first order - I was almost relieved to go back to the diaphragm which could at least be inserted well before sexual arousal. However, this time the diaphragm caused problems. It hurt! Incredibly so, and even though I'd had the size checked out by a specialist, I found the associated pain quite traumatic.

What now? The I.U.D. It had to come, sooner or later, despite the ever-increasing stories of its high failure rate and heavy side effects. It was very painful to get the loop inserted. The bleeding began that afternoon and continued for two weeks. The doctor assured me this was a 'normal' side effect. Three days respite and a period began - so did wrenching, cramping and more heavy bleeding. Some days I could hardly walk. Still, in the interests of breastfeeding, I continued to persevere for eight months, hoping that the I.U.D. would 'settle' down. When I could stand it no longer, I decided to have it removed. That was harder than it sounds. It took 4 attempts by four different people and all the attendant worry that it may have perforated the womb.

Back to condoms until we could decide the next step (we were travelling at the time). On the one occasion we allowed the 'heat of passion' to take over, we conceived our second child - only two weeks after getting out the I.U.D. A real surprise, that.

The second pregnancy so close to the first (I was still breastfeeding) didn't allow much energy left over from broken nights and long baby-filled days to take full advantage of being pregnant not to get pregnant

And after the second birth? Condoms for the first six weeks and then I was talked into the three month injection. Hurrah! All my problems solved at last! It didn't even affect my milk supply! I was amazed that this revolutionary approach wasn't being used by everyone.

My spirits began to sink, however, as my weight increased, and as I felt continually ill. After two months I went to the doctor who suspected my stomach pains might be indicative of stomach ulcer. At the same visit, I had my third injection since it was due. It was only then that I thought to relate the nausea with the injection. Too late to stop yet another three months of severe, crippling nausea (even more sickening because I'd never experienced nausea with pregnancy!)

This left me back at the beginning. What was a breastfeeding woman to try next? I was talked into a no oestrogen dose mini pill. It didn't seem to affect the milk, but it did cause a lot of anxiety. Miss out once, and you weren't covered for a fortnight! Pills and condoms then, until I caught up on the uncovered days. Worse, was a continual yeast infection which seemed to thrive on this

hormonal mixture. And a yeast infection is a deterrent to one's sex life. It's itchy, it stings, and the treatment is messy.

Back to a doctor again. (I never go for anything else). Why not try a diaphragm again? That seemed very reasonable and logical. After all, those earlier incredibly painful experiences could have been a result of having had it fitted too soon after delivery. Yet this one hurts too! Not as much, admittedly, but a continual low down cramp while it's inside and a numbing feeling when it's not. Hardly satisfactory.

The doctor has already indicated that he's not happy with I.U.D.'s - mainly because of the number of pregnancies he's getting. The side effects are a different issue altogether.

But I must try an I.U.D. again despite the unlikely chance that I won't experience heavy bleeding and cramping. Not a very happy prospect in store. No doubt we'll decide on a vasectomy sooner than we would otherwise have done - and I hope that won't be a psychological, emotional and physical error! Meantime, if I become pregnant, I know that it would virtually be impossible to get an abortion. I can hardly cope with the two I have and still maintain any sense of my own identity. A third child now would be a disaster, but not so that I could 'prove' it to anyone. And our sex life, already reduced, would hardly benefit. The whole scene is a violation of my sexuality!

Ruth Bates



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nonpoem

all i can do is write someone elses words
i have something to say
but nothing that wasn't said before
i always wondered how good poets manage
but perhaps that's it

i have been loved but even that is
PLAGIARISM
that dreadful word that comes from school
english teachers and sneering critics
i have suffered in my own way but the
words are not my own
i have been happy
sad
but it means nothing special

Raynor Ewart

POETRY

Housebound.

Above her eaves the sky
Blossomed clouds of palest freedom
Echoing the marble statues of milk
At the gate
She turned, sighing, avoided
Lamed groups of abandoned clothes
Spreadeagled in grief, aching
Colourless.

Dirt among the toothbrush bristles
Mirrored grime in the bedroom
The dust of uneaten dinners,
Unwashed dishes, unlaced shoes
Laced up minds.

Knowing who she was not
Hunting for her soul in the washhouse cupboard,
Burying her hands in the harpic
She studied the watery outlets
Of her prison.

Penelope Atkinson

sickness.

leaning over the silver sink
she retched bitter bile
while watching her
the neighbours wondered
at her stained mind
her yellowed fingers
her boredom
her silent screaming
noted the child's play outside
and left for fear of disturbing
her.

Janet Betts

Osip

Will ever woman write like man
whose bones are buffered on her
patient flesh; whose bright
heroic goldfinch is set free eventually?
Preserved in time the wait of centuries
will be rewarded but
it is too late for me.
For I who never saw you
but through an English bathroom window
grew from thin soil slowly in a dream
to skim the milk and brush my hair a hundred
times
believing fate is fate and who are we
till birth quakes tore the figments down
and crackling consciousness fair shook the
doors ajar
leaving me in custom's house
to pace the hallowed cell,
in daylight beleaguered,
and haunted by the agate word.
You may watch me wither to the beat
of many hearts that quicken at aces
and the photo finish, little else,
for this is freedom
I can say say say what I like
to the ears of sleepwalkers
and because it is true it will never be heard.

Lyndsey Ferrari

This poem is dedicated to the Russian poet Osip
Mandelstam who died in 1937.



This is your room. I can tell,
your cock fills it up.
I was so stoned I didn't give a fuck.
You said it, showed it,
then I showed you mine.

I was caught in your movements
although I dug my spurs in.
my cunt got lost in your thrusts.
Can't you feel my hate?
Then I lose it
and remember who I am "entertaining".
You are everything! I just heard a voice say so!
(whose voice?)
My God, even as I change I am changing.

NOW.....

if you would just be so kind as to wait,
I will rejoin my mind
after a cup of coffee and a cigarette.
Then we'll dabble in meaningfulness.
I mustn't be too long though
I've found yet another grey hair ...
and I'm not here to freak you!

You said you would blow my mind
you're blowing my ear drums ...
explosions from 80 amps of ego.
I feel so compromised.
please, recirculate the oxygen.
am I still visible?
So hard to know through dirty windows.

Give some proof ... I'm begging
but your hand is camping your hair,
scratching your cock.
I am ransacked by your eyes.
Even when I think I love you I hate you
more than I realise myself.

I'm so tired of myself,
If I could shed my skin / weave a new cocoon,
Glimpse the end of the wasteland,
Oh Must clean those windows !

This evening has been so fragile,
Became a cafe bar conversation,
A cannibal tete a tete,
And you drank my every blues.

Oh Father Son and Holy Ghost ...
It's high time the spirit moved.
Naomi lies frozen in her tears, but about to thaw,
Tween the melting icicles eyes shine, snow begins to fall
and still I need your love,
And still you love my need.

