

broadsheet

new zealand's feminist magazine

november 1978 no. 64

90 cents

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BRD

The values of Margaret Crozier

Battered wives — why they stay



**HOW THE ABORTION LAW ISN'T
WORKING FROM NORTH CAPE
TO BLUFF**

Registered at the GPO, Wellington, as a magazine

fronting up

Writing for Broadsheet

If you would like to write for Broadsheet but feel that you would like some guidelines as to content, style, presentation of articles, etc. please send a large, stamped, self-addressed envelope to Box 5799, Auckland, and we will send you our recently-prepared guide.

Enveloping — Sunday December 3

“Stuffing” is a little later than usual this month — in December, in fact. The December issue will be enveloped for mailing out on Sunday December 3. Anyone who can help please come to the office (Colebrooks Building, 93 Anzac Ave, First Floor) between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Children are welcome, and if enough women come the work is done quickly and a good time is had by all.

The office still (desperately) needs —

More chairs, especially the “kitchen” variety. We also need an electric jug, children’s toys and furniture, a play pen, a cot mattress and cushions. If you can spare any of these things please drop them in or give us a call — they would be much appreciated. We have also just lost a bookcase to its real owner — now we have a big pile of books on the floor. Any spare bookcases?

Helpers

If you have some time to spare in the daytime to help with the Broadsheet office work, please get in touch with us. Tuesday and Wednesday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. are “drop-in days” for anyone who wants to help. Children are welcome — and your friends too. If Tuesdays and Wednesdays don’t suit please give us a ring and we can arrange another time.

Gift Subscriptions

You are bound to have a friend, sister, grandmother, mother, aunt, niece or daughter who would love a gift subscription to Broadsheet this Christmas. On this page you’ll find a gift subscription form — just fill it in and send the money and we’ll do the rest — including enclosing a special Broadsheet card telling the recipient who the gift is from. Gift subscriptions are a great way of increasing awareness of Broadsheet and providing us with much needed financial support — so it’s really a double gift.

Envelopes for recycling

Our stock of envelopes for recycling is dangerously low and we urgently need an “injection” if we are not to have to resort to more laborious and/or expensive means of sending the magazine out. Please send us any large envelopes which are suitable for recycling as soon as you can — we really appreciate them.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to Broadsheet are cheaper than buying your copy from a bookshop. Plus you know you’ll get it “hot off the press.” But there are other advantages to subscribing. Broadsheet depends on the steady financial base which subscriptions provide. The more subscribers there are, the more secure the future of the magazine is. We know that copies of Broadsheet often pass through several hands before reaching their final resting place. It’s nice to know that lots of people appreciate reading it — but no so good for our bank balance and the future of the magazine if we have only one subscribed for every four or five readers. \$8 per year is not an awful lot to pay for the unique information which Broadsheet brings you — if you can possibly afford to subscribe please do so now — and help ensure that Broadsheet will be around for you to read for a lot longer.

Paint

Some women have offered to paint a mural in our children’s playroom — all they need now is paint. If you have any house paint which you no longer want (no matter how little) please let us have it.

Poems

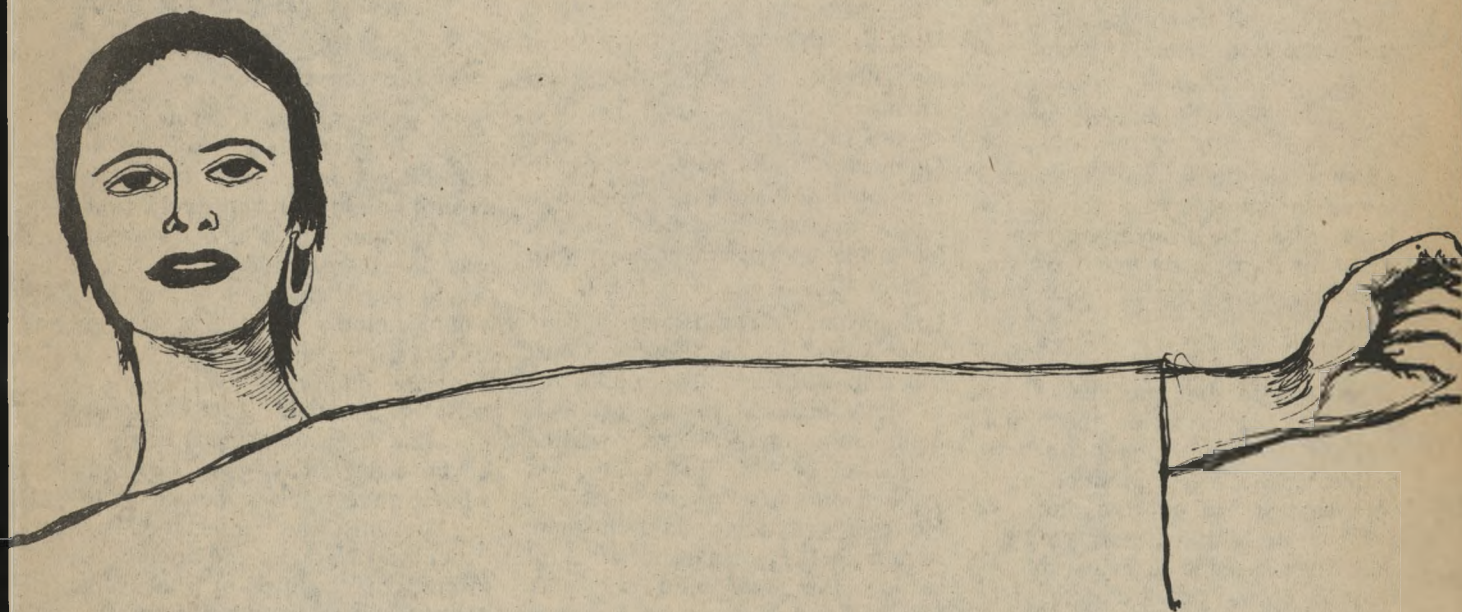
- To all readers submitting work
- please put your name and address on **everything** you submit — not just in a covering letter. We are having problems with letters getting separated from their enclosures — if you haven’t heard from us, this may be why.
 - please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope (or if you don’t want a reply, please say so.)
 - if you can’t type your work, please print it **very** legibly and check it before you send it in. It’s sometimes difficult to know whether idiosyncratic spellings, punctuation, etc. are intentional or merely the result of carelessness — we don’t want to “correct” things you’ve deliberately done a certain way — so please make it clear.

Apology

On the cover of the September issue of Broadsheet, we printed a photograph of a woman from Bastion Point. We had the permission of the photographer, but not of the woman herself, and we apologise to her, for any upset caused by this. We would also like to say here that our usual policy is that it is necessary to have the permission of the photographer, before any photograph can be used. It is sometimes difficult to track down the subjects of these photographs to ask their permission as well, particularly with photographs of crowd scenes. We try to avoid any upset or embarrassment this may cause, and once more offer our apologies.

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women

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These women worked on this issue: Sandra Coney, Christine Dann, Miriam Jackson, Delwyn Lowen, Anne Macfarlane, Anne Parsons, Jill Ranstead, Jean Volkerling, Jane, Lisa, Rosemary and the enveloping women.

Illustrations:

Marg Medley p1
Robyn Conway p7
Donna Hoyle p11, 12.
Helen Courtney p14, 15.

Prohibition Vote

Dear Broadsheet,

This year's general election may well be the last chance we have for three years to make a loud and clear statement on the abortion issue. The problem is that in many electorates it will not be possible to **effectively** express your view. In electorates with two major liberal candidates, or in electorates with two SPUC candidates, how do you express your view in a way which will be seen to be linked with abortion? A Values vote is the obvious choice; the difficulty here is, particularly where there are two liberal candidates, there may well be compelling other reasons to vote for one of them.

It would seem to be less of a problem when you have a liberal against a SPUC. Well, it rather depends who the liberal is. I can no sooner imagine myself voting for Jones, M.P. for Invercargill, than I could for Patricia Bartlett were she standing. No, it's not as simple as it seems.

However, we do have a positive, simple way to state our views if we choose to use it. Using the liquor poll as our own referendum, we define a vote for prohibition as a vote against the abortion laws — and vote prohibition. Only a simple majority is needed to gain prohibition in any given electorate. The effects of prohibition (even if not nation-wide) would be absolutely chaotic. No licences (given on an annual basis only) would be renewed; that includes every pub, tavern, restaurant, nightclub etc. It would (from 30 June, 1979) become illegal to import, manufacture or sell any alcohol whatsoever. Just imagine (gleefully) the uproar!

To vote prohibition is simple, positive and has explosive potential. BUT it depends on massive publicity for success. Plans are afoot in the Waikato to drum up funds for

advertising specific to this tactic, plus letters are being written to every outlet possible explaining the rationale. Radio and TV interviews are being sought (and gained).

Let's all make a last-ditch modern-day-Lysistrata effort. Let's hit 'em in the liquor lobby loud and clear. A vote for prohibition is a vote for repeal! No booze until abortion is a woman's right to choose!

In optimism,
Alison Fletcher

P.S. Thanks to the genius, whoever it was, who dreamed this one up!

Legal Obstacles

Dear Broadsheet,

I would like to congratulate Beth Furmage on her courage — final success in her case to have her Domestic Purpose Benefit reinstated. It is not easy to sustain a fight against a decision of a Government department, even with legal aid.

One obstacle is the delay in having cases heard, in the Supreme Court especially. Our feminist group wrote to the Minister of Justice last year, complaining of the lengthy waiting periods and Marlborough was granted an extra one week session. However, we were told that there were no Judges to spare for an extra session this year and we were advised to ask for more Supreme Court judges to be appointed. This we have done. The Minister replied that 'Consultations are at present proceeding with a view to increasing the number of Supreme Court judges'. So I would urge other women who know there is a large backlog and long delays before cases are heard, either in the Magistrates or Supreme Court in their district, to write to the Minister urging him to appoint more magistrates or judges as required.

Maxine Wain

Unemployment Update

Dear Broadsheet,

Since "Unemployment, the special work fraud" was written in 1977 a couple of important things have changed for the jobless.

1. Literally untold thousands more unemployed.
2. Slight recognition of this fact down at your local friendly dole office.

Result: The dole is somewhat easier to get these days. Go get it!

Karen Sutton

Selective Information?

Dear Broadsheet,

Since you were able to devote several pages in your July issue to an incredible vilification of the Mental Health Foundation and its Women's Week campaign, which, after all, was drawing attention to what one would have thought Broadsheet would endorse — that women are usually at a disadvantage in the marriage situation — you might at least have had the grace to spare one line in your August issue to acknowledge that Eva Cox, for whom (quite rightly) you had nothing but praise and appreciation, was brought to New Zealand and toured around the country by that same Mental Health Foundation for that same Women's Week campaign.

In not doing so you have behaved exactly as the very worst of male-run publications do, picking and choosing among the available information to print only what suits your own prejudices.

Cherry Raymond

Broadsheet certainly endorses drawing attention to the disadvantages women face in marriage — our article was about the offensive and inadequate way in which the Mental

Health Foundation advertisement did this, so as to render the message worse than useless.

Broadsheet feels under no obligation to endorse or even mention the means by which visiting speakers arrive in New Zealand — whether this is done or not is entirely up to the individual reporting on the speaker. Our past practice in this matter has been as varied as our reporters.

Whose Liberation?

Dear Broadsheet,

Jill Ranstead in her review of the film 'Adoption' asks:

"When will our desire for freedom be understood? When will men learn to let go, and become people we can love? When will there be real companionship between men and women?"

The short answer is there never has been and it's likely there never will be in our lifetimes. That's what the institution of heterosexuality is all about. That's what the term 'heterosexual privilege' is all about. To have those things men would have to treat women as equals. To treat women as equals men would have to give up everything that makes them men — self-castration in fact. They are not interested. This is why the W.L. movement has always had as one of its basic aims a nebulous, but vitally important, goal of sisterhood. It is companionship and, dare I say without being misunderstood, love between women that the liberation of women depends upon.

Until women are prepared to give to women the energy that they give to men as of right they are putting men first and reconfirming their own second-class status.

It occurs to me that this statement, and Christine Dann's assertion in the July editorial that some of us (not me) will be handing our shovels on to our sons, indicates that Broadsheet is no longer dedicated to Women's Liberation but rather to **People's liberation.**

Valerie Cole

On Becoming Part of the Movement

Dear Broadsheet,

After reading all the criticism in the September issue that has come as a response to Christine Dann's editorial "The State of the Movement", I feel that protest. So much of what I've read in this article applies to me, as a "new" feminist.

My own introduction to organised feminism came through Broadsheet I read my first copy in May 1977. Since then, after having "jumped for joy" at finding my personal beliefs expressed by a group (or groups) of women, and at the same time realising that I had a long way still to go in my own liberation and consciousness raising, I have tried to join in and take my part in the Movement.

Here, I wholeheartedly agree with Christine's statements. There really isn't any easy way to become part of the Movement. If I had been here in Auckland at the start of the Second Wave, (instead of married and incarcerated in a small provincial town and, later, overseas) and had gotten to know the leaders of the Movement then, it would probably have been much easier for me today. However, I have struck a hierarchy which seems to say — Well, if you come in here, you do so on our terms, by our leave, and you listen to us, but we won't listen to you; WE'RE running this show.

I have joined (or tried to join) several groups, but I've never been able to feel part of one, nor have I experienced much feminist consciousness raising within these groups. In fact, I've found more of that at a recent Trade Union Seminar, where the women were busy discussing many aspects of feminism, not just those aligned to Trade Unionism.

I fully realise that there are many women in the Movement who have long ago done their consciousness raising "trip" and maybe to them it's old hat. But what about all the "new" feminists' I often wonder how many more women there are,



like me, who've tried to become part of the Movement and found the doors closed to them? How much Womanpower is going to waste up and down this country?

So, what do we do, all of us women who become interested in the Movement? Do we sit on the fence, like spectators, or will you "old girls" let us get into the arena and help you fight?

Does it really matter whether we're lesbian or heterosexual, whether we're socialist, activist or cultural feminists, whether we live with women or with men? Have we really got to fight about these issues: Discuss them, by all means, but let's stop all this mud-slinging and back-biting; it's pissing me off!

If we really believed in each woman's right to choose her own lifestyle we wouldn't be wasting valuable space in Broadsheet, we'd be calmly accepting each other and getting on with the job we got together for. I've made back issues of Broadsheet available at my workplace, hoping to interest the women there, but too many of them have been turned off by continual lesbian v. hetero slanging matches.

I think the final pages of "The Female Eunuch" express my feelings rather well, and I quote:

"The older sisters must teach us what they found out. At all times we must fight against a tendency to form a feminist elite ... and struggle to maintain co-operation ... The time has come when women are ready to listen, and their number is growing. It is time also for those women to speak, however uncer-

tainly, however haltingly, and for the world to listen. The surest guide to the correctness of the path that women take is JOY IN THE STRUGGLE" Unquote.

I've looked for the joy, and occasionally I've found a little of it but too often I've found myself feeling sad. Eight years have passed since "The Female Eunuch" was published. How far have we gone forward in those eight years, and how far have we slipped back?

We all have our differences, and our different ways of contributing to the Movement. I believe that our differences are necessary to the health of the Movement, so that we can reach out to all aspects of the society we live in. But let's keep the greater picture in mind, rather than each of us seeing only our own small corners.

Alison Blackburn

Reply to July Editorial

Dear Broadsheet,

Unlike those correspondents who attacked Christine Dann for her editorials on "The State of the Movement". I related to them most strongly, and blessed her for her commonsense and courage.

