

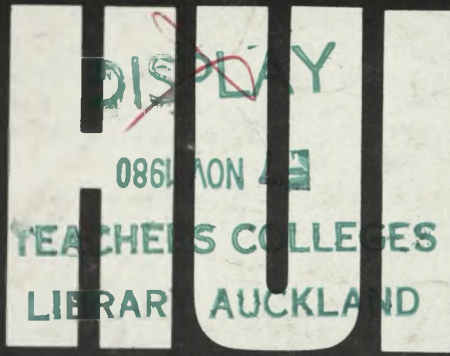
# broadsheet

new zealand's feminist magazine

november 1980

no 84

\$1.20



FIRST  
NATIONAL  
BLACK  
WOMEN'S  
CONFERENCE

# KORERO-TIA

# WAIHIE MA



Wellington's magazine

When the ANOREXIA  
TAMPONS  
The vaginal time-bomb  
THE KILLING  
OF LEIGH  
MINNITT

# Fronting up

## Broadsheet office:

is at:  
1st floor, Colebrooks Building.  
93 Anzac Ave, Auckland.  
Office hours: 9-3, Mon-Fri.  
Phone number: 794-751  
Our box number is:  
P.O. Box 5799, Wellesley St,  
Auckland, New Zealand.

## Deadlines for future issues:

Deadline for January/February issue: November 10  
Display ads, classified ads, small announcements and news can reach us up to three weeks after this date.

## Enveloping

Enveloping of the December issue will be on Sunday 30 November at the Broadsheet office from 10 am. Women and children welcome.

## Listener advert

Some months ago we appealed to readers to donate money so that Broadsheet could place an advertisement in the NZ Listener. Eventually over two hundred dollars was collected and an advert will appear in the Listener some time in November. Be watching for it.

## Helpers needed

We are a bit short of helpers in the Broadsheet office at the moment and would appreciate any voluntary help you might care to offer. The sort of jobs available: typing, recycling envelopes, layout, filing, sundry office duties. You don't need to have any previous experience (except at the typing), we will assist you in learning these jobs. Helpers on a regular basis are very welcome eg: every Monday morning, but even a couple of spare hours irregularly will help us get through our work better and save headaches.

## Broadsheet Library

Broadsheet workers are in danger of drowning under the avalanche of books, cuttings, papers and reports stacking up in our library room. Unfortunately we are so busy getting out the magazine that we are unable to cope with the work required to keep the library under control. At the moment we don't know what's there, nor how to get it. Some good work was done earlier in the year and material filed under subject heading. Where this has been done we are able to retrieve what we have and it makes it very easy for us to get material for ourselves and visitors. We would dearly love to hear from any women who could help in this area. They need not be skilled, just be prepared to come in on a reasonably regular basis to work in the library. Even casual help would be welcomed because all the newspaper cuttings have to be pasted onto a sheet of paper before filing and there is this sort of work available. Also desperately needed, big Eastlight files for filing material. No matter how old, we'd like them.

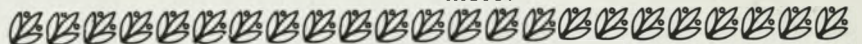
Since these currently cost about \$7 we're relying on donations of people's cast-offs. Smaller files also welcomed — that is, ring binders. Bring them into the office during working hours if you can help, or if that isn't possible ring us and talk about it.

## October graphics

Our apologies to two of our artists whose work wasn't credited last issue. A Helen Courtney cartoon brightened page 8 and Robyn Conway's were the illustrations to the "Nuclear Madness" article on page 22 and following.

## Teenaged Feminists

We'd like to hear from you. We're planning a feature on feminists at school and want to collect comments, stories etc from young women at secondary school — what their friends, teachers, family think of their politics. Or anything else you want to write about. 400-700 words please. Ring Sandra and talk about if you need to know more.



## GIFT SUBS

### Give a gift subscription to Broadsheet

We will send your friend the December issue of Broadsheet with a greetings card from you, to reach her/him before Christmas, saying that a year's Broadsheets are on their way. We will then mail a copy of Broadsheet to your friend each month for a year and it will only cost \$11.00.

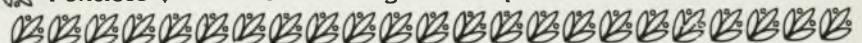
### Give the gift which goes on and on — a Broadsheet sub.

I would like to send a gift sub to:

Name .....

Address .....

.....  
I enclose \$            for            gift subscriptions to Broadsheet.



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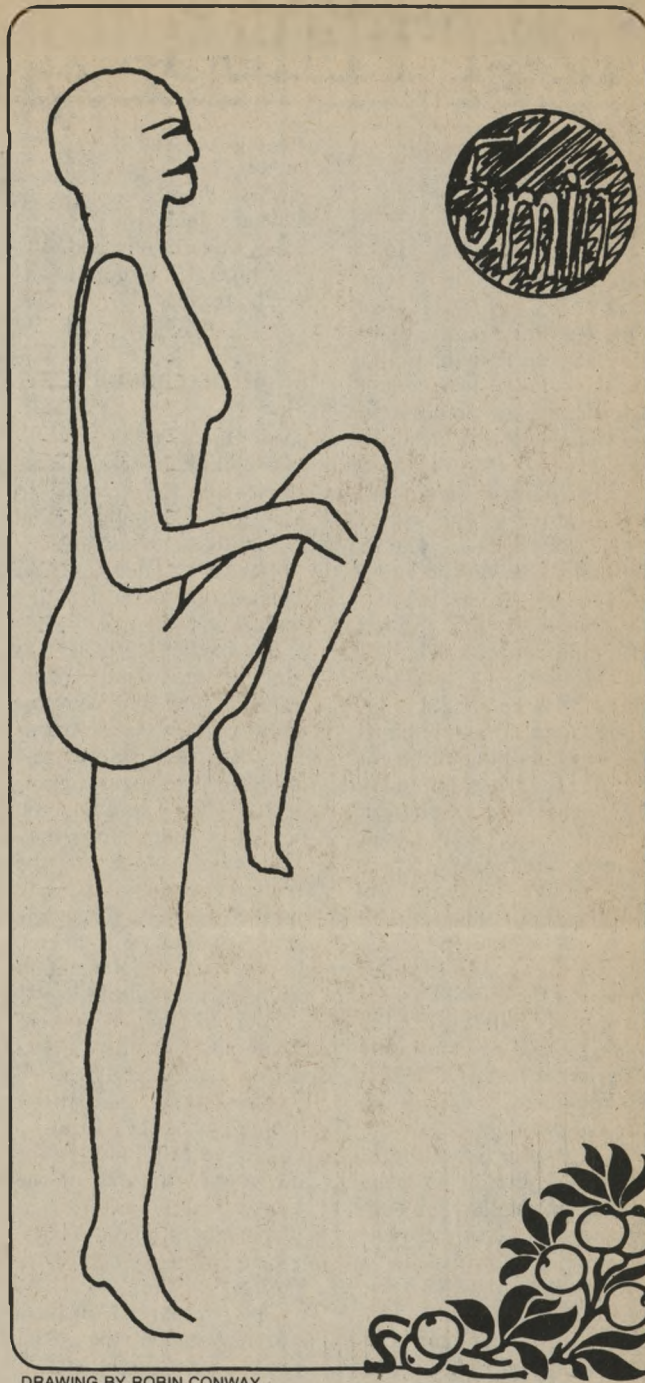
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DRAWING BY ROBIN CONWAY

**The Broadsheet Collective:** Sarah Calvert, Sandra Coney, Sandi Hall, Miriam Jackson, Anne Macfarlane, Heather McLeish, Jenny Rankine, Sarah Ransom.