Naomi Gantman

The Kite

You, fat fingers that grimly clutch
my line of life with strangling touch
And make the rut in which I dance
Devoid of sudden winds of chance-
Beware of storms.

You, thin wrists, who guide my course
With terrifying mindless force
And with sharp squeals apply the goad
That keeps me on this usual road --
Beware of calms.

For calms belie the coming storms
In which the monstrous anger forms
Just who the hell do you think I am,
battered baby, in your pram ?

Sandi Hall

Mons Venerated

What is it that I've got there
between my rounded thighs,
that smells of musk and honey
and is grabbed by all the guys?

What are these long low foldings
that lead into my womb
which all men want to fondle
yet revere like Kennedy's tomb ?

What has it got to do with ME
- a person with no balls -
it's mine to give where I should choose,
otherwise, nothing at all.

Sandi Hall



Photo: Rhondda Bosworth

Carniceria - the slaughterhouse

Who doesn't wonder at least once at the meat
when told they cut only three times here.
Heavy handed wallops
and the carcass falls apart
then the muscles pulled away
and it's all over.
Dust to dust and
ashes to
fertilizer.

It's never been too easy
to watch
disintegration
especially so calculated.

Hold my hand please
while the muscles are still intact
and try to avoid hitting me
on a flawline.
I might just fall apart too
and I wouldn't like to guarantee
you could make much use
of the pieces.

Judith Jones
Buenos Aires
March 1975.

This morning
breathing the brisk and bleating air
I saw a ewe give light to twins,
stumbling for their feet,
steaming yellow in the dewy grass,
and I walked back for breakfast
and crunched on my cornflakes.

Tonight,
inhaling the stewed cigarette vapour of her room,
I heard an old friend, re-met,
tell me of her abortion,
groping still for voice.
And I wandered home
and took a shower,
then cleaned my teeth
till the gums bled.

Judith Jones
Wellington
September 1975.

The Feminist Eye

BOOK REVIEWS

**Learning About Sexism
In New Zealand**
Edited by Phillida Bunkle,
Stephen Levine, Christopher
Wainwright.
Learmonth Publications 1976

This isn't a feminist book. It doesn't claim to be and it isn't. It is a book about sexism. Women don't have a monopoly on describing sexism but few men have risked opening their mouths on the subject and this book reminds me why.

It isn't a feminist book for more reasons than that men have edited and contributed to it. Written and produced in the male dominated academic tradition it is a collection of formal, documented, referenced essays telling us little more than we already know. It wasn't produced by a collective. We know that more people must have worked hard on it than the three editors but only they get the star treatment and the typists, proof correctors and so on get only token acknowledgement.

These essays originated in universities and it shows. I feel the contributors could have written more readably, authentically and usefully out of their own experience, rather than semi-distancing themselves from their subject to conform somewhat uneasily to academic conventions. The introduction claims that "a conscious effort has been made to describe sexism "the way I see it", not according to an abstract academic formula which takes the guts out of experience". The effort should have been more strenuous or perhaps it must be admitted that essays written in universities can't escape this limitation.

The section headings show me how difficult it is for academics to disregard their own training: who else would invent Theoretical, Empirical, Personal/Political and Sources? The

essays themselves I found on the whole to be impersonal, unreadable (though I did, every word and it took me weeks) and tedious. Some were too specialised and most were jargon ridden. Reading 'ascertain' and 'endeavour' repeatedly made me angry with editors without the sense to substitute 'find out' and 'try'.

I haven't the space (or inclination) to mention more than a couple of the essays. They will be the ones I liked most and least.

'The Erotic Revolution: Is Sexual Freedom Revolutionary?' by Debbie Jones is not easy to read but I enjoyed her arguments (drawing on Reich and Marcuse) relating sexuality to economic and political interests, and explaining how the New Zealand sexual ideology ravages the sexual responses of women. This essay is very condensed and I would have preferred to take the arguments more slowly and more concretely. It isn't easy to see how to relate Debbie's theory to our own lives. "Intensely genital sex may be replaced by sex that is essentially communication - a diffuse and loving language between persons." It sounds good but what exactly is 'a diffuse and loving language'?

'Sexism in New Zealand Society' gives some useful and depressing statistics on men and women's job and wage differences in New Zealand, and explains how the Equal Pay Act won't abolish these. The section shows how New Zealand education oppresses women making us internalise limitations on ourselves.

'She's Leaving Home' by Sharman Evans is in the Personal/Political section which I reached with some relief. After some initial theorising Sharman describes her feelings as a child turning into a woman, her early sexual experiences and their grim medical aftermath. This essay is real, convincing and I learned something from it.

Christopher Wainwright's essay 'Male Oppression: Emotions, Sex & Work' begins by asking "Where can we start? With ourselves, just as women do."

Unfortunately he does not. Using the pronoun 'we' throughout a general essay on men doesn't constitute starting with oneself. I don't believe Christopher does identify with the sexism he describes and this essay feels to me like an attempt to regain control ... those feminists were a real threat for a while there but now I understand sexism and they can't fault me any more.

As Debbie Jones did Christopher explains how emotions, sex and work are related in our capitalist society and I found some of this useful, but always underlying his arguments is his sense of being a suffering man deprived of the privileges women enjoy. I found this twist of emphasis offensive and only thinly masking hostility towards women: he argues that men suffer the 'burden of masculinity' but that they 'cannot fight a sex war because our oppressors are not *primarily* women' (my italics). Every so often women are accused of exploiting men and perpetuating sexism eg in discussing pornography the only person singled out for critical mention is Xavier Hollander, a woman.

In fact men are martyrs more than oppressors: "Men are caught thrice over" (that beats black women) and his emphasis is always on the ways men suffer from their sexism. "We are the controllers and we pay for it." "We need to appreciate the many ways in which we are severely penalised for being men. We are in jail, we are on the battle-field, until recently, we were on the gallows, we are in borstals, we are in mental hospitals, we are in industrial accidents, we are the exploited wage labourers in the capitalist system, far more often than is the case for women." "We have been used and we have been destroyed accordingly."

What men gain through their sexism is subtly dismissed: "On the surface we have everything - power, privilege, wealth and sexual satisfaction" ... just a few hollow compensations ?? Even rapists are described as poor sad victims misunderstood by punitive women.

Christopher continually describes men as handicapped by their emotional control, omitting to emphasise that control means power, and implying that women aren't so handicapped. He doesn't point out that where women are more in touch with their feelings it is usually men who benefit from this. Few women are experiencing the 'bonds of closeness' he says men are deprived of. And to complain that men are unable to take ornaments for themselves is to unforgivably overlook that ultimate ornament: woman.

The section on sex puzzled me, especially the distinction between having an erection and being sexually aroused. Masters and Johnson claim that erection can occur through pathologic conditions causing irritability or through stress on the perineal muscles and in sleep and on awakening. But Christopher claims that the erection he has after reading a sexist Playboy letter is not due to arousal (but to anxiety?). This suggests to me that his head is getting into some strange places in his need to control, control, control. Perhaps that's the guts of what's wrong with this essay: far from understanding his own (and other men's) sexism Christopher is still denying it.