I believe her editorials provide a basis on which feminism can reach out to society and improve conditions, not only for women, but for children and men ... for human beings. And if that isn't what feminism is all about, then I, for one, am not interested in it.

Feminism is the first wave of a revolution which must seem attractive to a wide spectrum of society for it to be successful. No revolution was ever won unless it was supported by the majority.

I firmly believe that if the women's movement is headed by lesbian feminism, then its importance is downgraded, and its eventual collapse is guaranteed.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Steincamp

More Responses to the Recent Changes in Broadsheet

Dear Sisters,

Many of you will be aware that over recent weeks there has been a major row in Broadsheet that culminated when four of the collective resigned. As a major contributor to Broadsheet I would like to publicly state my objections to the policies and behaviour of the present collective. Despite a personal friendship with these women, who now control Broadsheet, and despite a past belief that we share a similar perspective on feminism I am no longer able to share a perspective on feminism with them. I believe their behaviour is not acceptable within my definitions of feminist ways of operating. They have, in my own experience over recent weeks, refused to compromise or become involved in attempts to resolve the situation. They have, in my experience, behaved with arrogance and their attitudes are in my opinion based on their own views and not on a wide experience with women in New Zealand. My own anger at Christine's editorials (which we are given to understand do not reflect Broadsheet policy, even though they are editorials) has already been expressed, but I feel I must again point out that this view of feminism is in direct contrast to my own and to others. As such I wonder if Broadsheet can any more claim to be the feminist magazine of New Zealand. Its anti-lesbian, anti-cultural feminism view is reminiscent of the attacks on feminists launched in the early days of the movement. We need to question why it is that Broadsheet is behaving like this and I hope many women will do so. The small clique that now exerts its control must be challenged if the magazine is once again to be our magazine. It is ironic that the complaints made by feminists in 1976 are yet again relevant.

Yours,
Sarah Calvert

Dear Broadsheet,

When I first became aware of the women's movement in the early 1970s the thing that impressed me about it most was the possibility that it held out that here at last was a movement of which I could be part without holding part of myself back, as one does in so many groups one belongs to. I think I must have believed in that possibility for rather longer than a lot of other women whose interest in the women's movement began about the same time. For about three years I have had little to do with any of the organisations that represented for me the women's movement. I suppose I thought that things would be almost the same as they were when I drifted out in 1975. The saddest thing for me becoming aware of the women's movement again is the extent to which that possibility of freedom has been destroyed by women themselves.

It is not the lack of pickets and street marches that indicates to me the sort of doldrums that the women's movement is in. It is the kind of fighting going on in Broadsheet and presumably elsewhere that suggests to me we have won almost nothing in the past six or so years. I harboured the illusion (as it appears now) that the women's movement would remove labels, that women would no longer have to be identified by something as arbitrary as their sex. It appears however, that having been put down all my life because I am a woman, I am now about to be put down again because I am not one of a particular brand of feminist. I suppose I have most sympathy with what you call the cultural feminists, but apparently that's not an acceptable thing to be, because according to one line of the argument that is not going to win the revolution. I would have thought that the women's movement could have allowed for a large variety of feminists, without labelling them, and without fighting for which one is the best. It is for this reason that I find the part of Broadsheet's aim which states that 'the Broadsheet Collective prefers not to publish points of view which

it strongly disagrees with' rather disturbing. Who is going to know in the future what point of view the Collective is not going to agree with, and therefore what it is or is not going to publish. It's getting a bit like Muldoon altering the laws when it pleases him.

I think there is a fundamental error in calling the pieces Christine Dann wrote about the state of the movement 'Editorials'. That is a hierarchal kind of description which one might have expected not to have seen in a magazine edited by a Collective. I wonder if Christine's pieces had been written as articles how much less flak would have been directed at them. Sure, they would have still been provocative, but the power given them by calling them editorials would have been removed. Like a lot of other people, I object to those articles. I object to being told what I should do that is best for the movement. As I said at the beginning of my letter I have for rather a long time laboured under the illusion that the women's movement was going to give me a few more choices of action and thought than I had hitherto had in a male-dominated society. It saddens me that 'New Zealand's feminist magazine' is indulging in the kind of typecasting and name calling that I thought was a symptom of a patriarchal society. I don't want a brave new world where the only difference in the power structure is that a woman holds the power. The tactics being used at the moment suggest to me that this is the way the women's movement is going.

Heather Roberts

Dear Broadsheet,

I have just read the latest Broadsheet with supplement re the women who have left the co-op and why they did. I am very angry that this has happened, and I'm afraid for the consequences. As a feminist magazine I see it as your responsibility to solicit and write as wide a range as possible on women's issues.

Obviously, part of this includes discussion on lesbianism. Particularly so as many of your readers are lesbian or might be one day soon. Much of the work done on all aspects of women's rights has been initiated by lesbians and we are getting a bit sick of being used and then discarded. I have a personal interest in reading views on lesbianism, because I am one, but I do think that it is vital for your straight readers to get a clear picture of what it's all about. You're definitely not living up to your aims of reaching a very wide range of women on a wide range of issues if you continue the way you have been. It seems the range of content in Broadsheet is getting narrower and narrower which makes it politically unsound and frankly will put it on a boring par with The Womens Weekly.

My support lies with my lesbian sisters, and if there is no immediate change in your policies and actions, you can count on one less subscriber.

In concern
Breindy Weir

Dear Broadsheet,

What is happening to us? Such conflict over whether we are to be **all** lesbians, or **all** radical feminists, heterosexual or homosexual.

Sorry to be awkward, folks, but I demand the right to be what I want to be, and still have the right to call myself woman **and** feminist, because I am working towards the same freedoms as most other women I know and love.

I also reject the label, lesbian, (because I am considered feminist) only because I am not lesbian. I also resent being labelled heterosexual or heterosexist because I retain the right to love who I want, male or female.

Please Broadsheet — let us always hear from **all** women.

Who cares **what** they are!

Surely when you accuse men of labelling, classifying women, and discriminations, you are coming close in doing the very same when you demand we must decide what label we must wear — lesbian or radical feminist?

Can't we all be women first and leave the labelling to those who need the security of classification and 'boxing' into type etc., and let the sub-groups sort themselves into wherever they feel they belong. Surely we must all fight and stand united against all who oppress women.

Let our lesbian sisters love who they want without fear of oppression, let the women who love both men and women love without recrimination, and let also those women who love caring, non-exploitative loving men and families do their thing without feeling they are not 'purists' or 'true' feminists. (Let's not kid ourselves that only male/female relationships are dominated by one person so the weaker one will suffer oppression. As many of us have experienced, a woman/woman situation can carry the same undesirable factors.)

So let's say "each to her own" and get on with the fight for respect, equality and the right to our own bodies.

Sorry if this letter appears naive (as I'm sure it will to those more political and academic sisters) but I feel so sad and sorry that we are in danger of destroying what has been such a source of stimulation, support, and reference to so many.

We are going to delight a lot of men if we divide our ranks and divide the movement.

Let us not all be labelled lesbians because we are feminist, let us not be labelled non-feminist because we are heterosexual, let us embrace all women and wear that 'label' proudly — together.

Yours in sisterhood,

Kass Tindall

I arrived in the dark. The university campus was vast and gloomy, and I had no idea where to go. They had not acknowledged my \$2 subscription sent off in July; nor had they answered my second letter, urgently requesting a reply. If it had not been for a programme picked up in the Auckland University Bookshop, I would not even have known for certain that the conference was taking place. But the programme, announcing the Friday night social, did not say what part of the university to go to. I looked in the local paper; there was an item about the conference, but no details about where to go.

So here I was, having optimistically driven down from Auckland, searching for a light on a dark, deserted campus.

Two cars drew up, and the people who got out of them seemed to know where they were going. I followed at a distance, into a pre-fab building, down a long corridor, to a closed door with a notice on it saying ISIS. Surely this was it — except ... weren't some of those people **men** who had just gone in? It turned out to be a discussion on smoking! And I was none the wiser, just hopelessly lost. I felt like going home.

Fortunately, just then three other women from Auckland wandered along, also lost. They too had sent money, and got no reply. I began to feel less of an outcast. Together we found a common room with a notice on the door saying to go to the Bryant Hall lounge (wherever that was). Luckily one of the women knew it, and after a twenty minute walk through the silent university grounds, we arrived.

A SPACE OF ONE'S OWN

*some impressions of the
Women's Studies Inaugural
Conference. August 25-27.*

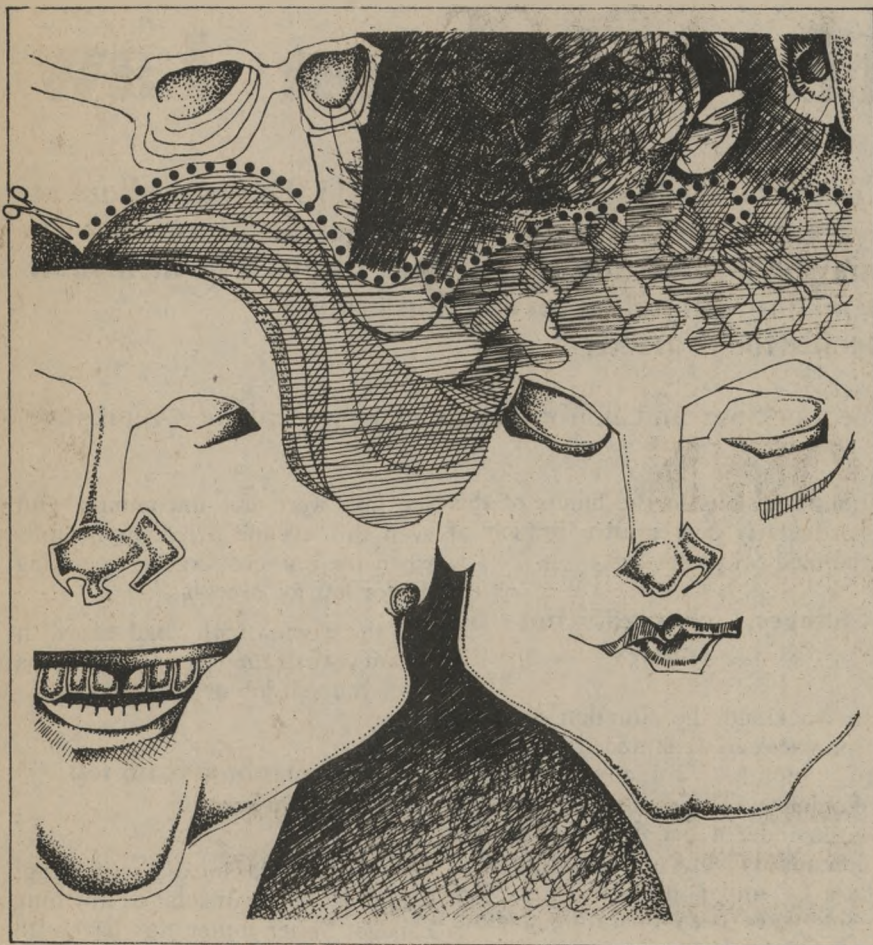
I feel awkward admitting that at the age of 36 I am new to feminism. The sense of valuable time lost frustrates and angers me; my lateness to the movement embarrasses me.

How does a newcomer find the movement, especially if she lives in Auckland? There seems to be nothing to grasp hold of. My reading, thinking, growth, have all been taking place in the privacy of my own life: I'm travelling fast, but it's lonely.

The formation of the Women's Studies Association sounded exciting, and I looked forward to the conference as some kind of starting point for myself. A researcher in

search of a subject; a woman in search of feminist friends.

The atmosphere of the social was warm; a poetry reading was soon to start. Here was a womenspace, outside the main-stream of the patriarchy, a place to which women could withdraw and discover (re-discover) their strength. Or so it seemed. But through the murmur of women's voices a louder note travelled. It boomed out. I turned and could not believe my eyes, for there, surrounded by a group of attentive women, was a man! This was the only group that had divided into speaker and audience. Its behaviour was quite unlike that of



by and watched? I would rather have no film of that session than to have watched it being done by men. Driving down from Auckland, I had blithely thought I was driving away from all that, at least for the weekend. Women feel **powerless** in such a situation; why did the conference have to reinforce that feeling?

When the male got up to deliver his paper, the Expert on women about to tell us about ourselves (just as they have been doing for centuries), a woman stood up. She stated her objections to the man's presence, including the fact that he was being given a plenary session that could have been used for a woman's paper. She said that those women who objected were now going to walk out. I didn't know them, but as I walked out that door I felt enormous relief that at least some women existed who were not prepared to compromise.

And what now? I work within the patriarchy for my bread and butter. For my other needs I want a space of my own, space to share with other women. Space to show paintings, read poems, share research, knowing that I will not be bugged (pun intended) by men. It looks as if the Women's Studies Association is not going to be it, after all.

Will somebody tell me, where is womanspace?

Julia Seule

".... some women will seek premature reconciliation, not allowing themselves to see the depth and implications of feminism's essential opposition to sexist society. It can be easy to leap on the bandwagon of 'human liberation' without paying the price in terms of polarisation, tensions, risk, and pain that the ultimate objective of real human liberation demands."

Footnote:

Mary Daly: "Beyond God The Father"

the other groups in the room, where there was a quiet interchange. Here was a male, holding forth, and here were the females, submissively listening!

It's hard to describe the shock. I felt utterly cheated. It seemed I wasn't just an awkward newcomer, but I was a naive one as well; for in my simplicity I had though this was to be a **women's** conference.

Had I been one of the women reading poetry that evening, I would have withheld many of my poems, the ones that expose aspects of myself that I am only ready for women to see. It seemed to me that this man's motivation was suspect, a

kind of voyeurism, not to be trusted. It astounded me when I learned that he was to give a paper at one of the plenary sessions.

The conference was a positive experience in many ways. To experience an event that is run for women by women is to be morally recharged. We **need** such events as we need food and water. But I wonder how other women felt, when Marilyn Waring gave her opening address to an audience of women, while three men held the video cameras. Did they see the contradiction of putting the equipment in men's hands, while we helpless, technically incompetent women sat

How The Abortion Law

What takes 5 minutes to get and 49 days to get rid of? What do the counsellors at Epsom Day clinic do all day? What do you have to do to get an abortion with handcuffs on? The answers may be bizarre, but they are not funny. The little man down in Wellington tells us abortion will not be an election issue. Please read this article and decide for yourself.

SANDRA CONEY reports on the workings and non-workings of New Zealand's repressive abortion legislation.

I rang up a GP the other day. "I'm writing an article about now the abortion law isn't working . . ." I began. "But you're wrong," she exclaimed "It is working. It's working exactly as they intended it should."

And, of course, she's right. The Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act which came into force in April this year has made it supremely difficult for women to get abortions and when they do, demoralising and often downright dangerous. The situation varies from district to district, from hospital to hospital and from doctor to doctor.

The Act empowers the Statutory Committee, under chairwoman Augusta Wallace, to license hospitals, public and private, which may perform abortions. It also appoints those who may make the abortion "decision", the Certifying Consultants, or CCs. One of the two CCs who must approve each woman's abortion "application" must be a practising obstetrician and gynaecologist (O&G).

The Statutory Committee has defined a practising O&G as someone who clocked up 50 deliveries a year, a clever move to keep abor-

tions decisions in the hands of this particularly conservative branch of the medical profession.