**These women worked on this issue:** Rosemary Cocker, Ana Macfarlane, Joyce Porter, Jill Ranstead, Lesley Smith, Doreen Suddens, Anne du Temple, Jean Volkerling and the enveloping women.

**Cover photo:** Monica Fa'alava'au

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Permission must be sought before any article is reprinted.

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# LETTERS

## The male media

Dear Sisters.

May I clarify the issues about my attack on the media, to which Karen O'Brien has taken exception, by explaining that I wrote from Australia and it was the Australian press, in particular, I was describing.

I am glad to hear that things are not quite so bad in NZ and that a few female journalists make it to being sub-editors (we have a few too) but Karen has avoided the main point I tried to stress — which was that there is a persistent misconception of the media as being something different from other big business corporations: as though there is some lovely Cloud Cuckoo land where reporters are free to trumpet the un-slanted, undistorted news to a waiting populace as a kind of divine right. Whereas the truth is that if their news collides with the political and social interests of the media's biggest shareholders it will *not* see the light of day.

And as the liberation of women is seen by so many men as a threat to their own privileges, and as the overwhelming majority of media owners and controllers are men, we don't need a crystal ball to understand why our bombarding the media with news about the activities of feminist groups for the last 10 years has had so little success.

Most feminists working inside this particular male power bastion are well aware of what they're up against. It was because so many on the outside are not so aware that I wrote to *Broadsheet*, and urged my sisters everywhere seriously to consider turning their energies into extend-

ing and supporting our own media.

In Sisterhood.

**Barbara Jones**

PS. Congratulations on the 8th birthday issue. It was really great.

## Refuge politics

Dear *Broadsheet*,

On September 18 I was present at the meeting to elect the management committee to run the new West Auckland "Refuge". I came out of the meeting angry, and am still angry.

From the start, it was clear the reactionary forces were determined to have their own way. Towards this end, they stacked the meeting with their supporters. They wanted the feminists out, and they succeeded. None of the feminist women who had worked so hard to get the project going were elected to the five-woman management committee.

One of the Waitakere Feminists put forward a well-prepared and worded motion that the roster women should form a collective to look after the day-to-day running of the house, and that the management committee be elected *from and by this collective*.

This was voted on by a show of hands, the result was 33 for, 65 *against*!

Throughout the meeting, there were interjections, by various conservative men and women, displaying an appalling level of ignorance and bigotry. (One person called the steering committee the "steerage" committee, another called the roster women "foster women" etc).

After the management committee was elected and the meeting about to end, a feminist stood up and

thanked the conservative people present for "the most beautifully orchestrated meeting" that "went exactly the way it was intended to".

However, angry as we were, the meeting did not deteriorate into a slanging match, and we walked out with our dignity intact, if little else.

I hope you will publish this so others may learn from this experience. To put it in a nutshell, *never underestimate the opposition*.

The thing that really makes me sad and angry is that once again the true interests of women, in this case battered wives, have been washed down the drain by a vocal, reactionary minority, interested only in pushing their views on the rest of the world and to hell with whether we want them or not.

Yours in sisterhood,

**Penny Chappell**

**Ed note:** For an earlier report of events surrounding the setting up of the West Auckland refuge see "Behind the News", *Broadsheet* October 1980.

## Depo-Provera experience

Dear *Broadsheet*,

I would like to congratulate you on your splendid work which is of immense value to me and I am sure to many other women. Even if at times you feel submerged in practical difficulties and theoretical disputes I hope you still feel confident that you are supplying reinforcement and information to so many who would have no other source.

Congratulations also on the Campaign Against Depo-Provera. I have read

all your articles and letters on the subject carefully and while I sympathise with the women who felt that we should still have a choice to use the drug, I end up unable to agree. Partly because of the evidence on it, and the situation when it will be used without choice (mental institutions) and partly because of my own experience. I'm not poor-non-white, a prison inmate or hospital patient yet I still managed to end up a Depo-Provera victim. After two years on it I ended up physically debilitated, very depressed, overweight (the same weight I had been when nine months pregnant and I am normally a thin person) and I also had brown marks on my face though that was the least of my worries. The interesting thing is that it had been possible to ascribe all these things to separate factors (strain of ordinary life with children and a job, encroaching middle age, and so on). It was only when I read the *Broadsheet* articles that I added my symptoms up and found that they matched the list you provided. How very much easier not to reach the right answer, when the other reasons a woman might have these symptoms are much more obvious than in my case — for instance, a mental patient's depression, or overweight which could be put down to institutional food.

I now feel horror at the ease with which I ceded control over my own physical and mental health. And I am privileged, compared with many women, in terms of my income, education and confidence in questioning my situation. How much worse it must be for women who don't have those advantages. However, I was less fortunate in

that it took a long build-up over time before the malign side-effects showed up. A friend of mine had one injection and then "climbed out of her head", so she was taken off it straight-away. I am now off it too, and much better, but it will be a while before a build-up of two years fully leaves my system.

I am deeply grateful to you at **Broadsheet** for alerting me to the source of my problems. Contraception remains a problem with no perfect solution: certainly Depo-Provera is at best a dangerous gamble and at worst, pure evil.

Thank you, and may you continue to flourish.

Yours sincerely,

**Helen Sutch**

### Little sisters

Dear **Broadsheet**,

Recently I came just about as close as you can get to being fired from my part-time job in a supermarket. The cause — A feminist badge that I refused to take off. The manager deemed it "offensive", yet couldn't even tell me what it stood for.

The fact that the badge had a fist on it had something to do with it.

The fact that I was a woman wearing a badge with a fist on it had something to do with it.

The fact that I was fifteen had much more.

**Broadsheet** tends largely to ignore our presence and our struggle. We too face oppression, maybe even more in our schools than you face in your jobs. We are denied respect and rights in society and are expected to behave like adults in return.

In the fight against oppression and sexism don't forget your "little sisters".

**Ana Macfarlane**

**Ed note:** We are trying to get together an article reflecting the experiences of

teenaged feminists at school. Readers are invited to write up to 600 words on what it's like to be a teen-aged feminist. How do friends react? Teachers? Parents? Where does your support come from? What good experiences (successes) have you had? What bad ones? We'd like to hear from you — if you need any help, please write to our box number for guidelines. Deadline: December 10.

### Pageant protests

Dear **Broadsheet**,

The Miss Wellington East Contest —

On hearing over a school assembly that our School Council was organising a "Beauty Contest" some of us were rather angry. As a result of discussion (and a teacher's encouragement) we decided to organise a small protest. As affairs developed we were more dismayed at the bitter reaction to our proposed peaceful protest than at the actual contest itself. Matters became more complicated still, when the organisers denied it was ever a contest judging "Beauty", and named it, "Miss Wellington East Personality Contest".

So we protested at what we considered was a nominally disguised Beauty Contest. We feel what we did was a success. People were made to think, and many admitted shame at the principle of a Beauty Contest.

**C. J. Findlay**

### Natural Family Planning

Dear **Broadsheet**,

If your correspondent Sue Neal (in **Broadsheet** no. 80) and the other women like her, wish to know more about their cycles and the "personal pattern of bleeding and ovulation" they should contact the New Zealand Association of Natural Family Planning Inc.