Camille Guy

A reader, Sarah Calvert, sent this piece to Broadsheet about Christopher Wainwright's essay in the book reviewed above.

Mr. Wainwright's article, and the introduction to this book, are examples of the sexism so inherent in our lives. I don't think the men involved in this book have any conception of the reality of sexism. Mr. Wainwright sounds just like that male "feminist", Warren Farrell ("The Liberated Man" Random House). The opportunist with the 'burdens of masculinity' idea which rips women off even more than ordinary sexism because these men actually raise our hopes. Throughout his article you get the feel of the oppressed and unhappy male "bragging about what a non-supremacist he is". Society, (nothing to do with him)

has created these monster men who control the world, oh how he hates it, and men and women must unite to fight to free both sexes from this oppression.

Oh, how many times have women heard this cry, these honeyed words and suffered for years as a consequence.

I get this idea from this article:
men men men men men men men men
suffer suffer suffer suffer suffer suffer
society society society society society
women women women women women

I read in this concern for men, not women; sexism is caused by society not men. Men suffer, not women (or, at least, if women suffer it is because men suffer). I do believe that we're back to the old rip off again, sisters.

The theme of the introduction and some of the articles (and again I feel the heavy hand of men) is that the enemy is capitalism. Yet as women know to their sorrow, men in other societies and structures are just as oppressive and sexist as anywhere else. The authors are really concerned about their middle-class background, but not about the men involved or the sexism - strange priority. The final paragraph seems to me to set the tone of this book. It deals with men: men oppressed, men penalised. I am sick of men men men in books about women. I think the people involved in this book should do two things. They should read and absorb the Double-F Magazine and manifesto (to be found in the "New Women's Survival Sourcebook") and the non-sexist point of view and ideology contained therein, and they should pin up in front of them this:

Revolutionary Pig: Sometimes known as the frightful boor. Seems to be friendly but treat with caution. A creature of contradictions, it can smell oppression at a distance of 5,000 miles but remain unaware of the gunge it wallows in ...

This is exactly how I feel about this book. I can no longer accept the idea of men controlling women's things and this book is a shining example of the reason.

Sarah Calvert

Lament for Ariadne,
 Rachel McAlpine,
 Caveman Press 1975,
 \$2.50 - \$3.50



Rachel McAlpine

I had come across some of Rachel McAlpine's poems before in New Zealand literary magazines - notably *Cave* - and they had seemed to me the work of a promising young poet. More recently, since the publication of this book, I'd read 'The Pink Dress' in *Islands* and it seemed to me then that there was an element of superficiality about her work. I got the impression that she used the 'eye of the camera, rather than the vision of the photographer', so that one got a series of 'photographic' images - isolated images rather than a coherent unified 'vision'.

To a great extent this collection suffers from that particular 'fault' (if one can call it that), and on the whole I was a little disappointed.

This is Rachel McAlpine's first collection. Published in 1975 - International Women's Year - she is one of the many women poets who managed to get their work published that year. The year, if only from *that* aspect, was exceptional. It saw, among others, the publication of the poetry of Fiona Kidman, Lauris Edmond, Dawn Hayes, Jan Kemp, Marilyn Duckworth and Jane Stewart, but in comparison with some of these poets, Rachel McAlpine's work seems to me rather slight. It has little of Fiona Kidman's control of language and image, none of the refinement and delicacy that singles

out Lauris Edmond's work, little of Marilyn Duckworth's ironic brittleness or Jan Kemp's command of poetic image and way with words.

There is much here which is 'confessional' - dealing as it does with the relationship between man and woman -

'and these are poems
planted by you
tangling with me
as they grow'

but insufficient objectivity which should distance the poet from her subject. As a result parts of the poems seem suddenly to degenerate into clichés and inconsistencies.

'and your bud grows, my dear
smooth as a crooner ...'

Frequently a poem will work quite well - but then be destroyed by either the last lines or some inconsistent image which seems to bear little relationship to the rest. In 'Manhood' for example, the last two lines, (shiver, man, shiver/you move like a river') the poet seems almost consciously to thumb her nose at the rest of the poem and subsequently destroys the mood which she has created.

A few of the poems, however, are rewarding -

'your blood
has the beat
of the sea
it pulls
to the pulse
of the moon

if I die
before I lie
with you
rock will rain
from heaven
on my grave'

the metrical line here/ its brevity - is no doubt consciously evocative of the pulse beat, but in other poems this predominantly 'two-beat' rhythm seems rather contrived and incantatory - adding little to the substance of the poem -

'I blink
you twitch
I don't talk
till I think
will it hurt ...'

Much of 'Incident At King Arthur's Court' is of this nature and it seems to me that there is an attempt to imitate the rhythmic patterns of Cohen and Dylan songs - but rather unsuccessfully -

'planning witties
that bite

.....
in her bright
little mind'

The superficial rhyme schemes seem contrived and insubstantial -

'shimmer of destiny
and bonhomie'

At times the rhyme scheme *does* work for the poem. In 'I am Kohoutek' - once one has worked out the references (Kohoutek - comet - which burns and disperses - Diaspora - the dispersal of the Jews -) the effect is quite ingenious -

'my eggs of light
sing in flight
I am the babe of the universe
I burn
I disperse

I am Diaspora
the scattered selves
of Pandora'

Frequently though, the poem begins with a particular rhyme scheme which is then abruptly, and for apparently no reason, discontinued, so that one gets an oddly 'dislocated' effect, a fragmentation which is frequently evident in the incoherence of images as well.

In 'Safe In The House' for instance, the third stanza seems to have little bearing on the rest of the poem and although the last stanza is fine -

'close for a time to your track
I found it bald and bleak
but the sun shone white as chalk
and I thought my heart would crack'

the total effect is one of disconnectedness which leaves the reader wondering what relevance certain images have to the poem as a whole. Similarly in 'Goodbye' the effect of the poem is destroyed by the commonplace and banal

'eels in my bowels
a fist in my chest
I lean back
and rest'

- and although one can see the connection with 'eels in my bowel' and a plane taking off, the image is too clichéd to do anything for the poem - not to mention that it is somewhat inconsistent with the idea of 'rest'.

There is an element of 'sloppiness' in many of the poems where one gets the impression that the poet has not sufficiently *worked* at the poem to get the strongest effect. In 'Love Song' for example, again a potentially fine poem, the word 'silken' in contrast to the rest, seems to be inconsistent ..

'through your eyes
I slide
into a jungle
a tangle
of flying vines
of blood feasts
of jagged cries
of silent
silken
steps'

And what does one make of 'he flings his arms/like yachts' (?)

The consistently 'unthought-out' imagery does much to marr this *potentially* good collection. Individual images are at times delightful, but on the whole, the poems, as a unified statement, fail, so that like Lauris Edmond (Journal - March 1976) I too am left with a dissatisfied feeling. 'The core, the centre, the place where something important has happened which a reader may recognise and understand, is often a blank.'