Changes, chances, but no choices

In Auckland the situation changes from week to week and from month to month. Initially National Women's O&Gs decided not to work under a bad piece of legislation and only one of them applied to be a CC under the Act. Those who could have been operating doctors refused to operate on women approved by 2 CCs, "Basically," I was told, "because they would not be told what to do by their less-qualified colleagues." The operating doctor had, in their eyes, been reduced to the unacceptable level of technician and they didn't like it. For the woman this raises to three the number of doctors she must convince of the "legality" of her "case".

GPs sympathetic to desperate women seeking abortions soon sorted out "liberal" CCs from those who weren't. One known liberal CC was flooded with patients, having seen about 200 to date, although referral agencies protected him from the full extent of the demand by only sending women with "good cases". Waits of a week or two to

see him were not uncommon. But even this avenue dried up in June when the one cooperative operating doctor left for overseas.

For the women with "bad cases" it meant Australia at \$500-800, a do-it-yourself job or a baby.

White elephants and red herrings

In June it briefly looked as if things would get better (insofar as anything can get better under this law) with the opening of an outpatients' clinic by the Auckland Hospital Board at the Epsom Day Hospital. This was modelled very much on the lines of the old Auckland Medical Aid Centre (AMAC), put out of business by the Act. Between early June and the 23rd of the same month 17 abortions were performed at Epsom and then it all ground to a halt — no operating doctors. It seems that prospective operators objected to the low wage of \$32 paid by the Hospital Board for a session at Epsom. Contrast this with the generous (some would say excessive) fee paid to CCs of \$25 for a consultation with the woman and \$10 by other means, eg by telephone. So until the Hospital Board approves higher wages the women wait.

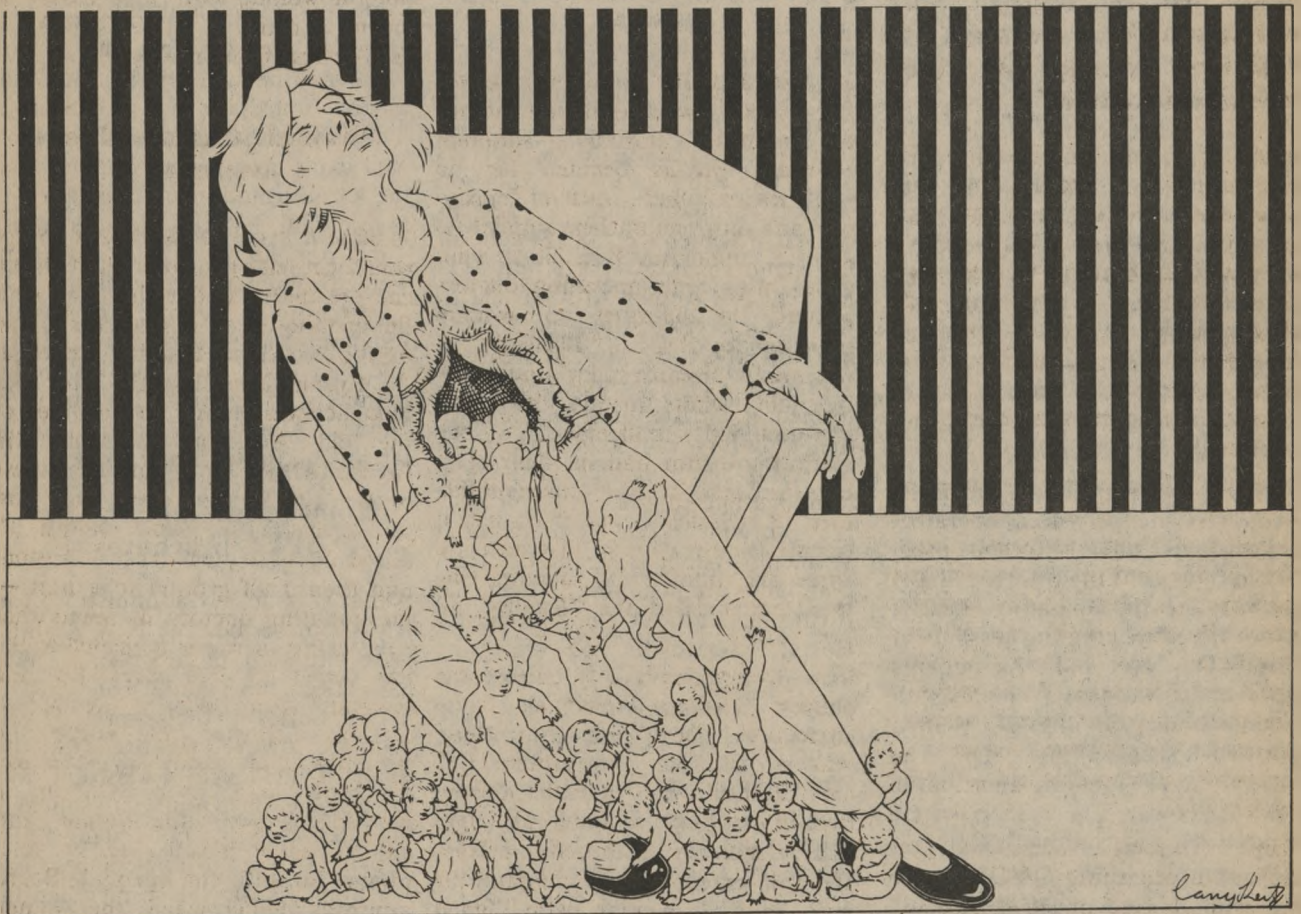
Isn't Working

For the counsellors working at Epsom, mostly ex-AMAC, it's a depressing business. It's boring sitting round all day without work to do even when you're paid to do it by the Hospital Board. It's worst when a patient does arrive. As one counsellor told me: "It's pretty awful when you *do* get a patient. It's difficult counselling someone when you know no abortion is available if that is what the patient chooses." The counsellors have found also that most of their time with a patient is

spent helping her fight her way through the system and organising the logistics of the lengthy and gruelling abortion obstacle course — acting more as a patient advocate than a counsellor. There is a danger, the counsellors pointed out in a report to the Statutory Committee which the Hospital Board apparently did not pass on, (but which the Statutory Committee do know about) that women do get totally lost in the system.

So there Epsom Day sits, flossied up to the tune of \$65,000 according to Minister of Health, Gill, its brand new carpet untrdden, its silent counselling rooms smelling of new paint and its unused suction machine in the silent theatre mute testimony to the machinations of Parliament and the medical profession.

A few women have been getting abortions at National Women'a but a recent edict restricts operations to those over 12 weeks pregnant (into the 2nd trimester). Justification for this decision was given as bowing to the objections of nursing staff over the number of abortions being done, but it is suspected that a more likely motivation is to put pressure on the Hospital Board and Health Depart-



"Little People" TAN © Larry Hunt

ment to give the doctors their way over pay and employment conditions.

Does all this sound Machiavellian? Do you wonder what happens to the women? So did I. If they're lucky and have the money then they can get to Australia pretty quickly, even though at its best that can be a harrowing experience. Otherwise ... they wait. I heard of women with 2 CCs certificates who can't get an operation at National Women's at 8 weeks, but yes, they could maybe see them when they're over 12. I heard of women with 2 CCs certificates refused by the operating doctor. There is a documented case of a 49-day delay for one woman from the time she went to her referring doctor till she got her abortion. I heard of women who were refused tests for foetal abnormality even though abortion is legal where the foetus is abnormal. On average women see 4 doctors on their way through the system but some see as many as 8. This depends on the "inside knowledge" of the doctors they first see.

They are often treated badly. One mother of a fifteen-year-old, frustrated by the difficulty she was having with the CC said to him: "We're not getting anywhere. We might as well leave." To which he replied: "Why don't you?" One CCs letter states: "I have interrogated her for half-an-hour....." Another from an O&G: "The weakest part of her story is....." (This was her failure with contraception.)

Women are suffering medically because of inexperienced operators and the late stages of their pregnancies when they are finally wheeled into the operating theatre. In two horrific operating sessions at Epsom Day over half the patients ended up at National Women's with complications. Of the 27 women (out of 54) seen at Epsom Day who did manage to get an abortion in New Zealand, 7, or 25.9% were re-admitted to National Women's with complications. Contrast this with the 3% complication rate reported for AMAC in its four years of operation.

Parts South

In Wellington the situation is more straightforward. There, the CCs, some liberal, some SPUC people, wanted to show that the conservative law would work so it could be retained. They've been inundated with women and have been doing more and more abortions. Many CCs have had their eyes opened. They hadn't realised the real extent of the demand for abortion and had been sheltered from the harsh realities of women's lives by the existence of AMAC. Now more women are passing through the doors of Wellington and Hutt Public hospitals than ever came to AMAC when it was open. 211 abortions were performed at these hospitals in the 3-month period May-July compared with 108 at National Women's and Epsom Day for the same period. Sympathetic GPs set up a system whereby many women didn't actually see the CCs themselves, as before the Amendment was passed, she could elect not to.

Workers in the abortion scene in Christchurch describe it as "dreadful". Some notorious SPUC doctors are CCs and the only abortion services available are at Christchurch Women's. Liz Sewell of Christchurch SOS reports that SOS has sent 584 women to Australia so far — for every 6 who went there 1 got an abortion at Christchurch Women's. 117 abortions were performed at Christchurch Women's in the May-July period.....but, at a price. Liz Sewell has noted that the complication rate for women they get through the Christchurch Women's system is far higher than that for women they send to Australia. And yet the Canterbury Hospital Board has scrubbed the idea of a day clinic after Christchurch O&Gs claimed that day clinics were not as safe as hospitals!

Women frequently leave the hospital theatre with vaginas packed with gauze, indicating a torn cervix. Prostaglandins are used unnecessarily causing a long and painful labour. Pain relief is not given to these women and no explanation is

given about what is going on or the inevitable outcome of the prostaglandin abortion — the delivery of the foetus, dead or alive, in the bed.

Women are kept in hospital three days and exposed to judgemental attitudes from some staff members and hostility from other women in the ward who are often there hanging on to wanted pregnancies.

The four registered O&G CCs who women see at Christchurch Women's are in Liz Sewell's words "conservatives, supporters of SPUC". The CC doing most of the approving is selective about who gets an abortion in line with his own prejudices. "If they're middle-class and well educated and can express themselves he's sympathetic and they'll get an abortion. If they're coloured or working class it's what they deserve." Women report brutal internal examinations with pain and sometimes bleeding. One doctor prefers to sterilise women at the same time as the abortion.

Outside Christchurch things are blacker still. Liz Sewell: "In Ashburton you have no problems as long as you're a friend of the doctor. You can't even get an appointment for a confirmation of pregnancy in Invercargill — the doctors don't want to know about pregnant women. Women are reaching SOS Christchurch 12 and 13 weeks pregnant and in a dazed condition and they don't even know if they're definitely pregnant. It's bad in Dunedin too. It's terrible, really terrible — quite unbelievable."

Home grown material for SPUC brochures

Anna Watson, ex-administrator at AMAC, describes the New Zealand wide situation on abortion: "This legislation has made true SPUC horror stories at their worst. If you compare AMAC figures with the reported incidence of abortion over the rest of the country it's obvious the demand is not being met anywhere else. Many places are short on CCs. In Nelson they had no CCs but they did have an operating

continued on page 19

ABORTION IN AUSTRALIA

Visiting Australian abortion activist Peta Stewart gave Broadsheet these facts on the current abortion situation in Australia.

The recent Federal budget was intended to dismantle the Medibank system of national health insurance set up by the Labour government. How this will be done has yet to be finalised, but it is certain that if it happens payments for abortions will be one of the first medical benefits to go.

At present an Australian woman needing an abortion has two financial options — she can go to a clinic which will bill the Federal government for two-thirds of the cost of the abortion (so the woman need not take any money with her) or she can pay the money directly to the clinic and bill Medibank herself. If a woman belongs to a private health fund then it will pay 80% of the cost of her abortion. However, under anti-abortion pressure, the government recently gave private health schemes the option of refusing to give abortion insurance — Peta sees this as the thin end of the wedge, with the cuts in Medibank being a widening of the anti-woman campaign. Already Australian women who do not live in New South Wales Victoria or South Australia must pay heavy travel costs if they are to obtain an abortion. Women from Perth pay as much as women from New Zealand to fly to Sydney for an abortion. If all Medibank subsidies go, Australian women will be paying \$100 minimum for an abortion those from the anti-abortion states a lot more.



Peta Stewart

Photo: Peter Butler

At the moment the states which provide legal abortions seem secure, but the situation as a whole is far from satisfactory. Already the American Federal government, forced by the Supreme Court decision to declare anti-abortion statutes unconstitutional, has managed to restrict access to abortion and keep it unsafe for women by cutting Medicaid funding for poor women seeking abortions. It is important that Australia doesn't follow suit.

The Contraceptive Con

In 1975 the National Party election manifesto promised to make contraceptives free on prescription. Three years later (only three months before the next general election) the National Government has "kept" its promise. Doctors have been prescribing free contraceptives for those with "approved" medical conditions for quite some time — now they can dish them out free if "in the opinion of the practitioner, it would be inappropriate for the patient to pay." ("Hop up on the couch, dear, I'd just like to see the inside of your wallet.") The God-like position of doctors is further entrenched.

Nor are all contraceptives to be free. Some of the more expensive brands of contraceptive pills will carry a part charge — these include two of the lowest dosage pills on the market, which many women prefer to use so as to try and minimise the ill effects of the Pill.

As for condoms . . . "practitioners are requested to preserve economy in prescribing." (!) ("Six times a week, Mr Jones? Outrageous! Take three.") Since it will cost \$4-\$5 and perhaps an hour of lost time to visit the doctor to obtain a prescription for "free" condoms, individuals can calculate whether they are likely to save money or not.



A New Look

A WEL view
of some changes for
New Zealand



The New Zealand Women's Electoral Lobby has published a booklet entitled "A New Look — A WEL view of some changes for New Zealand." Covering early childhood services, education, employment, health, law, social welfare and town planning, and providing a list of suggested reading, with WEL branches, aims and contacts, this booklet gives a good guide to WEL's views. Readers can order the booklet from WEL, P.O. Box 11-285, Wellington. There's no price on the cover, but perhaps a donation would be appreciated.

TAX CUTS STING

By now we will all have enjoyed one month of Muldoon's much-vaunted tax cuts. Or will we? Cunningly timed to take effect six weeks before a General Election, and touted round the media as being the biggest tax cuts of all time, in actual fact these cuts are mainly (you guessed it) for the boys only.

Many women will be receiving not a tax cut, but a tax **increase**.

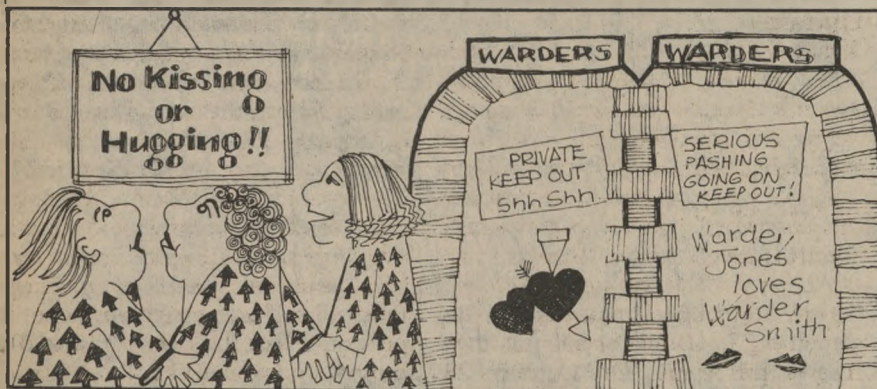
Some election bribe. How is it possible? It is possible because anyone earning less than \$55.50 a week will now pay **more** tax, not less. Who earns less than \$55.50 a week? Part-time workers (and the majority of part-time workers are women) and beneficiaries (many of whom are women). Some groups of women will be especially affected — women students who are trying to pay their way through University or Technical College, for example. (Surprising though it may seem, not **all** women students are the offspring of rich Remuera daddies who are only too delighted to bankroll their study at a place which abounds with eminently eligible potential lawyer, accountant and doctor sons-in-law.