Apart from its use as a method of family planning, Natural Family Planning helps women (and men) to understand a female's natural cycles and to live in harmony with their sexuality.

The Auckland branch of the Association can be contacted at phone 605-451. They will give you a contact in Sue Neal's own area.

Yours sincerely,

**Graeme Siddle**

### Reclaim the world

Dear **Broadsheet**,

I have just returned from sixteen months overseas. I thought I'd pick up a **Broadsheet** to see what you're all up to these days. It seems that some of your priorities need questioning.

"Seminar in the Sun" reports that Sandi Hall believes that feminist energy should not be drained on such trivia as the Save the Whale campaign. I do understand that the **Broadsheet** collective doesn't necessarily have a

"central" line but if some women involved with the magazine agree that whales are energy wasters — how much energy did someone spend on your fashion pages of the same issue? SO WHAT that Maggie Eyre is upset by our short hair and boring clothes! If your idea of serious business is getting into a luscious bundle of second-hand clothes — then I'll go to sea (with my greys and hump-backs).

All conservation/ ecology/ anti-war / anti-nuclear issues are feminist issues. It is my opinion that we have less than ten years to live in the way we do now, if we survive at all. The nuclear machine has long been beyond the control of women. Now it is beyond the control of its designers. Tensions between the major power are bad enough but then we have the regular computer errors to keep us hopping. Wasn't it two minutes we missed by last time? (U.S. computers reacted to what they thought was a Russian attack — the error was detected two minutes before "return" missiles were to be fired.)

The threat of a nuclear war is incredibly large. It is easier and cosier for us to carry on with the same old issues and forget that all that nuclear stuff exists at all. But the point is that it isn't much use to be emancipated (or colourful, thanks Maggie) when there's no world to do it on. And I think the whales would agree. Reclaim the WORLD.

**Rose Curl**

**Sandi Hall replies:** Welcome home, Rose, and thanks for your letter to **Broadsheet**.

I believe that the whale is endangered because of a world value system that

### PUT-DOWN OF THE MONTH

*"You've probably read that toxic-shock syndrome is caused by bacteria called staphylococcus aureus. You may not be able to pronounce it, but you're probably wondering what it's all about if you're a tampon user."*

*From 10 October press release from Hillcastle (NZ) Ltd, NZ distributors of Tampax.*

does not respect anything except money. Saving the whale (and I swear I want them saved) will not necessarily change that system. As well, there are thousands and thousands of non-feminist women, and men, who can devote their energies to that task.

To me, feminism's goal is larger than saving the whale: it is to change living patterns and priorities for the whole world. But to get there, we *must* change the ingrained oppression of women. To do so will, I believe, ultimately achieve an active, workable feminist world.

We have a long way to go. At the moment, what we have is a quasi-international movement already infiltrated by organisations whose objectives are in direct opposition to ours.

Few of us can make feminism a full time job because we have immediate survival needs. So, as I see it, our "extra" energy priority must be feminism. I think the survival — and sanity — of the world depends on it.

### Labour's performance

Dear Madam.

In **Broadsheet** (July/August, 1980), Roslyn Noonan comments on the Labour Party's conference decision to call for a referendum on abortion. It is understandable that a party that claims to be progressive is often faced with controversial issues on which it is difficult to get a consensus of opinion. However, the Party is courting dissension among its members when it chooses, as Shadow Minister of Health, a known supporter of the current legislation on Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion. I refer to Mr Frank O'Flynn, MP for Island Bay.

To date, no one has chal-



DRAWING BY HELEN COURTNEY

lenged his nomination as Labour candidate for the seat for the 1981 General Elections. Perhaps the Party thinks his position is strong enough in a fairly safe Labour seat, but perhaps the Party has had enough of controversy regarding candidate selection . . . and Mr O'Flynn's selection as Labour's official candidate in late 1977 was indeed controversial. So should Labour become the Government next year, there is our future Health Minister.

Judith Bird

### Creche threatened

Dear Madam.

I am working to promote a child creche in the Auckland inner city region, which is one of the few facilities specifically designed to help mothers of pre-schoolers, who need a

couple of hours off to shop, or simply do something they enjoy, alone. The creche is situated at the Ellen Melville Hall on the corner of Chancery and High Streets, and in spite of an Auckland City Council subsidy as well as increased promotion, it is still not being used to full capacity. If interest doesn't increase over the next few months, the rooms will probably be used for a different purpose next year.

It would be a shame if the creche was closed just because Auckland mothers didn't realise it was available.

Yours faithfully,  
Joan Dodelszen

### Scandalous schools

Dear People.

Firstly I would like to commend Paul Younger on

the attempt to have **Broadsheet** at school. Good luck (I mean it). I hope you have more success than I did. Last year I approached my school librarian about having back copies of **Broadsheet** in the library along with **Time**, **Newsweek** and other periodicals already on the shelves. She had, in fact, already approached the Head of English and Headmaster (both males) with this same suggestion. They opposed this move most strongly saying it was propaganda (!! look at **Newsweek**!) and had a bad influence on young ladies. She decided to slip a **Broadsheet** of her own on the racks — but said Heads decided to take spot checks and removed any they found. Great! I would like to commend Mt Roskill on their wonderfully liberal and progressive ideas.

I would also like to tell all my sisters of an experience which left me exhilarated. Three weeks ago a group of approximately thirty women spent a weekend on Waiheke Island. We had many workshops, self-defence lessons, a self-made concert, films, videos etc . . . a lot of fun and a lot of learning. It was a great experience which really brought my diminished morale up.

My point is that it is not impossible to organise and Simpkin House, Palm Beach (where we stayed) is a good, clean, comfortable cheap place to hold such things. I urge all women's groups to try it. It's not even that expensive.

If you want to know more about it, contact University Feminists c/o Auckland University Students' Association, Private Bag, Auckland or phone 30-789.

Next we're going to do it again, maybe for a week!

Thank you Jenny and Janet for the time, effort and love you put into it.

In sisterhood,  
Sara Parkyn

# COMMENT

by Sandi Hall

It began with our rivalry for the attention of men. I think. I can't see any other reason for it, unless we dislike and distrust one another inherently, which I refuse to believe.

Perhaps back in the days of the cave, I quickly saw the advantage of having another human being take over responsibility for my safety, especially when my swollen belly made it hard for me to run. It could have been then that I began to notice other women's beauty, seeing that the man who was protecting me had his attention constantly caught by other women, and would wander off and squat in her cave, or hers or hers. And then did I begin to look at other women contemptuously and try to set myself above them in other ways?

No, that doesn't seem right. We were nomadic then, and new to thinking, still acting mainly by instinct. And we were — and still are — herd animals, as are most life forms. Only the eagle, the shark and the house-cat walk by their wild lones. Herd behaviour is broadly the same, no matter what the species: a strong leader, lieutenants on either hand, and the increasing files of activists in rows behind them. The shape of the pyramid. Internal squabbles happen of course, jostling for the best place in the sun. But except at mating time, and between males, fighting to wound or kill members of your own herd just isn't on.

Occasionally, a member of the herd is excluded, deliberately kept out of the herd activities because of bad temper and churlish behaviour. Usually the exile lingers on the fringe of the herd, follows a few hundred yards behind, either until it dies or until it meets with other exiles and joins forces with them. The herd distinct is very strong.