Basically, there is no feeling of synthesis. The work is fragmented - in essence like much that is written today where the trend is to the breakdown of form and 'spatial vacuum' - so that one gets much the same impression as when a stone is thrown into a pond - beautiful ripples are created, a delightful series of patterns - which however, disperse all too quickly and are as insubstantial as a light, ever so light, breeze.

Riemke Ensing

Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, Special Issue: Asian Women.

A copy of this Bulletin found its way to my desk recently and quite by accident, as I believe its availability may be restricted to the odd university bookshop; copies may possibly be on file in some libraries. But as it turned out it made for fascinating reading and I feel justified to write of it, and perhaps in more detail, because of this.

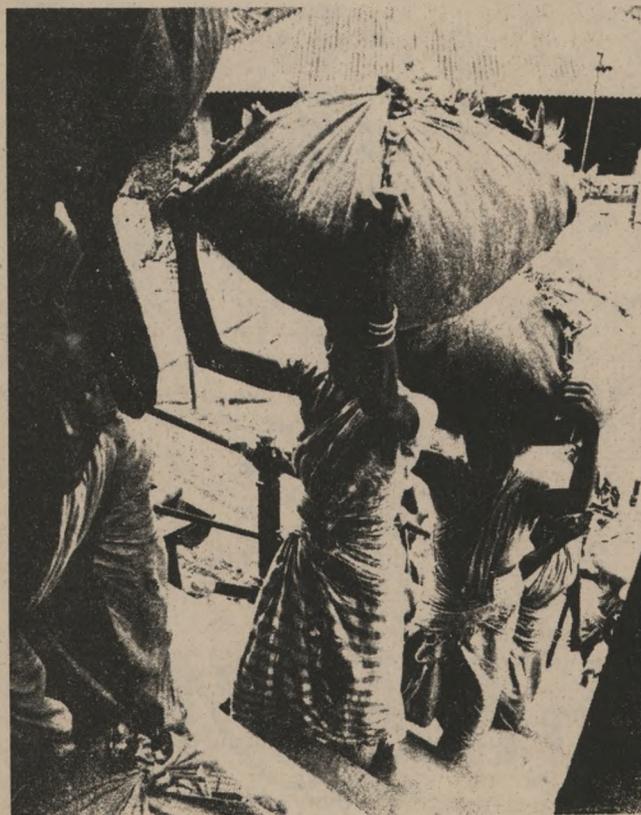
Just what kind of Asian Women this special issue is concerned with, we can instantly make out from the cover picture, it depicts two Indian women workers pulling a cart laden with obviously heavy newspapers, against a

street scene of urban filth as a backdrop.

It is occasionally quite interesting to think about a cover of a magazine as an expression of that magazine's character and who is meant to be attracted by it and why. I was intrigued for example by the contrasting sensation generated within me when I saw the cover of a recent issue of a local magazine that used to direct its message to "modern people" but has since dropped them from its title, in exchange, I guess, for - what? That issue, at any rate, featured an almost microscopically enlarged view of the nose, and then mouth and eyes and face of the Shah of Iran, calling him, prominently and on the cover: "The Shah-What a Nice Tyrant."

It is nothing less than fascinating that a man who in his own country is referred to as "the butcher"; who keeps almost entirely for his own dark purposes, a snooping, murderous, ubiquitous secret police of truly Aryan Gestapo-quality; can, in our western-style democracy, and without any apparent attempt at satirical flippancy in evidence, be adorned with the attribute "nice". What else, we may well ask, and who else, is "nice"?

Tea pickers in Sri Lanka



And what calibre of a crook must a politician be, to be seen as "not so nice"?

Anyway, to avoid reiteration of the obvious, and because my sympathies lie more with serious attempts to understand the problems of our Asian neighbours, I shall forgo a very tempting digression here, and stick to reviewing the Bulletin's special Women Issue.

In their Statement of Purpose, the Scholars express the need for their profession's specialists to speak out against the implications of an Asia policy "committed to ensuring American domination of much of Asia". The organization is designed to function as a provider of resources and a "community for the development of anti-imperialist research".

And a source of information, useful both for personal edification and research, is what this issue is. With great interest I read it from cover to cover, and few magazines can boast generating that kind of involvement of its readers. Spare Rib, the British feminist magazine may be one.

Two pages of revolutionary poetry (women's poetry) create the anger of Indian women-workers. We can see how different this anger is from that of New Zealand women. This anger is growling up out of centuries of poverty, caste and religious oppressions.

Years of "promise of a better tomorrow". Years of demands for land for cultivation. For work for the unemployed. And these demands being met with jail, with beatings and with bullets.

Yes, it's a cry from a separate culture, it is a cry from women who know there is "no grain in the sifter", whose children have "forgotten the colour of milk", whose only "memories are of starvation".

They have grown familiar with darkness, because there is no oil for lamps, they burn in the summer and are drenched in the rains, they bear the rigour of winter without any clothes. They have little or no shelter.

"We toil day and night and sleep half-starved while the parasites fill their bellies with butter (sic) why does the thief get nourishment, while the owner is cheated?"

These women shout out that they "vow to fight" with their lives to bury these injustices.

In an article by Maria Mies on Indian Women and Leadership, the roles of radical women in the Independence Movement and in recent revolutionary movements are followed and she also outlines the peasant women's potential for revolutionary leadership. These are of course relevant to the topic, but one vital paragraph best illustrates the

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need for a continued strong battlefront, we are learning of a society where the patriarchal structure of family in particular and society in general has given rise to such oppressive norms and institutions regarding women, and where this oppression has been perfectly internalized by the women themselves.

As Mies states, although the excesses of women's slavery - sati (burning of widows), child marriage, prohibition of widow-remarriage, and so forth - have been legally abolished, "the attitudes, as well as the actual behaviour of the majority of Indian men and women, are still largely determined by these norms, which are summarized in the ideal of the "pativrata", the husband-worshipping wife. Practically all the role conflicts of educated working women in India are caused by the still prevailing patriarchal family structure and its congruent ideology of female submissiveness and the priority of women's role as housewife and mother."

This theme is elaborated on by Susan Moody and Sharayu Mhatre, in their study of Sexual Class in India, where they give case studies of three women and conclude that it is still a common thing for a husband to desert his wife and refuse to support her and his children, and the woman has no recourse to conscience or law. This is apparently due to sheer ignorance in some cases, to the bias of the law itself in others, and to the inaccessibility of the courts to the poor.

But, more importantly, it was found that the woman's lack of consciousness of rights which should be hers prevents her from acting on her own behalf. This repressed self-image of the woman is not easily relieved because it is reinforced by the social environment of village and town. Women are needed by the system as unpaid workers to perform the labour required to cook the man's food, wash his clothes, clean his house, raise his children and keep him sexually satisfied. These functions serve to release the man's energies for his exploited labour in field or factory. The frustration of the man, because of the nature of his own labour and its inadequate

compensation, are, in turn, taken out on the family.