Given Muldoon's vicious tax assumptions, though, it won't be surprising if soon all women students are like that.)

If you earn only \$15.00 per week (previously untaxed) you will now be paying \$2.13 in tax. If, on the other hand, you are in the upper income bracket (and very few women are in the upper income bracket) you will be paying less tax. On \$415 per week you used to have to pay \$170.08 tax — now it's only \$166.59.

Low income earners are being forced to pay these penalties because, in government jargon, they are only "supplementary" income earners. Supplementary to what? Supplementary to the "breadwinner", to the "head of the household", to the man — that's what. The right of women, young people, old people and people at a temporary economic disadvantage (the unemployed, solo parents) to have a reasonable independent income is not recognised. We must be dependent on someone — our father, our husband — or the State. Dependent people are more easily controlled. In times of economic crisis, like the present, the State has an even greater interest than normal in controlling people. Muldoon's phoney tax "cuts" are no accident.

christchurch women's prison 1978



notice to inmates

"It would appear that the 'darl' racket is reaching astronomical proportions around the institution. No wing is without its 'couple'. The behaviour of these people is offensive to other inmates and complaints have been made by some inmates. You are reminded that kissing and embracing in public places is offensive to people and should you be seen by staff indulging in this pastime you will be charged for behaving in an offensive manner."

BREAKING INTO BENDON

Bendon, the "intimate apparel" manufacturers, have been having a rather difficult time this year, with a series of disastrous advertising campaigns. Pressure has been brought to bear on the firm in a threefold manner.

Early this year, they produced a colour brochure called "Secrets and Promises", which was printed in the thousands and distributed throughout New Zealand in people's letterboxes. The response to this particular form of advertising, and the way women were portrayed throughout, was violent and prolific, to say the least. Letters poured in, on a more or less continuous basis for the three months following its release. Women were angry and said so in no uncertain terms. Many letters, enclosed the offending article, many women assured Bendon they would never purchase any of their garments again. The reaction was a surprising and unexpected one for the company, and all letters received had to be read, initialled and filed by the advertising manager concerned. Any further attempt at debasement won't get out of that particular department; it will be quashed internally. The message came out loud and clear — that type of advertising is not acceptable to a lot of women, so it won't be done again. The whole affair was taken very seriously by the management concerned.

The second attack came quite recently with the Christchurch Women's Liberation's attack on the Haywrights window display. (See September issue of Broadsheet.) Although Bendon was not directly involved, in that the display was set up independently by the store, the firm still bore the brunt. Newspaper clippings were sent up from Christ-



church for the attention of the Managing Director. Once again, women were angry.

The third complaint was Bendon's television advertisement for the "Second Nature" bra.

The offending copy line read "Second Nature for the woman who is more woman than most". The claims of the advertisement were taken up in a rather light-hearted vein by Brian Edwards and the Fair

Go team. No real points scored there, but still more letters poured into Bendon, and yet again they were made aware of the fact that women are becoming increasingly aware of how they are being abused via this media.

"Writing those letters in this case was very effective; if you haven't already done so yourself, I hope this article will encourage you to start.

Donna Hoyle

Dalila Zeghar — Maschino Update

Readers who want to help free Dalila Zeghar-Maschino, the immigrant to Canada who was kidnapped by her Algerian brother and who is now being held against her will in Algeria, being pressured to renounce her marriage with a non-Muslim (which is illegal under Algerian law) and marry a Muslim (see Broadsheet No 62 September) may wish to do something for Dalila as soon as they receive this issue. On October 28 women demonstrated outside

Algerian embassies right round the world. New Zealand has no Algerian embassy, but New Zealand women can express their concern by sending cards and letters to the governments of Canada and Algeria, and by writing to the Canadian High Commission in New Zealand. Broadsheet has attractive cards, with a message in French, and form letters available. Please send a large stamped self-addressed envelope if you would like the cards, plus a 10c stamp if you would like the letters as well.

Unfortunately, at the time of going to press, the four parties had not released their manifestos. We may ask why the complete party policies are not released sooner than one month before the election — but this won't help us play the part of concerned citizens now. So, let's take the best look we can at the parties' promises.

The General Election 1978

some quick comments

For starters, National — or a pig in a poke?

Our cartoonist sprinkles some sharp grains of salt on National's promises — and given National's notorious anti-woman performance over the past three years (the anti-abortion law, the flouting of the pro-choice majority, the cuts in the DPB, the hounding of solo mothers, the general disregard of the special needs of women — not to mention the

gratuitous insults of the “beady-eyed, slogan-chanting” variety) we imagine our readers will find the cartoons comment enough. Whatever National promised or promises — it's performance that counts. The Human Rights Commission Act (the only piece of legislation to come out of the Labour-inspired 1975 International Women's Year hoo-ha) is a pretty poor sop — in view of the attacks on women under this government it's like giving someone

five dollars while robbing them of a hundred dollars.

Labour is also hot on the promises.

Some of the best ones include — the unemployment benefit for anyone who has worked full-time for at least twelve months, i.e. married women workers, paid maternity and paternity leave, increased grants and other assistance to child care centres, elimination of sex-stereotyping in the school curriculum, restoration of the full DPB and an early referendum on the Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Act. This last one may be the most appealing of all. A word of warning, though. Labour politicians seem to be hedging as to whether they will immediately pass the results of the referendum into law — or whether they will use it as a “guide” and go through the conscience vote farce in Parliament again. Question candidates and party bigwigs carefully on this one — we don't want to get sucked in.

Why vote for a party, anyway? Voters who are feeling cynical about both parties as regards women's rights may decide that there is one way in which they can guarantee at least one women's right at this election — by voting for the major party candidate with the most liberal stand on abortion, regardless of party. Erich Geiringer's book “Spuc 'em all” (reviewed in this

Doctor Muldoon



UNEMPLOYMENT

Dealing with side effects

issue) provides extra advice if needed on how to put this tactic into practice.

Finally, Social Credit and Values. Social Credit is hardly hot on the trail of women's rights — Values is. Although Values candidates may not be elected, most of them do a good job by airing women's rights issues, backed by good policies on abortion, child care, employment and other vital issues. However, support for Values among women may be tempered in this election by two main factors — a desire to get the obviously anti-woman Muldoon government out, and a desire to ensure that liberals on the abortion issue reach Parliament.

Other things to watch out for: The Socialist Action League is fielding a few candidates and publicising women's rights. However, it is advocating that people vote Labour — its paper "Socialist Action" gives the reasons why.

Alternative National candidates are being fielded, mostly against notorious anti-choice MPs like Frank (Knitting Needle) Gill. The National Party is furious because the resulting vote splitting could benefit Labour. May be the ideal vote for some people in some electorates.

Abortion Car Stickers Vote Prohibition for Repeal

Get them from Broadsheet with no delay. Send stamped addressed envelope to P.O. Box 5799, Wellesley St, Auckland.

OVERSEAS TRADE



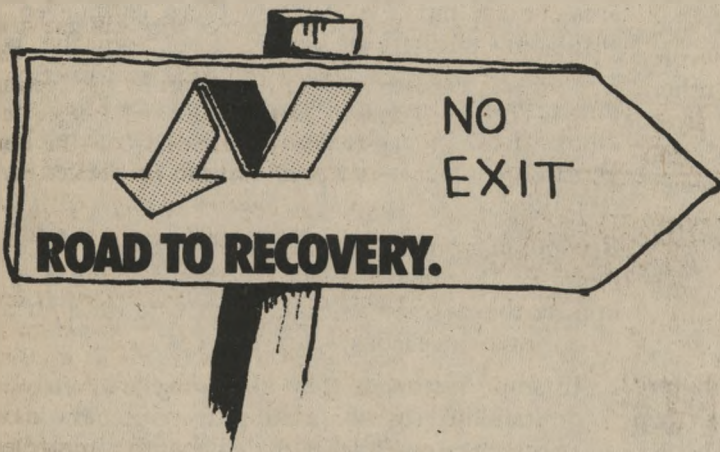
Are there any real alternatives? Politics is about power — and not all power resides in Parliament. Does the triennial election circus help disguise the difficulties most of us have in winning bread in the years in between? Bluff us into thinking that we have a choice — and that this is the sort of choice that we have?

Feminism is about using power for the good of the many — not abusing it for the good of the few. Feminism is about **real** choices — not opting for Tweedledum rather than Tweedledee. The significance of working for women's rights is highlighted at election time — but the vital necessity of working for the liberation of women goes on between elections.

"When the politicians say, don't come back no more —

Forget it, boys, you're gonna hear us roar....!"

Christine Dann



Single Issue Voting

Should feminists vote solely on the abortion issue this year?

There is at present a lot of discussion amongst feminists about how we should vote on November 25 and indeed whether we should vote at all.

The Views

1. Some argue that we should take no part at all in the present male devised and dominated political system — that instead we should put all our efforts and energies into creating alternatives.
2. Others maintain that it is short-sighted and politically irresponsible for a feminists to vote solely on the abortion issue. They point to other important considerations that affect our lives such as the economy. To some of this group, support for a National candidate would never be acceptable no matter what the candidate's abortion views.
3. Amongst this group there are those who advocate the mobilisation of public opinion against the abortion laws — but they are opposed to directing aroused public opinion into electoral action which involves support or opposition to individual candidates on the basis of their abortion views. This attitude presumes that a sufficiently strong demonstration of

public opinion would persuade even SPUC MP's to change their minds.

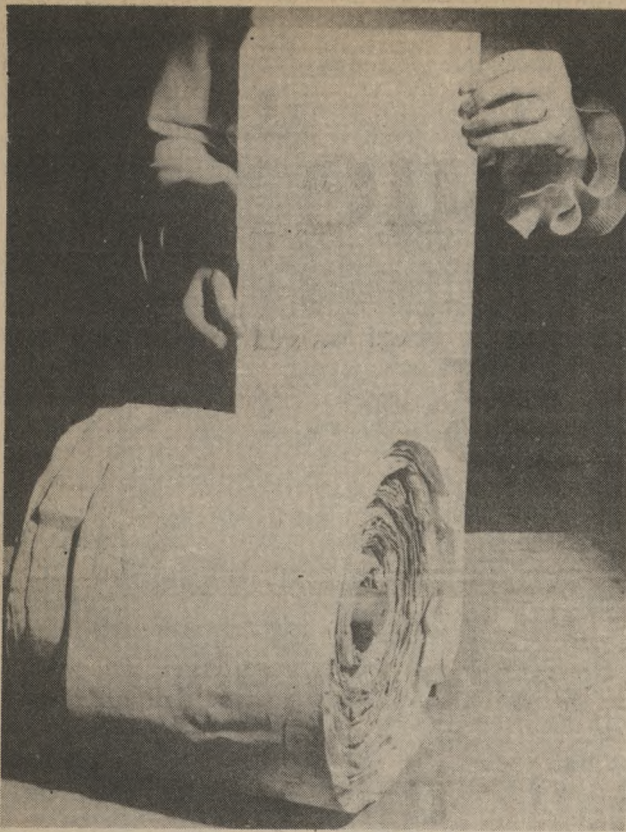
4. Still others support the use of the ballot box as a means of obtaining a sufficiently high number of liberal MP's to ensure a change in the current abortion laws.

I believe that as feminists we certainly should use our votes against SPUC candidates. I do not believe in allowing any more power to fall by default into the hands of our oppressors. Unless we can control our own fertility there will never be sufficient numbers of women free from the fear and fact of pregnancy with the time and energy to put into creating and supporting the necessary alternatives. In my view access to free, safe, legal abortion is a necessary precondition to the feminist revolution.

Reasons for opposing a single issue vote

Amongst feminists, those political activists who oppose the call for a single issue vote on abortion do so for two reasons:

1. In some instances they are actively involved in political groups which are putting up candidates at the election. This is the case with Values and Socialist Action members who both argue with some justification that the implementation of



their policies as a whole would immeasurably improve the position of women.

Quite a number of left-wing groups which do not actively support the Labour Party argue nevertheless that a Labour victory is preferable, in terms of overall direction, to another National government. They oppose therefore anything which might impede a possible Labour victory.

2. Some feminists fear the effect of failure if we should attempt an electoral campaign. They argue quite correctly that Parliament has no right to decide on whether a woman should have an abortion. The issue, they say, should be removed from the political and legislative arena and be left to the woman concerned to decide. They believe that implicit in any campaign to get MP's with liberal views elected is an acknowledgement that if we lose, we must concede to the SPUC MP's the right to legislate as they wish.

Reasons for a single issue vote

Both arguments have considerable validity. Obviously a Values or a Socialist Action government would result in very real improvements for women. But the achievement of such a

government is a long-term goal. In the meantime several generations of women would have to live without access to legal abortions. I do not believe that I should vote in a way that will perpetuate the present restrictive laws in the interests of any group's long-term political aims. Women are all too often asked to sacrifice their own interests to the needs of their children, their husbands, their parents, the less fortunate etc. I certainly agree that we must carefully examine all proposed reforms with a view to ensuring that some apparent short-term gain does not turn out to be, in the longer term, a restrictive development. But there is no way that access to free, safe, legal abortion can work except to the advantage of women.

Similarly I feel we must reject the view that a Labour government is at any cost preferable to a National one. In retrospect it is clear that the last Labour government did provide a permissive atmosphere in which all sorts of groups perceived some radical change as possible. But as far as women are concerned a close examination of the record shows that the present Labour MP's who are strong SPUC supporters tend also to favour other anti-woman measures. The Labour Party could only be strengthened by the loss of its SPUC MP's.

As for the fear of failure in an electoral campaign, I think that a basic premise of any such activity must be a clear statement that we reject the right of Parliament whatever its composition to determine who may or may not have an abortion. And that our support for a particular candidate is simply based on the need to have the present laws repealed — a practical fact which we cannot ignore. We thereby clearly reject at the same time the implication that the electorate of New Zealand as a whole has a right to decide on who shall have an abortion.

Having decided to cast a single issue vote on abortion some interesting points emerge.

1. National Party supporters can vote for liberal abortion candidates and in no way seriously threaten their party's chance of returning to power. This assertion is based on a calculation of how many of the marginal seats would change hands if a liberal abortion vote determined the outcome.
2. In over two-thirds of the electorates feminists can vote on as broad a basis as they wish. In these electorates there is either virtually no chance that the party currently holding the seat will lose it, or in those which are marginal there

is a SPUC/SPUC contest or a liberal/liberal contest between the two major parties. These provide the smaller parties with pro-woman policies an opportunity to increase their vote.

- The critical electorates are those in which the sitting candidate does not have a safe majority and where there is a clear difference of opinion between the candidates for the National and Labour parties. These electorates and the party and candidate for whom you should vote are listed below.

Why should we cast a single issue vote?

Because we owe it to the 30 women a day who

currently seek abortions in New Zealand.

Because we must prevent SPUC gaining further control over our lives and oppressing women even more.

Because we need to show that we are a force to be reckoned with and victory on the abortion issue will lead to gains for women in other areas.

Because by putting a little time and effort into getting out the vote in those crucial electorates and by ensuring a change in the abortion laws now, we will be freeing ourselves to concentrate on other equally critical issues.