In all herds, the males strut their stuff and the females choose which one they'll have. It is here that humans part company with their animal compatriots. Admittedly, human males strut their stuff and human females are supposed to choose, but in the chasm created between instinctive ritual and ego-instructed behaviour, choice falls, a slaughtered unicorn, and the smell of its rotting permeates all.

So it seems likely that it was here we began to trash one another, here where the herd became stationary, here where men realised the power of their physicality, here where they began to collect us as misers hoard gold, locking the bright coins into dark, airless boxes. Was it in those boxes that the murmurs began? "She's lazy, she's dumb, she's sluttish, she's up herself, she's dirty, she's frigid . . ."

If I say those things, what do I really mean? I mean / am not lazy, dumb, sluttish, up myself, dirty or frigid. And therefore I am superior. I am right. Therefore I am more worthy — of space, food, attention, respect, love. And of the company of men. For these are the condemnations of women which originated from men

who, their muscles having given them the seat of power, began to choose their female companions for what they could "bring" to the union, for what they could add to the stature of the man.

I think that's why I find this kind of behaviour so disturbing when it's woman to woman. Trashing one another. Beginning with that feeling of superiority, of my-politics-are-better-than-yours, my way righter than yours. Not starting from a base of respect for our womanness. Not recognising that all women are me, and I am all women, each a bright jewel of colour in the kaleidoscopic whole.

To be able to acknowledge our sameness doesn't cloud our vision. I can see Anita Bryant for what she is, a sister who has been conditioned in a way which leads her to make statements that I can't agree with and will spend energy to oppose. But I can't wish harm on her. I can't love her. But I will not hate her, either.

Does trashing happen because our women's community is still so new, as one friend suggested to me recently? That we carry on in the same old positions of rivalry that we learned as survival devices all those dark days ago? It sounds reasonable. I hope it's true. Because that's easy enough to change. Isn't it? ■



## ARE YOU PLANNING on travelling?

*We specialize in all aspects of travel for women and would be very happy if you contact Sally Mills for all c verseas travel, Trend Travel, NOW*

**Office at: 3 Bankside Street, Auckland 1  
(opposite Shortland Street car-  
park)**

**All mail to: CPO Box 1916, Auckland.  
Phone: 31-189 or 793-594**

# BEHIND THE NEWS

## Getting the run around

Women's groups throughout New Zealand are being asked to support a project called "Women on the Move", SANDRA CONEY discusses her doubts about the project.



Women's groups throughout New Zealand have recently been approached to support a project called "Women on the Move". **Broadsheet** was one of the groups to receive information from the project's National Co-ordinator, Antoinette Person. "Women on the Move" aims to mark the United Nations Half-Decade for Women by circulating throughout New Zealand a petition for world peace. The petition was drawn up by the women of the Nordic countries "provoked by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan" and presented to the UN Secretary General at the Mid-Decade World Conference in Copenhagen in July. Women runners will carry the petition simultaneously from North Cape and Bluff to Parliament between November 14 and 26 and it is planned to present the petition to Parliament on November 27. Women in each town the run passes through are being asked to organise activities ranging from "Having fun together", "Craft exhibitions" and "Parties" to "Lobbying" and "Health groups".

Ms Person suggests that women get fit in preparation for taking part in their leg of the run by listening to the Radio NZ "Stepping Out" fitness programme being broadcast from November 3.

"Women on the Move", we are told, aims at "raising the consciousness of all New Zealand women" and at showing "New Zealand that women are 'on the move' in this country in all ways." The project is being sponsored by the National Government.

Women's groups should think carefully before they support "Women on the Move" — will it really advance the struggle for women, or are we simply getting the run around?

Already in the past ten years, we have responded to calls on our energy which have emerged from the structures which presently have power over us. The UN-designated

and government-supported International Women's Year absorbed much feminist energy and contributed to the disintegration of the grassroots women's movement. So, too, have the several conferences (on Health, Education and Social and Economic Development) and seminars organised by the government-appointed Committee on Women. These experiences should make us suspicious of yet another project seemingly from the same stable — another project being imposed on the women's movement "from above", so to speak, without prior consultation with the grassroots feminist movement. And it is pretty clear that women's groups have indeed not been consulted at all about whether they want a project like "Women on the Move". The groups that I contacted have received no more, no earlier, than the undated press release received by **Broadsheet** early in October.

Whose bright idea was it? It seems that National MP Marilyn Waring was mooting similar project last year. The October press release, however, only names Antoinette Person as National Co-ordinator, and does not elaborate on who else supports, or is working on, the project. A request from **Broadsheet** for more information on this and other points, has, as we go to press, not been responded to. It is untenable to expect whole-hearted feminist support of a project about which we have been given so little information.

There are other objections to the project which I will briefly outline:

- Women are being asked to sign a petition on world peace provoked by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan." Although the wording of the petition has not been made public, it is fair to say that few New Zealand women (or men) are in a position to have an *informed* view of the Soviet role in Afghanistan since our available media is so tainted by a pro-



US. anti-communist bias. Is it fair to ask women to sign a petition "provoked" by an event we cannot know the truth about? What will happen to the petition once it is presented to Parliament? Will it then merely collect dust in the bowels of the beehive, or will it be put to some other purpose, as yet not revealed?

Irritation has been expressed by some women that the issue around which we are being asked to rally, is not a specifically women's issue. What about unemployment, Maori women's health, or abortion as issues demanding our attention, they ask?

● Government sponsorship of the project is another cause for concern. Although the nature and extent of the sponsorship is, as yet, unknown, women and women's groups who have been turned down for grants for projects by the government-funded Committee on Women (COW) and other government agencies, wonder how "Women on the Move" managed where they failed. The government has displayed no commitment to women's issues in the past. Even the token COW, originally formed under the Labour government, has been continually under threat from the National government. There has been constant talk of "re-evaluating" the role of COW and the current policy appears to be to let it die out. For some time, members, as they resign, are simply not replaced, a situation frequently re-

marked upon by Labour's Spokeswoman on Women, Mary Batchelor.

● The extreme short notice given to women's groups does not allow for any group discussion of whether to support the project, or organise activities. Many groups only meet monthly, yet the announcement of the project arrived only six weeks before the first runners were scheduled to leave Kaitaia. As well as organising our activities we're also being asked to undergo a programme to get ourselves fit for "the move"!

● It is denigrating to the hard work put in by thousands of women over the past decade to suggest we need this government-sponsored project to "consciousness raise". What the hell else have we been doing for the past decade? In my opinion the one area the women's movement in NZ has been extremely effective in is consciousness-raising. What we need now is not more consciousness-raising, but more action! Action to ensure a decent living wage for women; action to repeal our repressive abortion laws; action to halt the centralisation of birth facilities; action to end the belittling of our sex in the news media.

But we'll be slower at acting on these crucial issues while our energy is being side-tracked into meaningless, half-baked projects like "Women on the Move". All we'll succeed in doing is running the rubber off our sandshoes. ■

# NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ~ IN WHOSE INTERESTS?

**How can official government plans be "in the national interest" when they won't benefit women? asks MARGARET CROZIER, Leader of the Values Party and member of the National Interest Day Committee which aims to raise public debate on who *does* decide what is in our interests.**

Friday, November 28th, is the day when groups around the country will be questioning New Zealand's development alternatives: by sharing information, holding seminars and planning local actions.