The woman thus bears the brunt of his anger as well as the stifling conditions of her own existence, an existence, which unhappily depends on the family for whatever meager economic and emotional security it provides. There is nowhere else to turn. And the woman as an individual cannot attack the man, the family relationships or the social framework without threatening her own existence. It is blatantly obvious that the struggle to create a new society in India will have to involve the simultaneity of both the sexual and economic struggles as one injustice relies on, and reinforces, the other. "It is necessary to recognize the man not as an enemy to be destroyed, but as a force to be tactically resisted and strategically reformed."

I was not impressed by one article by Jane Price, Women and Leadership in the Chinese Communist Movement, 1921-45: a pointless and farcical exercise, whose only purpose is to point out that the objects of the article were thoroughly non-existent.

But one study by Norma Diamond of Interviews With Chinese Women reveals the situation as it is today and notes that the past continues to be discussed, not for its own sake, but because of its relevance to contemporary life. She found that there are still backward communes, like one she visited outside Canton, where almost each team represented a single surname group, each separated clearly from the other in residence clusters, guarding their own resources and hesitant to pool some of their wealth into brigade projects and enterprises.

She goes on to state (as we have all heard at some time or other) that the revolution is not yet completed, but "one can hope that it will continue to move along the right path, breaking down the last vestige of privilege and inherited power and doing away with outmoded social structures and ideas whose origins go back to tribal society."

A better analysis of the women's movement in China is by Phyllis And-

ors. She goes into the relationship between women's liberation and socialist revolution, i.e. how Marxists view sex oppression as a contributing factor to class oppression, while radical feminists view class oppression as a contributing factor to sex oppression.

One would, in conclusion, hope for a second, similar issue, dealing in some detail with the situation of women in other Asian countries; in the meantime, this one is highly welcome. The Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, incidentally, for those interested, can probably be obtained by writing to them. Here is their address: 604 Mission St, Room 1001, San Francisco, 94105.

Raewyn McDonald

Brief Notes on New Books.

Women in Photography: An Historical Survey, San Francisco Museum of Art 1975. \$10.05.

One photo and biographical details on each of a large number of women photographers compiled from an exhibition held by the San Francisco Museum of Art. The text isn't very exciting but you'll discover a whole lot of new women photographers, particularly from the late 1800's and early 1900's, that you didn't know existed.

The Complete Stories, Flannery O'Connor, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 1975 \$7.35

Superb stories about hate and prejudice in our most intimate relationships and in the Southern states of the U.S.

Mom, the Wolf Man and Me, Norma Klein, Avon, 1974, \$1.00.

A teenage girl's reaction to the marriage of her single mother. For adults and teenagers.

The Awakening, Kate Chopin, Avon, 1972, \$1.45.

Written over 70 years ago, relates the story of a woman trapped in a "dehumanizing marriage and struggling to establish herself as an individual."

BroadSheet on the Arts



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hogwash

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VOLVO

**EVER HAD AN AFFAIR WITH
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This one is big, beautiful, fast, and above all, reliable, because she never lets you down. She is very well endowed, frequently appears 'naked', and is a beautiful golden colour overall. Yes, my 1971 model sunshine roof Volvo 164 is for sale, radio, tinted windows (electrically heated at rear), power steering, etc.

For appointment to view and demonstration phone UP 78-467 after 6pm.

Branded

A recently married Queensland cattle rancher has had his ranch brand tattooed on his young wife's bottom to show anyone seeing it that she is his private property. The Brisbane tattooist, who performed the task, said: "The wife didn't mind at all, they were just married and everything seemed a big joke to her. He didn't seem like a maniac or anything like that but most likely he just had old-fashioned ideas about the sanctity of marriage."

Southland Times
Apr 7

Contributors

Joan Simmons, Fay Jackson
Anthea Levy
Dianne Cadwallader & J. Walter

Girls' Soccer

Dear Sir,—Girls should not play Soccer. If they get hurt they would quit. Imagine what their mothers would think of them if they went home grubby.

Robert Chapman
(Aged 12)

Kuawai College.

Herald Mar 10

Cooking for boys

SIR, Your correspondent, Concerned Kapiti Parent, rightly complains at the poor return from the \$595,000,000 spent on education in 1975-76. But there is worse to come, much worse. In intermediate schools in many areas there have been big changes in the

manual training programme. Believe it or not, the boys are now made to learn cooking and sewing, and the girls to learn woodwork and metalwork. No wonder today's kids are more mixed up than ever.

This move seems to have been kept secret by the Education Department, presumably because they would expect the scheme to get a hostile reception. As far as I

know, there has been no consultation with parents, and many are unaware of what has happened. The time spent in these classes, is time that could be spent improving reading, writing, and arithmetic specially for boys to whom these subjects are so vital to their future. Also, to encourage boys to take an increased interest in the usual feminine skills is not a desirable thing at all and is becoming far too prevalent. If parents take this sort of thing lying down, they can hardly complain if they have behaviour problems with their children during the teenage years. — Another Concerned Parent.

Healthy Women

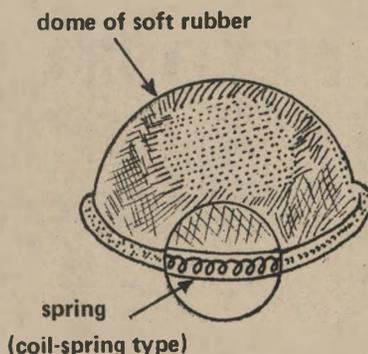
Diaphragms

During the honeymoon with the Pill and IUD, mechanical means of contraception have been largely ignored. SARAH CALVERT discusses the diaphragm, which, for some women, provides a real alternative method of controlling fertility.

Women are increasingly showing interest in alternative methods of contraception. We are slowly becoming aware of all the contraindications (bad points) to using either the IUD or the Pill. Unless we have a doctor we really trust, we are uncertain of alternatives and afraid to experiment with contraceptives which will not mess up our bodies but which will prevent pregnancy. One such alternative method is the diaphragm which has been largely ignored during the honeymoon with the IUD and the Pill. In 1961, 64% of all women attending Planned Parenthood Clinics in the US were using the diaphragm and it was the most popular form of contraception in most westernised countries. Chances are your mother or sister will have used it.

Description of Use

A diaphragm is a small cap made of soft rubber with a flexible metal spring rim. It fits snugly over the cervix, locking into place behind the pubic bone. It wedges firmly into the rear of the vagina (See diagram). It comes in a variety of sizes and its effectiveness largely depends on the correct fit. For this reason trained personnel must fit it initially. In New Zealand this means a doctor (and do get a well trained one. Family Planning doctors are probably the most skilled at this. The average GP has about 1/2 day of training in contraception during his/her student days and may not have had much experience in fitting diaphragms.) Once we have women's



health centres, paramedical staff could be trained to fit diaphragms as effectively as well-trained doctors can.