Rosslyn Noonan

The Critical Electorates

<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>CANDIDATE TO VOTE FOR</i>	<i>PARTY</i>
West Coast	T.K. Burke	Labour
Mt Albert	W.W. Freer	Labour
Napier	G. Christie	Labour
Papatoetoe	E.E. Isbey	Labour
Manurewa	R. Douglas	Labour
Hastings	D. Butcher	Labour
Western Hutt	J. Terris	Labour
Rotorua	P. East	National
Kapiti	M. Shields	Labour
Whangarei	J. Elliot	National
Wairarapa	A. Levett	Labour
Hunua	M. Douglas	Labour
Invercargill	N. Jones	National
Hawkes Bay	M. Cullen	Labour
Wellington Central	N. Pickering	Labour
Helensville	J. Elder	Labour
Yaldhurst	D. Watson	National
Taupo	L. Miller	National
Palmerston North	J. Lithgow	National
Tasman	R. Richardson	National
Nelson	P. Malone	National
Pencarrow	B. Newall	National
Mangere	P. Saunders	National

Two other marginal seats, Gisborne and Roskill, need to be checked out. In both cases the sitting candidates are SPUC supporters, but it is not clear where their challengers stand.

How do you judge a candidates views, if they are or have been an MP

- Check how they voted on the Wall Bill, the Gill Bill and the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Bill.
- Find out if they unequivocally support repeal of the present law — this is a basic minimum requirement. If no National or Labour candidate supports repeal, then vote Values (or something else — but not Social Credit which is pro-SPUC.)

This chart is calculated on the basis of electorates with a paper majority of 3000 or less for the sitting MP. It was drawn from information and analyses in *Spuc 'em All: Abortion Politics 1978* by Erich Geiringer, published by Alister Taylor. See review this issue.

continued from page 10

doctor so for a while Nelson doctors were sending case files to Wellington for approval. New Plymouth had no CCs or operators so women had to go to Palmerston North. In Invercargill the majority of CCS had signed a SPUC advert which appeared in national newspapers.

Doctors are not prepared to speak up about the awful treatment their patients get because that might cut off what service is available."

And God created . . . a Statutory Committee.

What of the Statutory Committee appointed to implement and supervise the Act? Opinion is that it is inaccessible and unresponsive to evidence of the suffering of women under the Act.

Returns are sent in to the Statutory Committee for all abortions performed in New Zealand with information about any complications, although often these are inaccurate since they usually only net complications at the time of, or immediately following, the operation. Even so the Committee must have figures for the complication rate known to them, yet in response to a question from MP Marilyn Waring about readmission rates to hospitals for complications, Minister of Health Gill stated that the information was "not available".

As a result we have no real figures to support the observation of many abortion workers that complication rates have rocketed to unacceptably high proportions. There is also no information about women reaching hospital with complications following backstreet abortions or self-induced abortion. This irresponsible attitude of the Statutory Committee shows a callous lack of concern for the well-being of New Zealand women.

Generally the Committee is felt to be unresponsive — not answering letters or only after long delays. ALRANZ Auckland has waited in vain 6 months for a reply to some

queries but has been told that the Committee won't enter into correspondence with "pressure groups". The Committee is also not seeking information from abortion workers in the community about what women are doing, for example, it has not contacted SOS, although Mr Gill asserted that it is doing this. (Gill to Waring, 8 September.)

It would be hard to describe the Committee as conservative. In fact, there are reports that some members of the Committee have stated that the Committee's function is to carry out the wish of Parliament — that is, to keep AMAC closed and restrict abortion. This would explain the Committee's decisions to license Rawhiti which did not have a suction machine or trained counsellors (although Statutory Committee member Bruce Grieve is a member of the Board of Trustees of that hospital) while refusing to license AMAC on the basis that it did not provide "proper" counselling and that medical staff working there had a "determination to bring about an abortion on demand situation" and therefore could not be trusted "to correctly interpret the law" and "carry it into effect in accordance with the tenor of the Act".

(Ironically most of Epsom Days' counsellors were AMAC-trained and one member of the Counselling subcommittee appointed by the Statutory Committee is Isobel Stanton, formerly senior counsellor and trainer of counsellors at AMAC). AMAC is to appeal to the courts against this decision but Trust member Anna Watson points out that the courts have no power to order the Statutory Committee to rescind its decision even if the court finds the Statutory Committee has erred.

The Committee keeps a profile so low it's invisible — meeting infrequently and only on one known occasion venturing into the community (when it met Auckland FPA). But it's sure costing plenty. At the beginning of September the Minister of Justice, in reply to a question from MP Jonathon Hunt,

revealed that in wages, travel and administration costs the Statutory Committee in its first five months totted up a bill for \$31,728.

The Government seems in some "confusion" about how much the abortion legislation has so far cost. On 14 September the Minister of Justice told Jonathon Hunt that the cost to the taxpayer of the implementation of the CSA Act was \$64,550.00 from 1 April to 31 August 1978. Yet he also has stated that in the same period the Statutory Committee cost \$31,728 and that fees paid to CCs for the same period was \$36,380. (Minister of Justice to Jonathon Hunt 13 October). Sorry, fellas, you can't do your sums. If the \$64,550 doesn't include CCs fees then the grand total for the cost of the Act for the 5 month period is over \$100,000.

Well that's the story of how the abortion law isn't working. It's gory, but it's true. Did they tell us "New Zealand the way you want it?" They did, but they lied. For the CSA Act has given New Zealand women abortion the way SPUC, the Catholic church and the white male ruling class wants it. And how dare that little fat man down in Wellington tell us abortion won't be an election issue and get all the lily-livered boys in the media to fall in behind.

Remember Marion when you vote for your MP — she was told at National Women's that despite her kidney disease she didn't have grounds for an abortion but they could bed-rest her for the pregnancy instead. Oh, she got her abortion alright, in Sydney, and then she came home and a few months later died — of kidney failure.

Or remember Anne. The cops were waiting for her at Sydney airport to put her on the next flight back here because she'd been to two Ananda Marga meetings in New Zealand. She got her abortion alright, after having hysterics on the airport floor. They took her hand cuffed to the clinic and gave her a police escort back to the plane.

I could go on.

There has been considerable interest in the proposition that women make a protest vote for a liberal abortion law by voting for prohibition in the liquor referendum at the next General Election — the slogan being “No booze until abortion is a woman’s right to choose.” What are the practicalities of such a move?

At every general election voters are asked to express their preference with regard to the control of liquor in New Zealand. The choices are between National Prohibition (a total ban on the manufacture and sale of alcohol), State Purchase and Control (the Licensing Amendment Act 1910 sets out exactly how this would be put into effect), and National Continuance (leaving the law as it is at present). At the last General Election in 1975 1,580,459 valid votes were recorded in the liquor referendum. Of these 1,094,445 were for National Continuance, 235,374 were for State Purchase and Control, and 250,640 were for National Prohibition.

If an abortion protest vote were to succeed over half of the total vote would have to go to prohibition (a simple majority is enough to change the law). If roughly the same numbers of valid votes are recorded in 1978, this means that approximately 540,000 voters will have to change their vote to prohibition. Is this possible? 300,000 people signed the Repeal petition, and we know that this does not represent the total number of people who wish to see a more liberal abortion law — but do enough people care enough about women’s rights to sacrifice their booze, even for a short time? (If Prohibition is voted for, it does not come into effect until June of the next year, so the politicians would have six months to get those abortion laws repealed).

In the nineteenth century and early twentieth century there was a strong connection between the temperance cause and the women’s rights struggle. Many leading New



VOTING

Zealand suffragettes were also temperance campaigners and one use to which they wished to put the women’s vote was to restrict drinking and the subsequent abuse and misery which drunken men inflicted on women and children. They were vigorously opposed by the liquor interests, which had Parliamentary stooges who voted against the suffrage bill. As a result of feminist campaigning, modern New Zealand

women now enjoy the right to do a number of “manly” things — voting, wearing trousers — and drinking. Excessive drinking, however, remains largely a masculine domain — though the whole nation suffers as a result — dangerous driving, wife beating, drain on medical resources, vandalism — are but

FOR A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE



some of the abuses where alcohol is often found to be present. Sudden drunks no longer loll on street corners as they did in the nineteenth century — but women still dare not walk the street at closing time, and many wait apprehensively at home for the alcoholic's return. Alcohol remains a major problem — it's still a feminist issue which we have perhaps paid too little attention to.

However, a protest vote for prohibition in the 1978 election is not intended to deprive either men or women of drink forever, though it may well serve the useful function of raising consciousness about the alcohol as well as the abortion issue. Most people voting prohibition as a protest vote will do so in the confident expectation that they would revert to their usual continuance or state control vote when the abortion situation improves. Would the government buy such blackmail?

The Muldoon government has rather a history of ignoring the law — its illegal disregard of the Superannuation Act being the most blatant example. It would be under heavy pressure from powerful interests to disregard the popular will in this case — again, it would be a consciousness-raising exercise to many people to watch the government try and evade such a clear expression of popular will, as I believe it would try and do. Would it accept that the prohibition vote is really an abortion protest vote and change the abortion law to get itself off the prohibition hook? It would probably try and deny the connection — which still leaves it with the prohibition problem. What if the prohibition vote doesn't reach a majority? The effect is probably not wasted if there is a clear campaign to associate voting prohibition with supporting more liberal abortion laws and the prohibition vote increases substantially. Not wasted — well, to the extent that the Repeal petition wasn't a waste of time. How often do we have to tell the b . . . s what the people want before they actually deign to make this country a little more like a democracy?

So there are the options — if you think it's worthwhile, go to it!

Christine Dann

N.B. Don't forget that voting prohibition is not the only way you can register a protest vote on the abortion issue. You can also vote for the candidate with the best stand on abortion. See the article and book review in this issue.

The Values Of



Photo: Sandra Coney

Margaret Crozier is Deputy Leader of the Values Party — not the largest political party in the country, but certainly one of the most interesting and challenging parties which will be contesting this month's General Election. The only party with a woman in a leadership position, the only party with an abortion policy a feminist could support ... Broadsheet asked Margaret to tell us more about her values and her party.

Margaret Crozier

First of all, how did Margaret become involved in politics? As a history student at the University of Otago in the Sixties, she was part of her times: Beatles, mini-skirts, and the Vietnam war. The Vietnam war was a big politicising event for a lot of young New Zealanders — some of whom have since joined the Values Party. Then Margaret moved to Whangarei and became involved in a different kind of political protest. There were plans to site a PVC manufacturing plant near the city. PVC is a dangerous chemical which is known to cause a rare form of cancer — Margaret was one of the citizens who became concerned. She was elected onto a ratepayers' committee to investigate the plant.

From then on, things snowballed. She made contact with other concerned parties — farmers, waterside workers and environmentalists. She found it an incredible experience, realising that instead of cutting off and lamenting "What can I do?" one could actually change things. Margaret's job was to collect information and counter statements made by the PVC company. She was subjected to a lot of verbal attacks, and at one point the company threatened to sue her. But by this time there was so much community understanding and support that the company methods were seen for what they really were — American-style bulldozer tactics.

Margaret found the whole process a valuable way of learning about how decisions are made, who pulls the levers. Even being attacked was illuminating — lawyers referring to her as "this woman". Her feminist hackles rose and she was more determined than ever not to give up.

While the PVC protest was going on the Values Party approached her and asked her to be their Whangarei candidate.

She had become interested in the "tie ups" — the ways in which the system knocked people back at all levels. She had experienced this very forcefully

as a result of getting involved with a group trying to set up a child care centre. She had tried going to Rotary and other establishment groups for help and had been "put in her place". ("What does your husband do?") Again the distressing gap between what people say and what is really going on — and again the alternative of getting angry about it but switching off or trying to do something.

So in 1975 she decided to do something by standing for Values. At this time she was at home with her small child and had the spare time which she emphasises every activist who hopes to be successful needs. The resources ranged against the social activist are so vast that only persistence and tenacity, a "never say die" doggedness, are likely to carry one through to success, she feels. Several times she has felt that projects she has become involved with have been unable to succeed because they lacked people with this resource.

By this stage Margaret was really hooked into politics, into bringing about change, into understanding and changing who decides what. She was influenced by an overseas trip — she came home feeling that New Zealand was small enough to do something in, and she felt a greater sense of urgency. She could see the results of the "drifting" that had been going on in politics and in the country as a whole. She felt that the Labour Party had no philosophy which could prevent this drifting, but was just trying to manage the same system as the National Party. Despite its efforts to protect the underdog, Labour's policies in the end had the same result as National's.

Then the oil crisis gripped New Zealand, and theories about limited energy resources began to take on a practical meaning. This sort of thing was going to keep on happening. Margaret believes that here is a chance to assess what we really want. She sees two alternatives — either women will once more become the victims of resource crisis, with no access to transport or jobs (which is



Photo: Sandra Coney

what we see happening already) — or else we will have to start pushing for something which meets human needs, for a system which responds to human needs and gives us feelings of satisfaction.

What chance has the Values Party got of bringing about such a system?

Is there anything a small party in a state dominated by two big parties can achieve? Broadsheet asked.

Margaret says she has the satisfaction of feeling that one can do something better, even if one can't win an election. That it's better to talk about important things than to give up, that it is important to make new and different ideas accessible to people beyond one's own little group. The advantage of having a political party is that one is dealing with so many different people, trying to meet people's attitudes and present something more. Margaret feels that Values has been very successful in this communications role. It would not be possible in the Labour Party, for example

— you spend your time buried in committees trying to get credibility within the Party, she said.

The aims of the Values Party are more generally political rather than Parliamentary. It's difficult now that New Zealand is so entrenched in the two-party system, now that people have false expectations of politicians, Margaret says. Expectations that politicians can fix it all by pressing a few buttons, that people and systems don't need to change, for example. However, Margaret sees some small things of incredible significance happening — among them the various feminist groups which are aiming for wider changes, and the people experimenting with alternative and smaller technologies. She feels committed to these approaches and concerned about the backlash which may occur when and if these alternatives start to threaten the Establishment. She wants to be in there, exploring that question, becoming clearer about what is happening and trying to be useful.

Another reason Margaret gives for not being too concerned about Parliament is because she knows

that a lot of power and decision-making lies outside Parliament. However, she believes that we should keep defining what we expect of Parliament. For example, the abortion law calls into question Parliament's right to control people's consciences. She is happy to debate with National and Labour politicians the issues of planning, economics, energy, etc. — because if we don't change there will be more energy crises, with their unpleasant accompaniments of social upheavals, violence and so on, and in that sort of situation there is much less chance of positive change occurring.

She feels that time is running out — that authoritarian attitudes are on the increase and so are the laws on the books which strengthen the heavy hand of the State. Differences are becoming less and less tolerable, and if things keep on the way they're going at present we'll end up with psychotics running the country. She points out that Muldoon has got us all psyched out, with the use of clever techniques designed to control the media and our minds. She mentioned that very effective Muldoon trick which other political commentators have also noted — the way in which he introduces something awful by first threatening something *outrageously* awful. When the threatened worst does not occur, we think we've got off lightly with second worst.

Margaret now finds it difficult to watch the news on TV — it makes her frustrated and angry. Of course, she said, it's fashionable to dislike Muldoon — but it's the hidden attitudes of New Zealanders which worry her more. Everyone feels the insecurity of the present situation and they respond by wanting a strongman. The well-organised National Party, following the Readers Digest formula, gives them "what they want". She's interested in the psychology of what is happening here — why do we feel this need for a strongman, why does it make us feel secure? How can we find new ways to satisfy our needs? She relates this to women — women have to understand why they carry patriarchal attitudes inside them, even when they can recognise them for what they are. It's hard to break down the internal blocks. The women's liberation movement pioneered consciousness-raising to release these psychological blocks, and that sort of analysis should be applied to politics generally. Movements must develop because there is a better way to do things, ways which make you feel happier. Women in the movement are growing in the sense that they are experiencing better contacts and relationships at all levels, and this is such an important thing

compared to the controlling, manipulative, exploitative way we are currently dealt with by the system. She finds it interesting that Guilt and Assertiveness Training were the two most popular workshops at the 1977 United Women's Convention.