What will be the effect of the large-scale industrialisation programme that the Government is embarking on?

- the rapid building of extremely expensive petrochemical plants, metal smelters and pulp mills
- more foreign ownership of New Zealand's industries and resources
- more foreign debt to pay for this investment
- closer military alliances which threaten to include New Zealand in any future nuclear war.

Government spokespeople have spelled out some of the costs such as the massive capital required, running into several billions, which will force cuts in other areas like health, education and social welfare. It is all a gamble based on a force-feeding of industry to keep it profitable. The taxpayer, for example, will be financing the Clutha dam (an estimated \$1200 million project) and subsidizing the price of electricity to proposed smelters.



## HUMANISM

THE AFFIRMATION OF OUR HUMANITY

"Humanism is the belief of those who insist on the right to test their doubts, who want to be informed of the choices open to them and to choose freely for themselves."

— Kit Mouat

Humanist Information Service,  
PO Box 22-459, Christchurch.

Who really benefits from this kind of development? It does not generate employment opportunities. Many more jobs would be created by investing such sums elsewhere in the economy, for example, the 950 jobs with a smelter could be 9000 jobs in other industries. And it certainly won't mean cheaper prices for the ordinary consumer. The big increases in electricity are to finance new works. Worse still for women, this development strategy will undermine their existing place in the economy; the kind of jobs created are largely in construction or for specialised engineers (which offers nothing to the young women who make up three-quarters of unemployed school leavers).

The cuts in health, education and social welfare spending will mean further reduction of services like small maternity units or child-

care facilities which are important to women. The gap between rich and poor will widen and women form a majority of the poor . . . unless we take action. It is time for women to extend their feminist research and analysis beyond the questions of personal identity and culture where, as Charlotte Bunch argued at the Women's Convention, "anything is permitted (by the male world) because nothing matters" in women's issues. It is time for the women's movement in New Zealand to take these questions seriously and plan their strategy for development. If women are to benefit from economic changes, they need some say, some control over the process and more human-scale tests to apply such as: will this development broaden employment opportunities, share out incomes and increase participation? Or deepen the

pressures on women to be the unpaid and invisible workforce? What do we believe is "in the national interest"?

Watch for National Interest Day activities in your area (this is just the beginning). For more information on the Government's development proposals or to be put in touch with other groups near you, write to the National Interest Day Campaign, Box 6501, Wellesley St. Auckland. (ph: 541-503). ■

Contacts:  
**Northland** — Janine McVeagh, Weka Weka Valley, R.D. Waimamaku South, Hokianga  
**Taranaki** — Janet Roborgh, Box 611, New Plymouth  
**East Coast** — Gavin McLean, Cullerlie, R.D.1, Gisborne  
**Waikato** — Katrina Inge, 4 Manuka St, Hamilton  
**Wellington** — Bridget Allen, Box 576, Wellington  
**Nelson** — Patsy McGrath, Todds Valley, R.D.1, Nelson  
**Christchurch** — Pat Wilkinson, 23 Charlcott St, Christchurch  
**Otago** — Lezlie Mearne, c/- Campbell Park School, Private Bag, Oamaru

## **MINCEMEAT AT OCEAN BEACH**

**SANDRA CONEY looks at  
the Equal Opportunities  
Tribunal's decisions.**

Good news on the 87th anniversary of women's suffrage — the Equal Opportunities Tribunal ruled in favour of the three women wanting to work on the slaughter chain at the Ocean Beach Freezing Works in Bluff (for background see Behind the News, September **Broadsheet**). In this case, the first to be brought before the Tribunal by the Human Rights Commission, the Tribunal ruled that the Human Rights Commission Act had been breached by the Ocean Beach Company in refusing to accept women for the learners' chain at the works; the Tribunal also rejected the company's justification that lack of separate facilities (lockers and toilets) exempted the Company from the provisions of the Act.

It was revealed during the hearing that the Ocean Beach Freezing Company had, in fact, made moves

towards employing women in the works in the early seventies. The Company has, it seems, had trouble attracting a stable workforce, partly because of the isolated location of the works and shortness of the killing season. In 1973 an agreement was reached between the Company and the local sub-branch of the Meat Workers' Union that women would be permitted to work in some areas of the works, but not on the slaughterboard. In the ensuing years women moved into various areas of the works and from 1977 began putting their names down for the learners' chain. In response to this the question of women on the slaughter chain was debated at length at a Shed meeting in early 1978 and the stand excluding women from the chain reaffirmed by the sub-branch.

Resistance to women on the killing chain no doubt derives from the additional financial remuneration and status that accrues from this position. It was these same factors which prompted the three women to apply for this work. When it became clear to them that men with less experience were being employed on the chain ahead of them, they took their case to the Commission.

In finding for the women, the Tribunal instructed the Company not to turn down the women again should they apply; it has also instructed that other women who might apply to be considered purely on the grounds of their ability to do the job.

The fly in the ointment could well turn out to be the union, the branch secretary, Mr T. Taurima, having displayed steadfastly anti-woman attitudes throughout the proceedings and following the Tribunal's judgement. Men in all the works in Southland, he stated, did not want women on the chains. The environment isn't suitable for females, he insisted, it's undignified. His final justification for his discriminatory stance was that the "environment" was "male-dominated". (And he'd like to keep it that way!) This attitude is held in spite of the fact that the national union, the New Zealand Meatworkers' Union, voted in favour of Federation of Labour adoption of the Working Women's Charter, guaranteeing the rights of working women. It remains to be seen what will happen when women do finally get accepted for the killing chain at the Ocean Beach Freezing Works. ■

# IN BRIEF

## PLANS THWARTED

The Council for the Single Mother and Her Child's plans to take over the unused Karitane Hospital in the Auckland suburb of Mt Albert as a home for solo mothers and children, came to halt when the building was sold by the Plunket Society to a church group for use as a private school.

## SEXISM IN ENGLISH CLASSES

**Reading Rights for Girls** — an introductory study of fiction supplied to secondary school English classes — recently published by the Committee on Women, is an interesting and well set out study of books used as class readers in 3rd and 4th form English classes. Author Lesley Taylor wanted to look at books read, the distribution of male and female characters, and authors' and teachers' attitudes to the question of sexist bias in the books read. The study confirms my own opinions of the male bias of English readers and the need to rectify this bias by more informed book selection. The study also includes a bibliography of research, both NZ and overseas, and a booklist from the School Library Service. All English teachers should read this study. Write to the Committee on Women for a copy. Helen Watson

## DINNER PARTY DELIGHTS

Judy Chicago's monumental art work **The Dinner Party** has come out of wraps and is on show at the University of Houston's suburban Clear Lake City campus. After a sad history of cancellations in Rochester, New York and Seattle it looked like **The Dinner Party** might never happen again for want of a host. Now thanks to the enthusiasm and foresight of Clear Lake City's Director of Special Events, Calvin

Cannon, thousands within busing distance of the campus are getting a chance to marvel at Chicago's extraordinary ceramic plates and embroidered runners commemorating significant women in history. **The Dinner Party** people are pleased to see the exhibit before the public again. But Chicago hasn't forgotten what nearly happened. "I take it very seriously." Chicago has said: "that the piece was almost blacked out. Okay, it's alright to say that the critics are going to be wrong. Maybe the critics are wrong and the museums are wrong, too. But they almost succeeded in blacking me out and destroying my spirit." Info from **New Women's Times**, Vol VI, no 10.