The diaphragm forms a mechanical barrier to the entry of the sperm into the cervical canal. It is always used with spermicidal cream or jelly (See below) which also acts to kill the sperm.

Fitting:

The doctor must perform an internal pelvic examination to choose the size and type of diaphragm most suited to the woman. The woman should learn to examine herself internally, recognising the edge of the pelvic bone and the cervix, since its fit and correct placement are crucial. The diaphragm is a user-oriented contraceptive; the more in tune you are with your body, the more able you will be to use the diaphragm effectively. A sample diaphragm should then be inserted and the woman asked to check it for fit (you should be able to feel the cervix through the rubber) and the correct position of the front rim.

Use:

Can be fitted up to two hours before intercourse although 1/2/1 hour is preferable. Empty your bladder before insertion as this will help get a correct placement.

1. Spread about a teaspoon full of spermicidal jelly or cream over the upper edge of the diaphragm and a little in the middle. Try to avoid getting the cream actually on the rim since this may displace the diaphragm during intercourse.

2. Squeeze diaphragm together by pressing the rim between thumb and third finger. With your free hand spread apart the lips of the vagina. Insert the diaphragm until it is pushed into the upper half of the vagina.

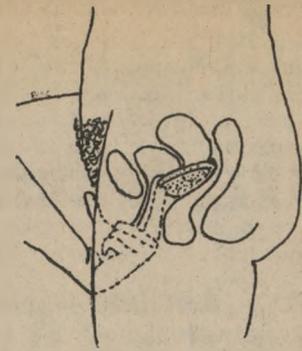
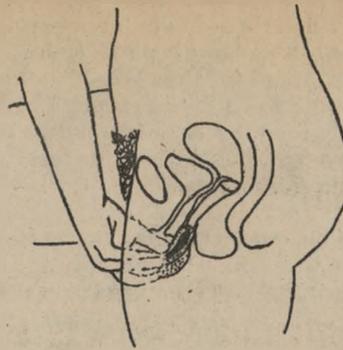
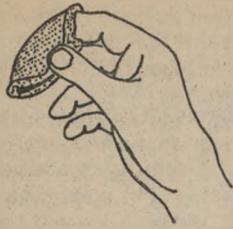
3. Push the upper, then the lower rim with your finger until you feel the diaphragm lock into place.

4. Check that it is in place; you should be able to feel your cervix clearly.

- when the diaphragm is in place neither you nor your male partner should be able to feel the diaphragm (very occasionally the male may feel it).
- it must be left in for at least six hours (preferably eight) after final intercourse. Remove it within 24 hours.
- the diaphragm is most easily inserted squatting, lying down, or standing with one foot raised (i.e. resting on a chair or bed).
- you can use your bowel or urinate with it in but check that it is still in the proper position afterwards.
- don't have a bath after intercourse but you can have a shower.
- a tissue can be used to wipe away any fluid leaking from your vagina.
- although it is generally recommended that any further intercourse be preceded by a reapplication of the spermicide some doctors disagree noting that good spermicides are effective for up to 24 hours. This means that (taking away the 6 hour period needed after final intercourse to destroy the sperm) there is a 12/16 hour period for intercourse. It is up to the individual woman to decide. If you feel safer with reapplication then reapply, but don't panic if something comes up to prevent it. Just make sure that you do buy a good spermicide. It is not how often you have intercourse but the actual time span between them that is important.

To Remove Your Diaphragm:

Place your forefinger behind the front part of the rim pulling the diaphragm down and out. If suction holds it in place, place your finger between the vaginal wall and the rim and pull down and out. CARE must be taken at this point so have a few practice runs first. Don't panic if things don't seem to be going right, have a sit down and relax before you try again. Your doctor should have gone thoroughly through this part with you.



Care of Your Diaphragm:

After removal wash the diaphragm with mild soap and warm not hot water. Rinse carefully and dry. Dusting your diaphragm with cornstarch or cornflour is recommended but never use talc (which usually contains irritants and won't be good for either you or your diaphragm). Most diaphragms come in containers, use them for storage or a small cardboard box with a lid. Diaphragms must be kept away from the light.

Spermicides should be tightly capped in order to keep. Check your diaphragm regularly either by filling it with water or by holding it up to a good light and checking for holes.

A diaphragm usually lasts for about 2 years and many women get a new one at least once a year just to be safe.

Plastic or Metal Inserters:

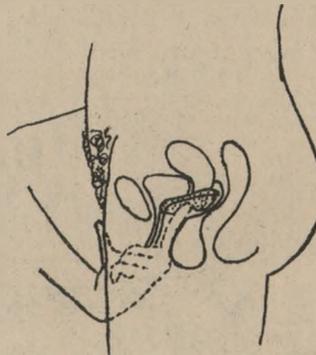
It is possible to obtain plastic or metal inserters to insert and remove your diaphragm. I personally feel these tend to emphasize the 'messy', 'dirty' idea of our bodies and since effective use of the diaphragm depends on you being really in tune with, and at home with, your body, they are rather counter productive. I think that if you feel you need one then perhaps the diaphragm may not be the most effective and safe contraceptive for you.

Effectiveness

The diaphragm is 90-98% effective. Chandraskaran and Karkel (1972) found it compared favourably with the IUD in populations of well motivated women. Failure is usually due to :

1. Improper Fit.
2. Improper care.
3. Inconsistent use.
4. Slipping of the diaphragm during intercourse because of :
 - a. expansion of the vagina during intercourse so the diaphragm moves.

Checking of Diaphragm



- b. cream on the rim which causes it to slip.
 - c. frequent insertion, especially deep insertion of the penis.
 - d. certain positions of intercourse especially the woman on top position (!), since the penis may get in behind the diaphragm.
- With proper use and care the pregnancy rate is 2-4% which compares favourably with other forms of birth control. It is a pity we lack real information about fertility, as some feminist groups in the US suggest that each woman has a different fertility rating, thus this would be a good method for low fertility women but less successful for high fertility women (eg a friend of mine who got pregnant on the pill twice). Effectiveness can be increased, if you have a regular cycle, by abstaining from intercourse over about 4 days during ovulation. To do this you must work out your cycle using a thermometer and a chart (as for the rhythm method). More information about this in "Our Bodies Our Selves" or the "Birth Control Handbook" and, if you are really keen, the Catholic Family Planning Centres have more information.

You can have intercourse during menstruation; the diaphragm will hold up to 12 hours of menstrual flow. It does avoid mess at this time.

Advantages

1. No side effects if used properly with good spermicides.
2. No effect on the body except to prevent pregnancy.
3. Can be inserted before or during foreplay therefore can be non-disruptive.
4. Excellent for women who cannot use the pill or the IUD or who do not want to.