But it's a two-way process — learning by turning outwards and getting involved in action as well as turning inwards and reflecting. She asks: Why has capitalism been so successful? Why are established attitudes so ingrained even though they threaten our survival? Why do we accept a situation where there are so many women taking tranquillisers, feeling so helpless? There are strange contradictions here between being told that we must cope as individuals, take individual responsibility for our lives and actions — and yet we mustn't be *individualists*, mustn't stand out from the herd or refuse to do as we are told. The worst of both worlds.

So many things are going on that it is hard to set out a single track or strategy — there is a need to work in all different areas. Margaret is especially interested in the "fringes" — in the connections between the women's and environmental movements, for example. How the more co-operative forms of ownership and behaviour which some "fringe" and feminist groups are working on mean more chances for women.

At the 1978 Values Conference she said that some members found it a revelation to see feminists put their theories into practice. Women were talking about what was going on at the Conference which they disapproved of — about the necessity for organising in non-hierarchical ways, for making decisions by consensus.

Margaret feels that the Values Party is important because it has undermined some Establishment attitudes. However she feels that it was easy for people to be sympathetic when Values wasn't questioning or challenging privilege and power. Now she feels that it is quite possible to have a society which could survive resource crises by becoming more and more authoritarian, by controlling and regulating behaviour, by keeping the groups it depends on for power happy — New Zealand a la Muldoon. This is not the sort of solution to resource crises and environmental problems which Values is looking for. Margaret feels it is time that the second "Values impulse" — towards individual liberty and a more just and democratic society — is developed further.

Christine Dann

BATTERED WIVES

Behind the dark glasses in winter, the coat in summer, the closed doors — a battered woman. Why are they beaten and why do they stay?

Miriam Jackson presents the results of her survey of battered women — New Zealand's first study of its kind.



Judith is taking Rebecca to kindergarten. It is an overcast day but Judith is wearing sunglasses and a hat and coat. She quickly leaves Rebecca at the kindergarten although the little girl appears distressed and seems unusually clingy. "What's the matter, Rebecca?" asks the teacher. Rebecca looks up at her with frightened eyes but does not speak and then watches the humped shoulders of her mother walking away.

Rebecca, at four years old, already knows why her mother wears sunglasses on wet days, why her mother is frightened to talk to anyone and show her missing teeth that Daddy knocked out last night. At four years old, Rebecca knows that to be a victim of violence is something to be ashamed of. Today Rebecca may be soothed with the toys and games of others, but what about the tomorrow for Rebecca? She already knows the stigma of the oppressed, and during the next sixteen years she will be conditioned into the mould of oppression, into the mould of what society expects of a woman.

Rebecca will be taught to care, to nurture, to be emotionally independent and to aspire to marriage as the great life goal for women. If Rebecca is conditioned in the traditional way, will she follow in her mother's footsteps and accept the role of a beaten woman, trapped in a violent marriage from which she seems unable to escape?

But Rebecca is only four years old and does not anticipate the years of conditioning that she will be subjected to, she only knows that she wants Mummy to go and stay with Granny or Aunt Margaret or . . . perhaps Daddy will go to work this morning and not come back . . .

Judith is a beaten woman who remains in a violent marriage because she does not think she is strong enough to live a life on her own. Judith has been conditioned into thinking that she is inadequate, unfulfilled without a husband. She has been trained to be emotionally dependent. Judith is unable to realise that not only does she sacrifice herself to the whims of an aggressive man but she is also sacrificing her daughter.

Why do women return to a violent marriage?

In a recent survey of battered wives through "The New Zealand Woman's Weekly" to which over two hundred women replied, it was found that many of the women who responded had left their men only to return after a few days or weeks. They gave many reasons for returning but their replies fitted the same conditioning patterns that a previous New Zealand study indicated. Nearly a third returned because of their financially dependent position. With only limited financial resources they

Why do they stay?

were unable to find adequate accommodation and money to survive those first few emotionally distraught weeks.

A fifth of the women stated that they returned because of the children. In one way this is understandable since children who are already distressed and are then uplifted from their home, schools and friends are in an emotionally disturbed state and will plead with their mother to return to the things and the people that they are familiar with. For a beaten woman to cope with this she needs tremendous strength to stick to her convictions, especially when society continues to hammer the myth that children must have two parents living with them. However, the recent book "Children of Parents Who Separate", by Marie Clay and Vivienne Robinson points out that separation in itself is not necessarily detrimental to children. Often it is other circumstances, such as lack of money, inadequate accommodation, the threat of violence or a disturbed mother which may be influential. Furthermore it would seem ironical that beaten women return **because** of their children when they listed innumerable negative effects that the violence had had on their children. Many of the children were nervous and frightened, over a fifth rejected or were frightened of their fathers and some had a variety of physical problems such as bedwetting and vomiting.

Fourteen per cent of the beaten women surveyed were swayed by the men's promises to reform though they are known not to change very readily. This reason for returning is probably closely linked with the nurturing and caring role that women are conditioned into since a further 5% said that their men needed them — what for? — a punch bag! As one woman said in a previous study "He said he would change, that he could not live without me."(1)

The role of making a marriage work usually falls on women and over 10% stated that this was their reason for staying. "To leave would bring shame on my family. There has never been a broken marriage in our family." One woman put it aptly: "It's up to the wife to make the marriage work. That is our goal and I was a failure." A great number of women separating from a marriage in which there has been no physical violence also experience this feeling of shame. Yet society continues to support the myth that marriage is the goal for women. Five per cent of the women were persuaded by other people to return to their violent men.

continued on page 28

"What did he do when he last hit you? Punched my face, broke my arm, kicked my back and kidneys. For reasons of his job I did not call the police."

32 year-old professional woman, married 3 years to solicitor.

"I'm going back because of the children. I feel they are turning against me and it's depressing me. I'll try again for their sakes. He wants to come back and has stopped drinking."

29 year-old housewife, married ten years, ten years violence.

"What was his explanation or apology? Just sorry and a promise not to drink, but he always does. My father-in-law and his father before him have all been wife-beaters. My mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law will not fill in one of these questionnaires."

20 year-old housewife, married 18 months, violence since before marriage.

"I stay because I have no money to leave. My husband would only find us and keep harrasing us and would murder me."

38 year-old housewife, married 10 years, 9 years violence.

"I consider every man should have a test of some kind as to mental stability before marriage, especially returned servicemen."

60 year-old superannuitant, 27 years marriage.

"How often does/did your man hit you? Three times a week.

When did he first hit you? Three years ago.

When did he last hit you? Yesterday.

What did he do when he last hit you? Punched me round and hit me with stick.

What injuries did you receive? Broken collar bone and badly bruised body."

28 year-old homemaker, married 7 years, 3 years violence.



The "normality" of marital violence

Should anyone think that the men could not have been very violent for the women to have returned, then they underestimate the power of our conditioning. The women received broken bones, black eyes, bruising and stitches. Some had miscarriages and in 10% of cases he attempted to strangle them.

In over half these marriages the violence began in the first year. In 16% it began before marriage and at least 12% were first hit when they were pregnant. Over a third of the women were hit more than once a fortnight which must lead to loss of self-esteem and depression. That one third were still living with these men is a salutary comment on the oppressive nature of our conditioning. The beaten women themselves suggested many reasons why they thought they were hit, including alcohol, his inability to cope, his temper, jealousy, his affairs and his attitudes towards women — that they should be kept barefoot and pregnant. The men usually offered no explanation or blamed the women. It is our fault for existing. The victim is to blame.

Help?!

Since there is considerable stigma in being a victim, the victim herself is often too ashamed to seek help. Yet two-thirds of the women felt that they did get help. Frequently they appeared grateful for the smallest gesture, such as the woman who said her husband helped because he picked her up off the floor. Of those receiving help over half were helped by relatives, their children and friends and less than a third were helped by professionals. Three per cent were helped by

women's refuges, which is quite significant since there are so few refuges and they have only been established in the last three years. In comparison only 8% said that they were helped by the police. Although the police were called to the house in two-thirds of the 220 reports, 41% of the women said that they were no help, were sympathetic to the husband, did not believe the women and did not want to be involved in domestic disputes. The police came more than twice to 46 homes. Yet only 8 men were charged.

Since the police are at present the first line of attack in domestic violence can we re-educate them or do we set up a viable alternative? The advice the police gave was often conflicting, such as in some cases advising the women to prosecute and in other instances advising against prosecution as the men may come back and beat them up again. The latter is realistic, but where is the protective service the police talk about? In other cases the police removed weapons, locked up the husband and offered protection and practical assistance.

How did other helpers assist? The two main ways they helped were in a supportive way of listening and talking, and in a practical sense of providing finance and accommodation. Other help included medication (13.5% — in Gayford's London study 71% of beaten women were on tranquillisers and/or antidepressants!), (2) professional help, physical removal of the husband (10%), information, immediate assistance, calling the police, professional help for the husband and prayer.

Thus to counter the years of conditioning and the woman-hating attitudes of our society the need for support groups such as the one that has been recently set up in Christchurch is well established. But it is a sad fact that we need these groups and the amount of sex-role stereotyping which is still being done by parents, schools and the media means that the horrors of family violence and the nightmare lives of the Judiths and Rebeccas will be with us for a long time to come.

- 1 Miriam Jackson, "Why Women Stay in Violent Domestic Situations," unpublished study, 1977.
- 2 J. J. Gayford, "Wife Battering: a Preliminary Survey of 100 cases," *British Medical Journal* 1975, 1, 194-197.

"I can remember the times my father attacked my Mum and it hurt me very much to see her go through so much. I will tell you some of the things I saw. One night I came into their bedroom and saw Mum on the floor and Dad had a loaded rifle at her head and it was only us kids that stopped him. Once I got them to go to bed after about three hours of arguing and heard funny noises. I went into their room and saw Mum going blue — he was trying to strangle her. That's only two instances. I have seen many more."

Daughter of respondent.

"When did he first hit you? When in labour with first baby.

When did he last hit you? Two days before I left.

What injuries did you receive? Bruises and cuts, 2 broken ribs, broken ribs.

How many times did the police come to your home? At least once a week.

How did they help? By telling him off."

32 year-old woman married two years, beaten every day.

"How many times did the police come to your home? Many times. **How did they help?** (No help) Tell me to spend the night with friends and read my hubby the riot act. At time of bashing I am very distressed, but I cannot understand why cops can't charge him. (Bluff). It's not easy for wives. I go to doctor everytime now."

32 year-old housewife, 10 years marriage, 10 years violence.

"P.S. We have a lovely home and everything you could wish for in it, I just don't understand it."

26 year-old factory worker, 7 years marriage, violence since before marriage.

Giant Women's Rights Rally!

85 years of women's suffrage

WHAT WILL WOMEN DO THIS ELECTION?

Sunday, November 19, St Heliers Bay Reserve, Auckland, from 11.30 a.m.

Stalls, entertainment, feminist speakers — a festival day with a fighting spirit. For everyone from Rotorua to Whangarei who wants to rally for women's rights.

Want to know more? Organise a car or bus from your town? Contribute to the day? Contact Ann McCafferty, 50 Silverton Ave, Glen Innes, Auckland, ph: 556-950.

Organised by the Auckland Women's Electoral Lobby.

Last month we reprinted an article by Charlotte Burch — "Self-Definition and Political Survival". It was originally published in **QUEST: A FEMINIST QUARTERLY** Vol I No. 3 Winter 1975, "The Selfhood of Women". **QUEST** is available from P.O. Box 8843 Washington D.C. 20003, at \$11 a year for surface mail and \$14.50 a year overseas air mail.

Your Cervix & what can

A number of problems can occur with your cervix, the following is a brief description of some of these problems and a look at some of the controversial treatments now used.

1. Polyps

Polyps are protrusions growing out of the cervical canal. They appear as long tube-like but small pink growths. They are usually painless and do not cause noticeable problems or changes. Polyps can grow both on the cervix and inside the uterus. Uterine polyps may cause suspicious bleeding or an irregular menstrual flow. Polyps are almost never malignant and cervical polyps can usually be removed in your doctor's surgery under local anaesthetic.

2. Cervicitis

Cervicitis is an infection of the endocervical glands. The endocervical area is the area of the cervix going up into the uterus and an infection often shows up here at the mouth of the cervix. Treatment of cervicitis is usually by sulpha drugs.

3. Cervical Erosion and Cervical Eversion

These two are often confused (by doctors as well as by lay people). To understand the difference it is useful to understand the makeup of the cervix. The cervix is composed of two basic types of cells and is the muscle at the end of the uterus (it is the cervix which dilates in labour). At the centre of the cervix is the os or opening into the uterus. The two types of cells are the columnar and squamous cells.

Cervical Eversion

This occurs when the position of the columnar and squamous cells are changed. The red columnar cells which are normally inside the 'os' are pushed to the outside and the squamous cells are pushed to the outside. Normally we should see only squamous cells which are pinky like the vaginal walls. Columnar cells are red and rather angry looking. The junction of the types of cells is quite definite and eversions have a ring shape to them. This is how you would know you have an eversion (see diagram, sometimes it is not quite so obvious but the ring shape is always there).

Women who are on the pill will often have an eversion and some women will have a 'congenital eversion'; that is the columnar cells are always on the outside. You are born with this trait. Some doctors

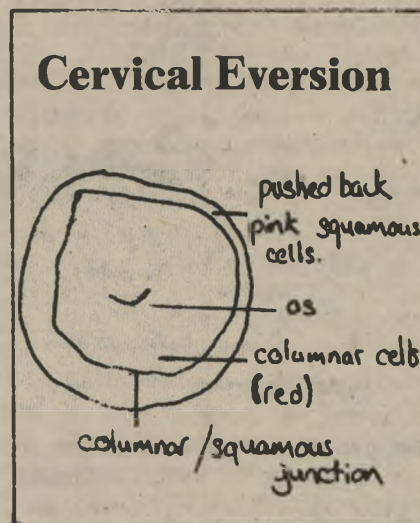
feel that the exposure of this cells division can be a site of infections and that is why they advocate treatment.

Cervical Erosion

This is quite different from eversion. It means that an actual trauma has occurred to damage the cervix. An erosion, as the words imply, means that your cervix has actually lost some cells and the raw surface is exposed. The sore or lesion is clearly visible as a pink red spot on the cervix. There will not be a definite border to the redness, it will be just like a graze appears on the outside of the skin. An erosion will cause a white discharge (Leukorrhoea) which may have an unpleasant odour. It is estimated that 95% of all women will have an erosion at some point in their lives but most will be unaware of this. Women who use a speculum regularly will easily be able to see both eversions and erosions and will be able to learn the difference.