DRAWING BY HELEN COURTNEY

## FACTS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

- In the USA, Japan and UK almost 40% of the workforce is female; 35% of the NZ workforce is female.
- Worldwide, women earn half to three-quarters the wage earned by men. In the UK women are paid 25% less than men, in the USA 40% less.
- Two out of three of the world's illiterates are women.
- Women and girls make up half the world's population, do two-thirds of the world's work hours, receive 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's land.
- A third of all families are headed by women. In developing countries

nearly half of the single women over 15 are mothers.

- In NZ only 15 of the country's 323 unions have any women executives despite the fact that women carry over a third of all membership cards.
- An American researcher found that the average US father spends only 12 minutes a day with his children.
- In NZ about 5427 men in the public service earn over \$18,000 a year, compared with 238 women.
- Women are responsible for 50% of the world's total food production. In Africa, for example, 60% of all agricultural work, 50% of animal husbandry and 100% of food processing is done by women.

## SURVEY OF DADS

The Council for the Single Mother and Her Child is presently conducting a survey to try and discover how much help single mothers get from the fathers of their children. They hope this will be the first of several such surveys. Women interested in participating can contact the Council at PO Box 47-090, Auckland or phone 760-476.

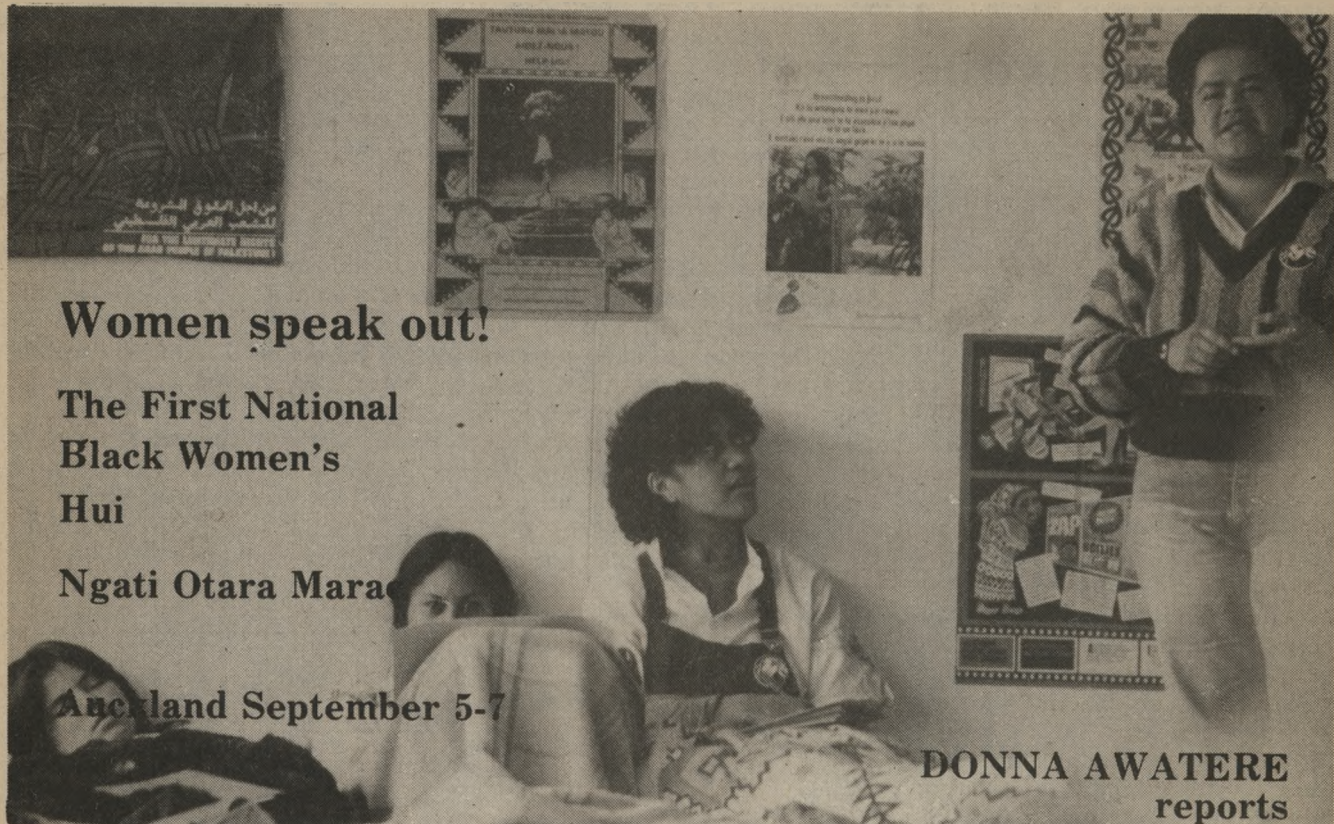
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Sociology, University of Canterbury,  
CHRISTCHURCH.

# KORERO—TIA WAHINE MA!



**Women speak out!**

**The First National  
Black Women's  
Hui**

**Ngati Otara Marae**

**Auckland September 5-7**

**DONNA AWATERE  
reports**

PHOTO: MONICA FA'ALAVA'AU

Ngati Otara Marae is an incongruous urban marae stuck in the middle of a pockholed piece of grassland next to Hillary College in Otara. Inside, the impression is of a drab, grubby building in which the Wharemoae is a huge bare room with numerous windows. The cookhouse is filled with huge relics like the two former refrigerators and the two has-been stoves coughing out their last drops of life in the service of the Maori community.

Into this setting, with its distinctly rural feeling, came over seventy black women — Maori, Pacific Islanders and Indians (and one lone white who passed for black until the last hour), from all over the North Island.

Preparations for the hui, the first National Black Women's Conference, had officially begun two months before when an ad hoc group of black women discussed the need to have a hui which addressed itself to the issues of feminism, racism and the economic order. However, the real preparation began

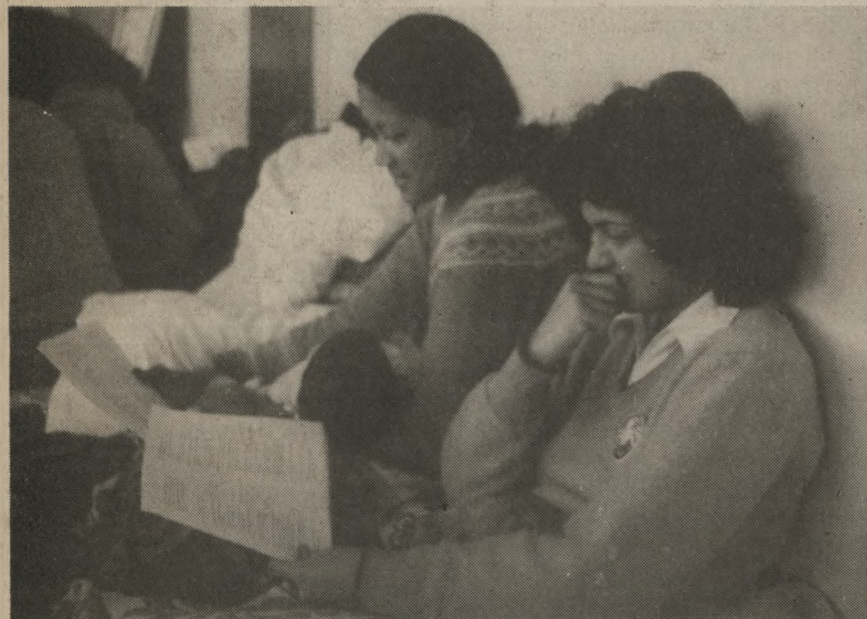
several years ago with the emergence of small all-women sections within the anti-racist activist groups, such as Nga Tamatoa, Whakahou, Te Matakite o Aotearoa, when the women involved realised that sexism was alive and kicking in these groups. More recently groups like Mana Motuhake have formed separate women's policy committees aimed specifically at including in a pro-Maori platform, policies which are acceptable to Maori women. Other groups at the hui represented five main strands with a similar history.