Disadvantages

1. You may forget to use it or forget to take it with you if you go away.
2. You may find it hard to use eg you may either feel ill at ease with your internal body or you may be the one in a thousand who can't use tampons etc.
3. You may be allergic to rubber or to spermicides. You can, in this case, get a plastic diaphragm. Different spermicides have different compounds so with some experimenting you may find one that suits.
4. Diaphragms cannot be used by :
 - a. women with a prolapsed uterus.
 - b. women with a severely displaced uterus.
 - c. a virgin. During first intercourse the vagina is stretched. It is preferable to have been having intercourse for some time before being fitted for the diaphragm.
 - d. women who suffer chronic constipation will have great discomfort with the diaphragm and it may not be so effective.
 - e. women who have great vaginal laxity (i.e. if you have had a lot of children, or a difficult childbirth or a very big baby at birth). The person who fits you will hopefully look for this and tell you more about it.

A diaphragm **MUST BE REFITTED** after pregnancy, abortion or if you gain or lose more than 7 lbs in weight.

Spermicides

Since the diaphragm is in itself nothing more than a mechanical barrier it is the spermicide that is important in effective use of this method.

Diaphragms themselves have no effect on your body but there are chemicals in spermicides that do. Some spermicides contain mercury, a potentially dangerous substance (remember the Japanese experience?). Don't use these since the long term effects on your body are unknown. Lorophyn and Koromex products contain mercury. Delfen, Ortho Gynol Jelly and Ortho Cream, and Rames Jelly don't have mercury although there is some question as to the effectiveness of Delfen Cream. The Consumers Institute publishes an excellent little book which has good information on all these products and is well worth the \$2.50 it costs.

Most products advertise their ingredients so please check for mercury before you buy any of them.

Comments

"There are effective non-intrusive methods of contraception in existence but they will not work without effective social and cultural supports."

Murawski, B.J. 1972.

"Vaginal methods need require no direct medical intervention either in prescribing or monitoring for adverse effects."

Peel J. and Potts D. 1969.

It is only with increased awareness among women of their bodies, an ability to be in tune with areas once taboo, that the diaphragm comes back into favour. Its rate of failure is undoubtedly higher among women who dislike touching their genital region. Most of us feel awkward the first time; repeated practice ensures not only that we use the diaphragm more effectively but that we also learn to accept and live with our bodies.

"It's messy, It's a hassle, it's always a failure."

A lot of the preconceptions we have about the diaphragm are tied to the campaign (by drug companies and others) to promote 'easy' contraception. Easy contraception DOES NOT EXIST. The most effective methods have all got serious side effects and hazards. However the diaphragm too has a disadvantage: it does fail. Don't consider it if

1. You never ever want a child (or any more children)
2. and you don't ever ever intend to have an abortion.

Because of the present situation with abortion in New Zealand each woman should think carefully for herself if she is using this sort of contraception. Contraceptive failure is NOT grounds for abortion in New Zealand. If it were easier to obtain an abortion then the diaphragm would be a more realistic choice for many women.

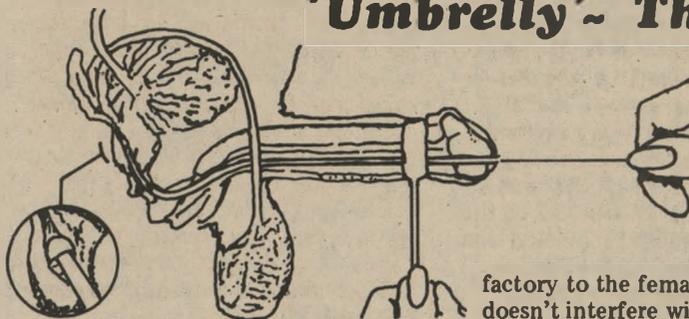
The diaphragm requires you to be in tune with your own sexuality and to accept it. You have to a certain extent to anticipate sexual activity: you have to remember to use your diaphragm. You may have to alter some of your sexual habits and if you can't be really sure you need to practice some abstinence. If you are unsure of your ability to deal with the above facts try some other sort of contraception.

I wrote this article because it is increas-

ingly clear that the pill and the IUD are unsafe in many ways. Unfortunately for many of us (especially highly fertile women), women who don't want children, women who can't afford an abortion and many others, there is at this stage no real alternative, at least nothing with as good a guarantee of effectiveness. However, despite this many women are concerned and interested in alternatives, especially natural methods of contraception. I think that the diaphragm is the best alternative, however, much depends on the fitting so you are dependent on the doctor. You must have faith in him/her. Try to find out how much experience she/he has had in this area.

For more information read the Consumers Institute book on contraception, *Our Bodies Our Selves* or *The Birth Control Handbook*.

'Umbrelly' - The I.P.D.



The newest development in male contraception was unveiled recently at the American Women's Surgical Symposium held at the Ann Arbor Medical Center. Dr Sophia Merkin, of the Merkin Clinic, announced the preliminary findings of a study conducted on 763 unsuspecting male grad students at a large midwest university. In her report, Dr Merkin stated that the new contraceptive the IPD was a breakthrough in male contraception. It will be marketed under the trade name "umbrelly."

The IPD (intrapenal device) resembles a tiny folded umbrella which is inserted through the head of the penis and pushed into the scrotum with a plunger-like instrument. Occasionally there is perforation of the scrotum, but this is disregarded since it is known that the male has few nerve endings in this area of his body. The underside of the umbrella contains a spermicidal jelly, hence the name "umbrelly."

Experiments on a thousand white whales from the Continental Shelf (whose sexual apparatus is said to be closest to man's) proved the umbrelly to be 100% effective in preventing production of sperm, and eminently satis-

factory to the female whale since it doesn't interfere with her rutting pleasure.

Dr Merkin declared the umbrelly to be statistically safe for the human male. She reported that of the 763 grad students tested with the device, only 2 died of scrotal infection, only 20 experienced swelling of the tissues, 3 developed cancer of the testicles, and 13 were too depressed to have an erection. She stated that common complaints ranged from cramping and bleeding to acute abdominal pain. She emphasized that these symptoms were merely indications that the man's body had not yet adjusted to the device. Hopefully the symptoms would disappear within a year.

One complication caused by the IPD and briefly mentioned by Dr Merkin was the incidence of massive scrotal infection necessitating the surgical removal of the testicles. "But this is a rare case," said Merkin, "too rare to be statistically important." She and the other distinguished members of the Women's College of Surgeons agreed that the benefits far outweighed the risk to any individual man.

Reprinted from THE PERIODICAL LUNCH, Andrew Rock Publisher, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Grapevine

Feminist Land Collective

As a result of discussions at the Auckland Radical Feminist Caucus a group of women have decided to work towards buying a piece of land which can be used by the women's movement as a feminist community.

The first meeting to set this up was held on Saturday 1st May. We decided that this community will be fluid and open - that it will provide both a place to which women withdraw completely from the patriarchal system, and a place where women can stay and work for varying lengths of time, gaining strength to go back and confront the system. We feel that it is crucial to the progress of the feminist revolution that we explore individual and collective womanity, following new ways of being and relating that we find within the women's movement.