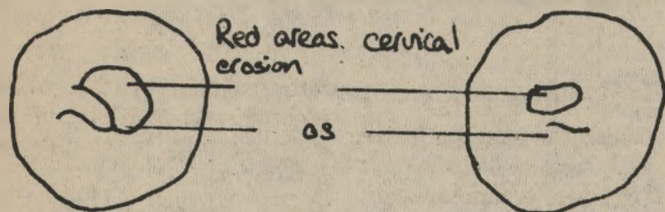
Causes

There is considerable controversy about the causes of both eversions and erosions. As yet it is impossible to definitely say what causes these problems. Possible causes of eversions are the pill, or any synthetic estrogen. IUDs or more particularly the IUD string (this is disputed), heterosexual intercourse and the use of tampons (also disputed). Possible causes of erosions are the use of estrogen (disputed), the IUD (and/or its string) (disputed), heterosexual intercourse and the use of tampons (disputed).



go wrong with it

Cervical Erosion



Some authorities say that any penetration of the vagina by a hard object (such as a penis or tampon) can cause enough trauma to cause an erosion. Others object to this saying there is not enough evidence. I can only say that I developed an erosion on my cervix with using tampons and since I have used natural sponges I haven't had one.

Treatment

This is another area of controversy. Some doctors advocate the most invasive therapy immediately; others believe that you should try something like sulph drugs first.

1. Sulpha drugs: These are the most common treatment for both erosion and eversion. Many doctors feel this is the only treatment that should be used on an eversion and some doctors believe that they should be left completely alone with no treatment. Sulpha cream is applied well up the vagina. Tablets are also commonly taken.

2. Surgery: Also called conization. This is becoming popular especially for erosions. It should certainly not be done on an eversion as it is an irreversible surgical technique. It requires a period of hospitalisation and involves removing a cone of the affected tissue of the cervix. Further details and a diagram are in "Our Bodies Our Selves" (pg. 144).

3. Cauterization: Also popular, done on both eversions and erosions. It should only be done on erosions and many doctors are opposed to its use in this case as well. There are two methods, burning with a hot instrument or chemical.

Cauterization involves burning off the infected cells and allowing (theoretical) new and unaffected cell growth. This healing is painless and takes at least two weeks during which nothing should be inserted in the vagina and you should have showers not baths. Some women experience an unpleasant discharge during the healing process and you may have to wear a pad if this is so. Occasionally women also experience irregular bleeding. Some medical authorities believe there to be medical complications associated with this technique, scarring of the cervix (which may prevent the diagnosis of cell abnormality at a later stage) cervical stenosis (narrowing of the cervical canal which can lead to painful periods), and destruction of the mucous glands in the cervix (with unknown effects).

4. Cryosurgery: This is the newest technique. It involves the use of extreme cold by the induction of liquid nitrogen to freeze the lesion on the cervix. It has become popular for both eversions and erosions. It

can be done in the doctor's surgery although you will need to rest lying down for at least ¼ of an hour afterwards. Some women experience cramping, bleeding, dizziness, light-headedness and headaches afterwards. Some doctors believe that the same complications associated with cauterisation are common following cryosurgery as well as the likely accumulation of pus in the uterus. Most health workers are very against its use for eversions and many oppose it also for erosions.

Alternatives

1. Removal of the IUD which may be causing the problem.

2. Stop taking the Birth Control Pill if you have an eversion and see if it helps. [NB. Remember to use some other type of birth control. An unwanted pregnancy is just as bad, if not worse than a cervical eversion!]

3. Do nothing except get a Pap smear. Many doctors and most health workers believe that both eversions and erosions will go away of their own accord with healthy living. If you have a speculum you can check for yourself.

4. Look at your diet. Bananas and oranges are especially good because they are high in potassium which is healing for the mucous membrane.

5. Poultices made of all or any of the following and inserted into the vagina. Borage, hyssop, comfrey, banana, pulped carrot, elencampene and plantain. Teas of rosemary, red raspberry and mugwort are very good also.

6. Use natural sponges instead of tampons. Vary your sex life if you are heterosexual, try non-intersertive methods.

Overall, if you have either an eversion or an erosion have a Pap smear. Check for any vaginal infection. After this have a good think before you do anything.

Sarah Calvert

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ERICH GEIRINGER

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hogwash

Libbers are 'derelicts'

KOJAK co-star GEORGE SAVALAS this week blasted women's libbers as "depraved derelicts of humanity."

"They are responsible for the increase in crime, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy," he said.

George starred with his brother TELLY in the popular TV series. He played the burly, woolly-haired Detective Stavros.

Frustrated

"Women's libbers hate themselves and the world," said George.

"They feel inadequate as women. They're frustrated and angry with men."

Savalas charged that women's lib is having profound negative effects on society, because of its deteriorating ef-

fect on the family.

"Drug use, crimes, teenage pregnancy, disrespect for parents and teachers — all of it is encouraged by women's lib," he said.

Liberated

"Where are the mothers? They're out trying to be liberated,

finding themselves, trying to be equal. Meanwhile, the kids are going to hell."

George, father of six, has been happily married for 10 years.

He says his wife ROBIN joins him in laughing at the women's movement.

"She isn't my slave. She's my life's partner," he said.



GEORGE SAVALAS... "libbers hate themselves..."

Contributors: Victoria Jones, Miriam Jackson, Alan Jackson

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The Kiwi Daily Times, Vol. 42, No. 111, Page 1

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The Feminist Eye

A boom in commercial women's music has prompted Sandra Coney to take a look at some of the latest albums. This month she looks at Kate Bush's "The Kick Inside" and Joni Mitchell's "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter". There'll be more next month.

After a hard day at the office I get a cup of coffee and slump on the sitting room sofa. The jangling of the phone, the recalcitrant adding machine, the 1500 envelopes waiting to be recycled and the harsh screeching of the traffic in Anzac Ave are all left behind. But all is not complete. The missing sound is the sound of one of my favourite women's records filling my little haven in the western suburbs with the voice of

The rub (but a bearable one) is that there are so many to pick from. Have you noticed that there's a positive bonanza in commercial women's music at the moment? While the popular radio stations continue to pollute the ears of the listening public with repetitious cock-rock groups a number of very different, but equally delightful, solo women singers are outstripping them in versatility, originality and sheer artistic ability.

Take Kate Bush for instance. She burst, or rather was thrust, upon the listening public earlier this year with the searing hit single "Wuthering Heights". She came in a carefully crafted package — the ethereal dancing on TV, the fey gleam in the eye, the wild witchy hair and, of course, the unearthly voice. And the publicity blurbs which told us that Kate was considered so strange by the record company that they kept her under wraps till they decided the listening public was ready to cope with her style. Which unfortunately for us wasn't too long.

What's different about Kate Bush? First, there's that voice, zooming so high you fear for the safety of your mirrors. It's wispy sometimes, like a latter-day Shirley Temple taking on grown up songs; at other times it positively soars performing spectacular feats in the highest registers. In the title track of her first album, "The Kick Inside", she hits one word like a coloratura soprano performing an Indian war whoop. But her control of her voice is such that even on her top notes she does marvellous things with the words, as in "Kite" where she manages to spin what seems like an octave full of notes out of one word "diamond".

She writes all her own music and seems to excel at memorable choruses. There's not a dud song on the whole record and once the record stations realised that their audiences had more catholic tastes than suspected, they've been giving air space to at least four of the tracks from this LP.

Also different about Kate Bush is the content of her songs. You wouldn't call them revolutionary but there are only about four about love with the chaps (and in these she exhibits a refreshingly

hedonistic eroticism rather than mooning dependency). The emphasis in these songs, and in fact in all the songs in the album is on the necessity to *feel* to be human. In "Feel It" she pleads with her lover to do just that, a trifle obsessively perhaps, but given the emotional state of many men, probably necessary. She chastises James in "James and the Cold Gun" for having sold out to a violent way of life:

"You're running away from humanity
You're running out on reality."



Kate Bush

The roots of her philosophical outlook on the world are hinted at in several of her best songs (Tibetan chants and mystical philosophers) and explicit in the Eastern symbolism of the album cover.

Other songs deal with a fascinating variety of subjects. In her hit song "Wuthering Heights" she adopts the persona of the dead Cathy calling to Heathcliff; in "The Kick Inside" she gives musical form to the suicide message of a Chinese woman in an incestuous relationship with her brother; in "Strange Phenomenon" she ponders the meaning of unnerving coincidences that have no explanation in rational terms.

"Room for the Life" gives me a queasy feeling. What's she trying to say when she upbraids the woman who's "trying to prove that you're better" and writes:

"There's room for a life in your womb, woman
Inside of you can be two, woman."

It sounds a bit like "Relax and enjoy perpetual pregnancy, or am I reading it wrongly? Certainly such an attitude would be consistent with her attraction to mystic philosophies and Eastern religions since these teach the sanctity of all life and the acceptance of what is. In reality, the effect of such philosophies on their female adherents is to screw them up about the abortions that they do have. Maybe Kate Bush hasn't been faced with that dilemma yet.

There's another Kate Bush record called "Lion Heart" due out soon. Let's hope it is as good as or better than "The Kick Inside". An unfortunate trend in women's music is that subsequent records by stunning women artists don't get better. Sure, they get "smoother", more polished and sophisticated but they often lose their guts in the process. I've seen it happen with Phoebe Snow — compare her vocal pyrotechnics in her first album "Phoebe Snow" with the positively bland dinner party voice of "Never Letting Go", her fourth album. Or listen to the raw power of Patti Smith on "Horses" and hear it tending to thin into a harsh babble in "Radio Ethiopia" and "Easter". Sad to say Joan Armatrading appears to have caught the same disease — the ache's gone quite out of her voice in her fourth album "Show Some Emotion".



Joni Mitchell

I fear that when the record boys realise they're onto A Big Thing they have to start controlling and packaging it and somewhere along the line the singer/songwriter gets lost in the wrapping paper.

Joni Mitchell seems to have escaped this fate. Her records get better and better — each one expands upon and grows from the last but makes greater exciting thrusts into new places. She is one of the few women musicians who demands and gets a lot of control over her recordings right down to the record covers which she personally designs. Her latest, out last Christmas, called "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter" follows on the on-the-road, disillusioned, searching Joni of the previous album "Hejira", where she said of herself:

"I'm travelling in some vehicle
I'm sitting in some cafe
A defector from the petty wars
That shell shock love away."
Hejira

"Hejira" was a downer; "Don Juan" is an upper. She's still on the road, but not running any more — she's taking things as they come. She's wise, cynical, still a self-appointed outcast from conventional society but she's more at peace with herself, more philosophical and ready to take risks again.

"Just like Jericho
Let these walls come tumbling down now
Let them fall right on the ground
Let all these dogs go running free
The wild and gentle dogs
Kennelled in me."

Jericho

Joni Mitchell is not one to be mean with words: her poems are long, her lyrics complex and rich in imagery, both emotional and visual:

"I float out of the hovercraft
Naked as infancy
And weightless
And drifting
Horizontally
Like a filing to a magnet
Like a long descent of rain
I am drawn
I fall against the ball
And lose paprika plains."

Paprika Plains

She also makes no observable concessions to the music audience's expectations. This double album has two tracks of over 6 minutes in length and one epic track filling a whole record side — "Paprika Plains". The album also includes a long instrumental track, "The Tenth World", where Joni and her fellow musicians create, with a variety of Southern American percussion instruments a hypnotic, trancelike, other-worldly dreamland — a musical form for the recurrent poetic motif of the album.

Joni draws strongly on Latin American and African music for this new album (instruments have intriguing names like "Coffee Cans", "Sandpaper Blocks" and "Ankle Bells") but her music is never imitative — she uses the elements of this "native" music to create her own in tune with her currently buoyant mood.

Every Joni Mitchell record is like a discovery — new music, new poetry, new Joni. If you haven't got to know this superb musician yet or if you haven't liked her albums in the past (I didn't get off on the early ones) try "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter". She bares her soul in a way that is neither stereotypically female, nor maudlin, only admirably honest.

Next month I'll take a look at Joan Armatrading and Maddy Prior. J

Sandra Coney

BroadSheet on the Arts

book review

"Woman and Labour"

Olive Schreiner

Virago 1978

A good time to stress the interdependence of oppressed groups is all the time. It is something constantly lost sight of by those concerned with sexual oppression, racial oppression or class oppression, that unless oppression is understood as something shared by all groups who do not have direct political, economic power, it is not understood at all. The quality of life in a society is determined for all its members by the quality of life endured by those at the bottom, whoever they may be. Gains made by some members of a race, sex or class are always pretty shaky if other members of that race, sex or class are without them. Achievements will always be undermined by the lack of understanding, by the envy of those worse off who were not allowed to share in the struggle and the victory. Those who are better off don't shed many tears about these

divisions and set one group against another with great skill and effectiveness. No one can be free until we all are free, in other words.

The women's movement knows about interdependence in theory but hasn't actually learned it. That's why we constantly hear sterile arguments about whether sex oppression or class oppression is the "primary" oppression. How can there be any such thing? For example, I believe that the cause of lesbian women is the cause of all women. Ti-Grace Atkinson says that when the patriarchy wants to attack women in general, they will start with the groups who are seen to be on the fringe of society, lesbians and prostitutes, knowing that more "respectable" women will not come to their aid and so that when they themselves are included in the attack it is too late. A women's movement without lesbians can be nothing but empty and gutless. But I also believe, for the same reason, that the separatism advocated by some lesbians as a political strategy is a sterile dead end. No one is going to make the

golden age on their own — not women without men and not men without women.

Which is what Olive Schreiner has to say in her book "Women and Labour". In 1911 she was writing about the change that technology was bringing about in the role of women — undermining the traditional work of women in the home but making the rationale for sex role divisions in labour more irrelevant — opening up new areas of work that women could and should enter. "We claim, today, all labour for our province," she says over and over again. She saw the whole future of the human race hanging upon women's ability to make that claim effective. Failure to do so she saw leading to the "parasitism" of women, where women would have no role left but to become useless, degraded playthings of men. Once women were so degraded, men in turn would follow — the one sex having a profound influence on the development of the other — and ultimately the whole civilisation would crumble. She cites ancient Greece as an example of where the parasitism of the



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ring class women led to the corruption and fall of the whole society.

She devastates with scorn and satire every argument you could possibly hear or think of in favour of retaining sex roles in labour and passionately calls upon women to meet the challenge in the tradition of all the women of grandeur throughout history. She is very stirring. If you need an infusion of hope, read this beautiful and compassionate woman's book. What appears small and trivial, she says, is part of the great movement of history. Your contribution that seems so puny and futile may be part of a whole you cannot see. Obviously she knows very well the kind of despair that pervades the women's movement and the rest of the left at the moment.

But she takes her own perseverance and courage for granted. I found "Women and Labour" hard to get into but didn't give up, thank goodness, because of what Olive Schreiner says in her introduction about how she wrote the book. For more than eleven years she had worked on an exhaustive study of women but when the Boer War broke out this book, the result of so much work, thought and energy, was almost entirely destroyed in fire when her house was looted. Later she was under house arrest and in total isolation in a little hamlet near Johannesburg. The horror of the war was around her all the time and so, to retain her sanity, in a room so dark it was difficult for her to see what she was writing, she tried to put together what she could remember of that original book. The result was "Women and Labour" and she apologises for its inadequacy.

At the end of her introduction she says this to us, the coming generations: You will look back at us with astonishment. You will wonder at passionate struggles that accomplished so little; at the, to you, obvious paths to attain our ends which we did not take; at the intolerable evils before which it will seem to you we sat down passive; at the great truths staring us in the face, which we failed to see; at the truths we grasped at, but could never quite get our fingers round. You will marvel at the labour that ended in so little; — but, what you will never know is how it was thinking of you and for you, that we struggled as we did and accomplished the little we have done; that it was in the thought of your larger realisation and fuller life, that we found consolation for the futilities of our own".

"What I aspired to be and was not, comforts me."

Carolyn McCurdie

film review

I Want to be Joan, Directed by Stephanie Beth.