The Auckland Black Women's Group, the Otara Black Women's Group, the Black Feminist Collective, Nga Tuahine from Wellington, which includes the Women in Prison Collective, all began as true consciousness-raising groups and now take an active feminist stance. An anti-racist, marxist analysis is an integral part of their politics. Black Dykes is a group of lesbians, some of whom have a long association with the Women's Movement.

The women from the five groups gave the political direction to the hui, and the workshops and position papers given reflected the fact that they had already thought out and worked through many of the first steps to feminist nirvana.

The hui opened up on Friday night with a discussion on whether smoking should be allowed. Among Maori women aged 20-24 nearly 70 percent are smokers; because of this the death rate from lung cancer is four times the rate for Pakeha women. The effect of this on us as Maori women was raised. One smoker asked why we didn't go the whole hog and ban sugar and salt, so no doubt this will be a topic for the next hui. But anyway, most agreed that smoking shouldn't be allowed in the wharemoae, which is where most of the sessions would be held, but that smokers could smoke in the area directly outside.

The emphasis on health carried through to the cookhouse, where no meat was brought in for the weekend. Fruit vegetables, cereals and



brown bread were the house specials.

On Saturday morning the hui kicked off with a discussion paper: Feminism — the Black Women's Revolution, in which I discussed the leadership role taken by Third World Women in the feminist movement in the rest of the world and the potential role black women have to play in New Zealand. But I pointed out there are obstacles to black women in NZ spear-heading the revolution. These are:

Fear; lack of information, awareness and understanding of women's oppression and exploitation; initial resistance to accepting facts, developing understanding and experimenting with change; romanticism, especially Maori romanticism of pre-European culture; backlash trashing. Black women trashing each other — frontal and rearguard attacks on black women are divisive and gutless. The enemy is out there. Trashing is a personal reaction that is totally destructive but all too common. Even at this hui we couldn't get away from it. The hui has been accused by one black woman, who didn't come, of being middle class, and the organisers are being criticised because she claims there weren't street women, gang women or rural women there. Actually, at least half of the women present were unemployed, one quarter single parents and only about 20 percent actually employed; only a tiny handful of the 70 plus women who came were on middle class salaries. There were women there who were, or who had been, in gangs, and women had come from Mangamuka and Tokoroa; they represented some of the 20 percent of Maori women who live in the rural areas.

This is one excellent example of backlash trashing, based on fear, lack of information, resistance to accepting facts and romanticism.

In spite of a tradition of trashing, during the hui a feeling of trust developed amongst us, even where there had been long histories of hostility.

Rebecca Evans and Hilda Halkyard-Harawira both discussed the reason why black-white per-

PHOTOS: MONICA FA'ALAVA'AU

sonal relationships are politically destructive to the black people's movement and to black women especially. From that point on black-white relationships became a hot talking point, especially among women who are in relationships with whites, either white men, or white women.

During the plenary session, an umbrella organisation covering all groups was proposed and unanimously agreed upon. This is to be called the United Congress of Maori and Pacific Women. A planning committee for a hui in March of 1981 was elected.

For most of the women I have spoken to since, the hui was a cathartic and exhilarating experience which triggered off in most cases decisions to confront and change sexism in their own lives, to

**“The Women's Liberation Movement is racist, the anti-racist movement is sexist and the socialist movement is both sexist and racist. This leaves black women out on a limb.”**

—Jan

work on political-consciousness raising with the other black women and to begin local hui to prepare for the national hui in 1981.

I talked to a few women about their impressions of the hui: **Ronnie Leef**, unemployed single mother.

“We were the first to arrive, clean up, bring the food in, and set up the hall. We were building ourselves up to it. I liked the talk on backlash trashing. There's been a lot of that around.

“I find it hard to connect that word feminism with black women. Feminism is about political moves for women. I see words like 'revolution'; I think of arms, guns and all that.

“My main workshop was Contraception and Abortion. Mary Jane Reid talked about abortion. I had gone to the workshop feeling good because I had something to say on that. But it got to the stage where I didn't bring it up because unconsciously I really felt I couldn't trust any of the women there. The talk on

abortion only lasted a short time, so I felt dissatisfied.

“I've realised I've locked myself up too much in other people's gripes against me. I realised I had a lot of hostility towards those other black women. Now I want to work harder on my relationships and trust with the women I know, so that then I can go out and do it with other black women.”

**Ngaromoana Raureti**, 22, factory worker.

“Actually the reason I went was to get out of the house — going to a black women's hui was better than being at home. When I got there, I walked in the door. I thought, Jesus, because, I didn't expect to see so many women. I thought ten or fifteen. Huh!

“Then the room itself surprised me. It was full. It was interesting. That wharemoa is really cold. It's like a schoolroom, dusty, untold light. It reminded me of Tiakina, the posters in the corner, the banner. At the same time, I thought, Shit, they've put a lot of work into this. I looked around the room. I was impressed with all the faces and the women speaking out.

“When the film **Rape Culture** was shown on the Saturday night I couldn't hear it, so all I could see was pictures of black men and white women talking. White women analysing rape and the rapists. All the rapists black. I didn't like that. I couldn't figure out why the white man was allowed to be blacked out and the black men were shown bright as day.

“I got a lot out of the hui. I was happy and I was high. I was able to relax a little. I felt less defensive, less on my guard.

“I feel there's a need to transmit theoretical knowledge to newer people. So Maora and I decided to run a Ponsonby/Grey Lynn local black women's hui on Sunday September 28.

My direction is to get together all the vocabulary-assimilation, feminism, revolution, racism — and get all the groups to discuss what they mean, as well as use in sentences and make up statements that are relevant to Maoris. I'm interested in finding out what I think

are the connections of the words, what ideas are behind the words.

“For the national hui next year, we've discussed committing ourselves to running a workshop on Theoretical Issues.”

**Hilda Halkyard-Harawira**, teacher.

“My first workshop was Women in Prisons. The Women in Prisons group started off by having discussions on topics that affect their own lives, such as Being Proud, Rape Culture, Gangs. There was a real identification from the Women in Prisons group, who then started to analyse their own backgrounds. Some had made a big effort to break their patterns of associating, behaving and offending. They had worked up a trusting relationship that kept going outside of prison. After this workshop I understood a bit better how women in gangs accepted

**“Since the hui more and more black women have expressed interest. We used to be so isolated but we've had our catalyst. There's obviously no turning back.”**

—Mona

blocks just to get acceptance from the men. It was good to know that the groups had been breaking down their negative conditioning of themselves.