We feel that a very important aspect of this will be exploring alternative ways of relating to and "educating" children. This community will be closed to men.

We plan to form an incorporated society. In order to get the necessary money together to buy the land women who are committed to the idea are contributing a sum of \$10 per month minimum. There are others who cannot do this now but are prepared to make a lump sum contribution at a later date. It is open to any woman who wishes to make smaller donations at any time.

This money which any individual woman puts into the scheme will not be regarded as a share but a donation. This means that the money cannot be later withdrawn from the scheme.

The next meeting of the group organising the project will be held at the Auckland Women's Centre on Saturday 12th June. It will also be discussed in more detail at the National Radical Feminist Caucus in Auckland on 5th to 7th June.

Any woman who wants to get involved or make a donation can contact us through Feminist Collective C/- Auckland Women's Centre, 125 Ponsonby Road.

Half-way House

Halfway House needs practical support so that it can continue to exist and reach out to women. The women on roster at present have frustratingly little time to branch out into exploring other aspects of feminism. We need more roster women - if you want to commit yourself to at least one meeting and one roster a week, and to discovering yourself and other women through feminism - welcome. We also need money, a sewing machine would be neat, a decent vacuum cleaner and children's clothing. Phone 763 477 or 762 287 if you can help.

NOW Marlborough

After the overwhelming success of the IWY seminar held in Blenheim in October last, it was felt that a women's centre should be top priority. NOW Marlborough was formed immediately after the seminar weekend and after a truly great amount of enthusiasm and hard work, the centre was officially opened on April 8.

We were fortunate in being able to rent for three months (prior to demolition) a central building with facilities for displaying pamphlets and literature, a rest area, creche, counselling room etc, plus a mezzanine floor for meetings and conducting workshops.

At \$40 per week and no money it took some courage to leap in - but we did and after excellent publicity from radio and newspaper, plus donations, subscriptions and the usual cake stall and raffle, we have already raised half the money needed to pay the rent!

The centre is open daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rostered members of NOW doing their stint and still offers of

help keep coming in.

A terrific number of women are "dropping in". Requests vary from job prospects, through weary shoppers wanting a friendly chat and a cup of coffee, to women wanting to know more about the feminist movement. A number of workshops have been organised to start after Easter.

A day book is being kept of all requests and enquiries so that at the end of our three month pilot scheme we'll have something concrete to hit Council, local bodies and service clubs with - for continued support.

Ruth Mercier

Classified Advertisements

IWY cards for sale. The Tauranga IWY committee has cards for sale showing the IWY symbol in black on the front and the message "Equality Development Peace" on the inside. Send \$1 for 20 cards and envelopes to Ms Margaret J. List, Secretary, Tauranga IWY Committee, 38 Eaton Crescent, Tauranga.

Women's Liberation T-shirts, screen printed with the feminist symbol and the words "Women's Liberation". In yellow or orange. Send \$5 plus 50c for postage, stating which colour you'd like (they are all size 36) to T-shirts, P.O. Box 47-261, Auckland. Car stickers, help publicise Broad-sheet, send to P.O. Box 47-261 for free stickers. State number wanted. Women's Small Press Book Club, Box 9279, Long Beach, California 90810 USA. Exciting New Reading . . . Send for free newsletter.

Self-help and self-examination film for hire. For more information and rates write to P.O. Box 47-261 or phone Sharyn Cederman 760 984. Books for sale. We have available "Abortion: The Bobigny Affair" \$5.70 "Lament for Ariadne" poetry by Rachael McAlpine \$3.95 hbk or \$2.50 pbk, "Against the Softness of Women" poetry by Jan Kemp \$4.50 hbk or \$3.20 pbk. Send to Broadsheet P.O. Box 47-261, Auckland.

AUCKLAND

Auckland Women's Centre,
Rape Crisis Centre,
125 Ponsonby Road,
Auckland.
Phone 764-755

Halfway House (Auckland)
P.O. Box 47-157,
Auckland.
Ph. 767-635

N.O.W.,
P.O. Box 2946,
Auckland.

W.E.L.,
P.O. Box 17021,
Greenlane.

The Council for the Single
Mother and her Child,
P.O. Box 47090,
Ponsonby.
Ph. 760-476

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 47-169,
Ponsonby.

CHRISTCHURCH

Women's Union,
9 Ferry Rd,
Christchurch 1.

Women's Refuge Centre,
Contact Ph: 558-546
554-746
559-965

WEL
P.O. Box 1798
Christchurch
Ph. 389-527

N.O.W.,
P.O. Box 2720,
Christchurch.
Phone 841-728

Canterbury University Feminists,
Student Union Building,
Private Bag,
Christchurch.

Christchurch Feminists,
51 Brown's Road,
Christchurch.
Phone 554-746

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 13-129,
Armargh St,
Christchurch.

United Womens Convention 1977
P.O. Box 913,
Christchurch.

DUNEDIN

Dunedin Collective for Woman,
P.O. Box 446,
Dunedin.
Phone 374-90

Working Women's Alliance
20 Gillespie Street,
Dunedin

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 1289,
Dunedin.

GISBORNE

N.O.W.,
3 Dickson Street,
Gisborne.

Gisborne Feminists,
21 Wellington Street,
Gisborne.

GREYMOUTH

ALRANZ
P.O. Box 421,
Greymouth

WEL,
7 Domain Tce,
Karoro,
Greymouth.

HAMILTON

H.O.W.,
P.O. Box 350,
Hamilton.

Hamilton Feminists
P.O. Box 751,
Hamilton.

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 1248,
Hamilton.

WEL (Waikato)
P.O. Box 9581,
Hamilton North
Ph 59-333
Rooms: top floor,
Public Trust Building,
Victoria St,
Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

Waikato Abortion Action
Committee.
Ph Hamilton 85716

HASTINGS

N.O.W.,
P.O. Box 1222,
Hastings.

LOWER HUTT

Hutt Valley Feminists
c/- 3 Taka Grove,
Normandale,
Lower Hutt.

MARLBOROUGH

NOW Marlborough
47 New Renwick Rd,
Blenheim.

NAPIER

Feminist/Socialist Study Groups
Contact :- Mary Hancock,
15 Chambers Street,
Napier.

NELSON

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 476,
Nelson.

NEW PLYMOUTH

Women's Action Group
Jill Woodd - 35981
Margaret Scott - 34016
Greta Jackson - 36377

New Plymouth Women's Centre
Ph. 79532
Hours 10 am - 3 pm weekdays

62 Vivian Street,
New Plymouth.

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 5006,
Westown,
New Plymouth.

PALMERSTON NORTH

Gay Women's Group,
P.O. Box 1482,
Palmerston North.

Palmerston North Feminists,
P.O. Box 1823,
Palmerston North.

ALRANZ,
P.O. Box 639,
Palmerston North.

TAURANGA

WEL,
68 Kingswood Rd,
Tauranga.
Ph 63-172

TE AWAMUTU

Te Awamutu Feminists,
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