There is nothing conventional about "I Want to be Joan". It began at the United Women's Convention in Christchurch where Stephanie Beth, with no previous film experience, was asked to make it. It consists mainly of head and shoulder interviews with six New Zealand women who look with some insight at their experiences in marriage and child rearing. The title and direction arose from a comment in an early interview and it is presented as a catalyst for group discussion.

When I saw it, Stephanie Beth was travelling the country presenting it to small groups, and I think that to review it fairly one would need to travel with her to see how different types of women reacted to it — so in that way this is not a fair review.

Stephanie talked to our group about the film's beginnings and told us that she had only had a vague idea of how she would approach it. She sent scouts out at the Convention and told them to bring back women with whom other N.Z. women would be able to identify. Women who represented a variety of points of view and who had had no previous public exposure. And finally, from two hours of interviewing, thirty minutes of conversations, six women were selected.

As could be expected in a film shot on less than a shoe string budget by people with little experience, the technical side of the film was uneven — wavering wildly between home movie standard and gripping professionalism.

As could hardly have been expected, the lack of experience led to a vital, sometimes naive, freshness, which was always exciting. I suspect that many conventional rules of film were broken more out of ignorance than choice, but the effect on me was like being taken for an exhilarating roller coaster ride.

The opening scenes were of a long car ride, home-movie style, around Christchurch streets, underlining the way we lose our identities in our separate lives in separate houses. I think this is a sound beginning to a film on marriage and Stephanie has put her finger on the cancer spot in our society, but the light touch with which she handled the rest of the film was not in evidence here. Nor was it apparent in the long sequence of

mother and child stills, which for me only took up good interviewing time.

I was sorry to hear that she had decided not to interview teenage girls because of their conservatism as it seems to me that it is exactly this conservatism which leads to our present life style and loss of identity.

I thoroughly enjoyed the inclusion of the work of three N.Z. painters, Robin White, Jacqueline Fahey and Lynne Zylstera, and a reading by N.Z. poet Rachel McAlpine, as an exciting extension of the interview technique.

But it was the interviews that mattered most and I felt reluctant to leave the six separate worlds which in thirty minutes we had had little enough of.

I would have been happier if the film had represented a wider range of women and if the discussion afterwards had been facilitated by a cosier seating arrangement — and — most importantly — if I had been able to see the film in the company of women who found its content new and illuminating. But I feel privileged to have been a part of such a caring, perceptive, intelligent and adventurous look at reality, and as long as Stephanie Beth keeps these qualities as she grows in technical experience, I'll be queueing up to see her future productions.

Jan Farr



Photo: Auckland Star

Stephanie Beth

theatre review

The Good Person of Setzuan,
Bertold Brecht,
Directed by John Curry,
New Independent Theatre,
Auckland.

Bertold Brecht believed in happy endings — not as the glib and tidy conclusion to a story or play, but as something we might, if we would, create ourselves — by changing the world. He believed that man (and woman) is basically good but that the society in which he lives (albeit created by himself) is evil and constantly corrupts both men and women. The only way to survive in this society is to perpetuate its cruelties, to obey and to administer its laws, however harsh and repugnant they may be. To live generously and honestly is to suffer and to die. In this society there are oppressors and victims — there is no other choice, even though the same person may be both. In this context it is not surprising that Brecht chooses to make the one good person left in the world a woman. (As a feminist of the 1970's, one might quibble with his equation of woman — and goodness — with generosity, tender-heartedness, emotional frailty, etc.; yet these are valuable qualities — and Brecht is not the only playwright of the 20th century to see in woman and her particular attributes a possible answer to the problems of our society.)

Shen Teh is a prostitute, the last good person in Setzuan, who with (quite literally) a gift from the gods manages to buy a small business. Now that she has a little money to spare for others she hopes to be able to help old friends, new acquaintances, her lover, anyone around her who is in need. But she finds that they do not accept what she can and wants to give — constantly they demand far more than she has to offer, constantly they threaten to suck her dry.

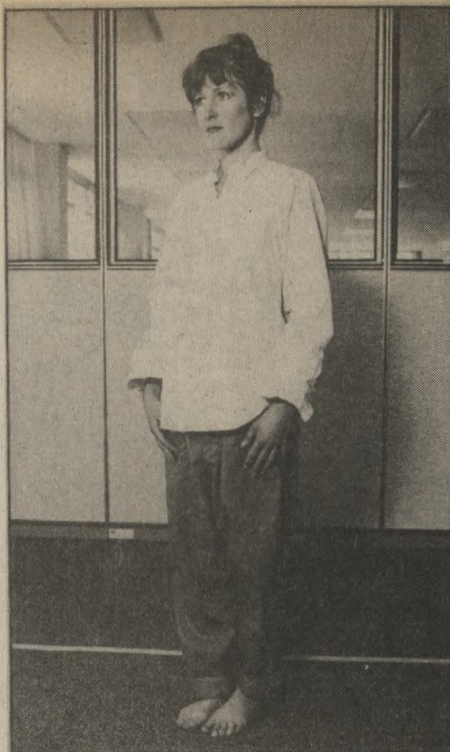
"To serve both self and others I found too hard.

Oh, your world is arduous! Such need, such desperation!

The hand which is held out to the starving

Is quickly wrenched off!"

She is faced with a moral dilemma — on the one hand there is her desire to respond generously and openheartedly to the world — on the other there is the need to survive, a need which becomes more imperative with the impending birth of her child.



Penny Morris as Shen Te

Because Shen Teh, the woman, cannot say no, she creates the character, Mr Shui Ta, who can and does. When Shen Teh cannot cope she goes away for brief periods and her "cousin", Shui Ta, takes over the running of the business. Shen Teh "disappears" completely during her pregnancy and the exploitative Shui Ta expands the business, driving her employees harder and faster, making more and more money. Finally Shui Ta is accused of imprisoning or murdering Shen Teh and before the same gods who gave Shen Teh her "start" in life, un.masks herself. The gods, relieved that their one good person remains and that they will not have to change the world, float, pompous and complacent, up to heaven, heedless of Shen Teh's despairing cries below.

Who is right? Who is wrong? Shen Teh, in the context of an unjust and exploitative society is wrong; so, in the presence of any belief in justice and equality, is Shui Ta. Maybe we should ask "What is right & What is wrong?"

"What is your answer? Nothing's been arranged.

Should men be better? Should the world be changed?

Or just the gods? Or ought there to be none?

We for our part feel well and truly done.

There's only one solution that we know:

That you should now consider as you go

What sort of measure you would recommend

To help good people to a happy end."

The Good Person of Setzuan may be seen as a parable — it calls for simple, direct, almost "transparent" presentation. John Curry's production, unpolished but effective, does just this. Against the bare back wall of the New Independent stage the actors, many of them wearing the anonymity of white-face makeup, use simple movements, props and costumes to tell the tale. The acting is straightforward and direct, avoiding for the most part the naturalism that Brecht felt to be a screen, masking the true intentions of the play; the overt relationship of the actor to the audience which Brecht at times insists upon is complemented and sustained by the energy, openness and audience-awareness of the cast.

Unfortunately, by the time this is printed, the New Independent season will be over — if you couldn't or didn't see it, you missed an interesting and worthwhile production of a great play with a philosophy we can't afford to ignore.

Priscilla Pitts



Wong and the Gods (Tony Ward, Nell Weatherly, Derek Wooster, Russell Shipman.



Cartoon by Brockie, from "Spuc 'em All"

book review

Spuc 'em all! Abortion Politics 1978, Erich Geiringer, Alister Taylor, \$4.50.

Plenty of New Zealand women will be wondering if there is any way in which their vote can have an effect on New Zealand's abortion laws in this November's General Election. On the face of it it seems unlikely, because if a pro-choice vote is to succeed it must be allied with hundreds of other pro-choice votes, which are being cast for the candidate with the correct line on the **abortion issue only**. This means that large numbers of people must be prepared to renounce their usual party allegiance for this election and vote for the liberal candidate rather than the Spuckster (to use Geiringer's terminology.) Will this appeal to the pro-choice person? Geiringer musters many persuasive arguments to show why it should.

His book is to be recommended for covering the issue from every angle, and as thoroughly as is possible in a book aimed to be widely read and understood. It is worth looking at some of his findings in detail. He devotes his first five chapters to looking at the strength of the anti-abortion lobby (which as he carefully explains should be more accurately described as an anti-sex lobby, because passing repressive abortion laws is the least effective way of stopping abortions). Most interesting is the chapter on "Kennedy the King-maker"

which examines the influence which J.P. Kennedy, editor of the Catholic paper, "The Tablet", has had on N.Z. politicians, principally Kirk, Muldoon and Beetham, all of whom received Kennedy's editorial backing when they took a hard anti-choice line. In 1972 the 11-12,000 readers of "The Tablet" were told they ought to vote Labour. In 1975, after Labour's relatively "poor" showing on the abortion issue, they were told they ought to vote National. Geiringer assesses just how much effect this Catholic vote could have, and decides that it must be allied with a specific SPUC vote before it becomes significant. Even then, the SPUC vote in 1975 was less than 2% of the total vote. Thus a SPUC (or liberal) vote only becomes significant in marginal seats, where small numbers of voters can tip the balance.

The remainder of "Spuc 'em all!" is devoted to showing how liberals can



Cartoon by Brockie, from "Spuc 'em All"

make use of this fact. Most of the country's electorates are excluded from the contest straight away, on the grounds that they are safe seats (i.e. always return the same party — examples being Remuera — always National — and Sydenham — always Labour). Others are also out of the running because the two main party candidates are either both Spuckniks or both liberals. This leaves 24 electorates where there is definitely a contest between a liberal and a Spucknik (Auckland Central, Hastings, Hawkes Bay, Helensville, Hunua, Invercargill, Kapiti, Mangere, Manurewa, Mt Albert, Napier, Nelson, Palmerston North, Papatoetoe, Pencarrow, Rotorua, Tasman, Taupo, Wairarapa, Wellington Central, West Coast, Western Hutt, Whangarei, and Yaldhurst). Then there are another seven electorates (Gisborne, Horowhenua, New Lynn, Onehunga, Porirua, Roskill and St Kilda) where the allegiance of one or both of the candidates is not clear as yet. What does Geiringer suggest should be done in these electorates? Vote for the liberal — regardless of party. Do not vote for Values, regardless of its excellent abortion policy, because by doing so you will be giving advantage to the Spucksters, who certainly won't be voting Values! Geiringer devotes a chapter to the Values vote, and argues that if Values supporters are really interested in seeing Values policies implemented, rather than taking power for themselves (as they sometimes claim) then they should not object to using this method to ensure that at least one of their policies is implemented.

Finally, in the Appendix, after some neat little answers to the common red herrings which get trotted out again and again when abortion is under discussion, comes the crunch point of the book — the "more important issues" red herring, otherwise known as "the economy". Geiringer argues, with a few graphs to back up his arguments, that neither party has the slightest ability to "manage" the New Zealand economy — they are both dependent on the fortunes of our overseas trading partners. This provocative little section requires a book to itself, but I think that some of us may agree with Geiringer when he asks "Why do politicians always talk about the things they can't do anything about and keep quiet about the many things they could do?"

"Spuc 'em all!" throws light not only on abortion politics but on New Zealand politics generally. It is well worth reading before you decide how to cast your vote this month.

C. Dann

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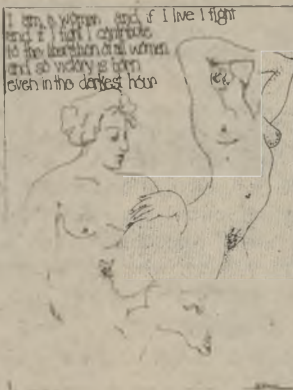
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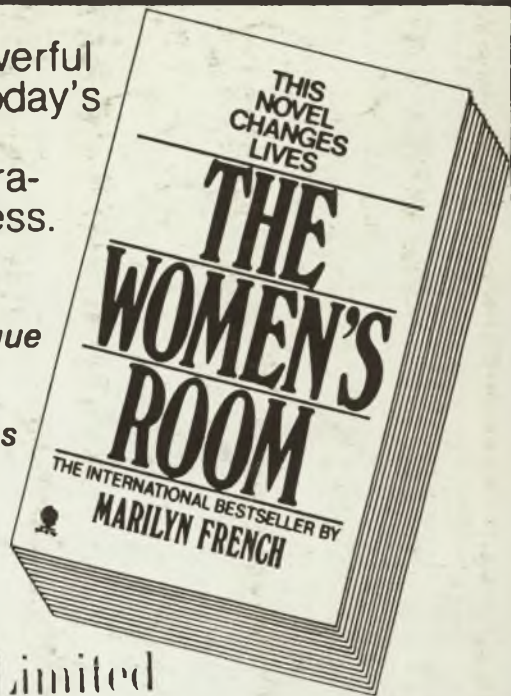
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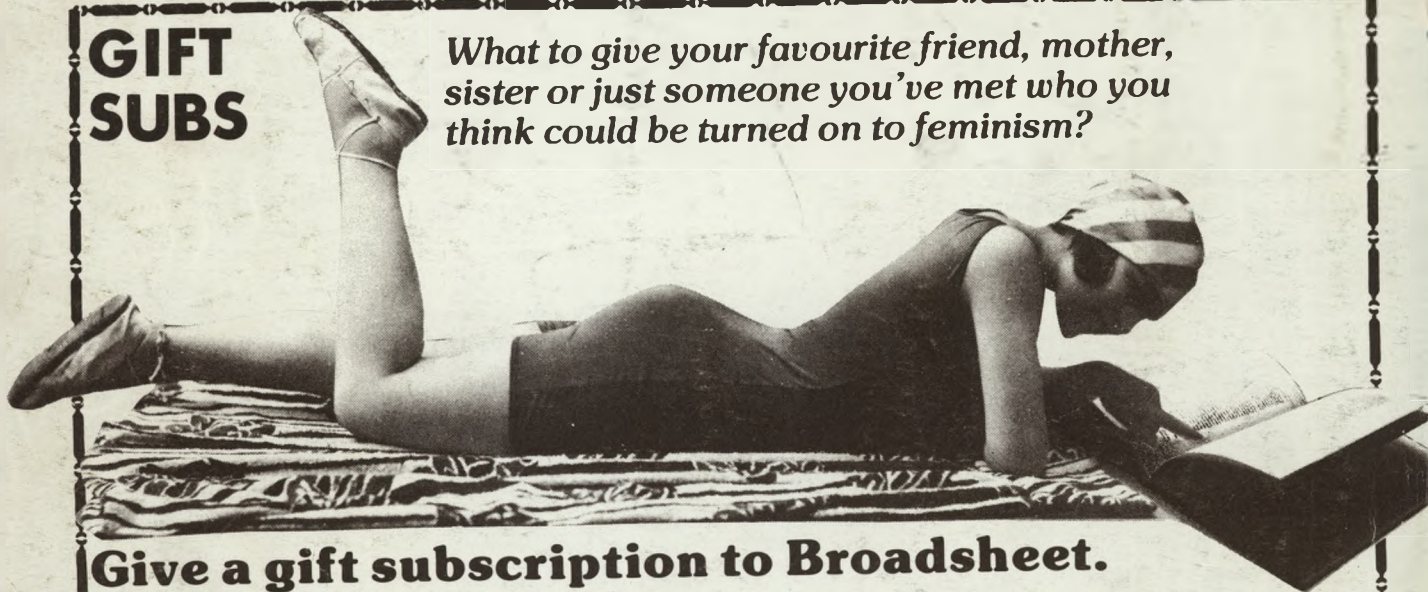
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