“The Lesbian workshop was interesting to break down my own conditioning. They asked us why we weren't dykes. Most of the women said they could see that they were hung up on heterosexuality. The conditioning is too strong. Some said they were too scared because they might lose heterosexual privilege. Three young schoolgirls were sitting there real interested. One of them asked, 'Do you fellas date?'. And one of them thought that lesbians had a genetic/chromosome imbalance.

“Half of the women in the Rape workshop had been raped, one at the age of six. The most recent was last year. All were raped by men they knew, the one at six by her stepfather. One woman had been block-raped and her own boyfriend had arranged it. We talked about breaking down the conditioning of

allowing ourselves to be raped, and how to fight attackers and win. This means being ready to smash back and win on the first strike.

"During the Plenary Session when women were giving their feedback. Scabby Harry, an old white alcoholic, disrupted and ignored our calls to leave. So he was 'escorted off the premises' by four of us. He kept muttering at us that we should 'act like ladies'.

"Straight after the hui I felt light. I sat in the marae for two hours. I didn't want to go home."  
**Christine Leef**, Otara Women's Group.

"Before the hui I was apprehensive about being with so many women I didn't know.

"The Assertiveness Training workshop really hit me. That's why I was crying. I couldn't think of even one good thing about myself. I learned to start appreciating myself and not have such a low opinion. I tried to do the being positive exercises. I found it hard to do. I ended up pulling faces in the mirror. I'm

**"We came out of it stronger anyway. We have re-defined our goals as women rather than just a struggle as people."**

—**Maora.**

feeling more confident now. On Sunday I got over my crying. I felt it easier to open up to the other women. I've done some scripts on other people, and they're shocked at me.

"After the hui I did Monica Fa'alava'au's workshop on photography, to promote women's issues. That came out of the hui, the energy, to actually do it.

"Before the hui, I'd thought about women's issues, but I wasn't taking things seriously. I think seriously about myself as a black woman now and I'm going to take a positive stand against sexism. I'll do my best until I can't hack it. The main job for black women is to educate other black women and to be supportive to each other."

**Nita Ropata**, co-ordinator for Project Kokiri, Otara.

"During the weekend I saw myself as a person who is non-effective

because I'm not assertive enough to deal with situations that put me down as a woman. I have to fight harder to do this. The techniques we discussed of how to be heard in meetings, this is good. I've tried them to make sure I get my fair share of time and that people treat you with respect as someone who has something to say. The key thing that came out of the hui for me to ensure that I act more, participate more, and that I'm not put down.

"All of us in my house have continued to do the workshop on assertiveness. We meet each Sunday for a couple of hours.

"Some women who didn't come felt threatened by the word black. They weren't sure about themselves as black. Some women didn't come because they didn't get a personal invitation, and they felt uneasy about coming."

**Maora Hinengaro Rewiti** — single parent

"I didn't know what to expect in the Lesbian workshop, but I was really impressed by the warmth and sincerity of the women who were running the workshop. We had combined the Lesbian and the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm workshops. A catch phrase that came out was, "It's not a matter of finding the right man but a matter of finding the right woman".

"To me lesbianism seemed to be the ultimate relationship, because if you fuck a white or a man, then you're still fucking the oppressor.

After that I came away with really positive feelings about lesbianism. It made me confront feelings in myself about how I must categorise people, plus a thought that I had had was, maybe I'd meet the right woman now, at the hui.

"Assertiveness training really impressed me. I was bewildered to think I couldn't think of three good things to say about myself. That really frightened me because I couldn't think of three. I was trying to think of one.

"The energy I got from that hui made me straightaway on Sunday get with Ngaromoana to get our format together for our hui next Sunday. What I had learned I just couldn't keep to myself. It all seemed to be relevant.

"The most important thing from the hui is the effect on all the other women I know who have black male partners. A lot of the reactions from the men have been very negative.

"We came out of it stronger anyway. We had re-defined our goals as women rather than just a struggle as people. Usually we compromise, we accommodate them. But we all now feel it isn't enough to accommodate them any more. It's for us to know what we want and just to do it."

**Jan Smith, Black Dykes**

"I have been involved in civil rights issues, socialism and feminism. Being a black woman requires you to have a split personality. The Women's Liberation



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Movement is racist, the anti-racist movement is sexist and the socialist movement is both sexist and racist. This leaves black women out on a limb.

"The Black Women's Movement therefore, is the ideal solution to me, and so I came over from Waiheke excited and feeling that this hui was like the realisation of a dream. The Women's Liberation Movement gives priorities to issues that reflect a racist bias, like equal pay; this has limited applicability to black women who can't get a job. Child care is the same; who needs child care if you can't get a job?"

"The greatest impression about the hui was the reception that black dykes got. At Women's Liberation Conferences dykes always have to fight to be heard. But at this conference there was no such conflict. The main reason is that black women recognise the need for separatism with whites and so they more easily understand it when we take a similar stand with men.

"The whole hui was amazing. I couldn't believe my ears at times.

"Black dykes are now planning a black dyke hui over the next couple of months."

**Zena Tamanui**, 24. Chairperson Kokiri Centre, Otara Women's Group.

"The term black women is the common bond of being the lowest, the most oppressed: the only ones to lead the revolution. It has to be *all* black women. I don't believe that Maori women can lead the revolution on their own.

**"I believe that the feminist revolution is in the hands of those who are most oppressed, black women."**

—**Mona**

"The commitment from Whakahou to women is strong, but it's become stronger since the hui. All of a sudden all the women kept coming out so strong I couldn't get over it. Some individual women have put their relationship with men on the line.

"In the Conversational Politics workshop, we dealt with men who are supposed to be on your side, and

how to cope with their conversational bull-shit — like, how many times they speak and if they listen to your ideas.

"My ultimate aim in black-white relationships is where everyone is equal and not oppressed. But for now, for your political well-being, it's best to stick with black people.

"After this hui, the women now want contracts with their men, about everything, when housework is done, who does what, standards set down, about frequency of sex, foreplay, about political education, child care and transport. "Now we women only want the best."

**Mona Papali'i**, broadcaster.

"After the hui someone asked how it went. My answer: brilliant, superb . . . exhilarating.

"Why did I go? I believe that the feminist revolution is in the hands of those who are most oppressed, black women. But many of us have a very low feminist consciousness — we are aware of racism and to a certain extent, classism — but

**"The whole hui was amazing. I couldn't believe my ears at times."**

—**Jan**

sexism is often seen as a Pakeha problem. Sexism? No such thing in 'fa'a Samoa', or Maoritanga for that matter. Like hell! That's just the trouble — we're perceptive enough to see that white man's culture is not for us, but we don't make the same connections where our own cultures are concerned. I was keen to find out how many women stood on this common stumbling block.

"The question of 'what is feminism?' took up a great deal of discussion. Feminism to me is a many splendoured thing. It's analysis covers all forms of oppression, not just sexism but racism and capitalism. It's not reformist like the Women's Liberation Movement of the 60s and 70s which sought equality and the 'laundry list' through the system.

"Being 'given' your freedom is hardly freedom; the power to give is also the power to take away. Feminism is a revolutionary concept that seeks to destroy that

power, that questions the foundations that cause oppression — not ask for handouts! 'Feminism' in the white woman's movement touches only on sexism. Racism and capitalism aren't seen as relevant issues.

"Why was I always angry and uncomfortable each time I attended a white woman's conference or seminar? We were, after all, all women. But the Women's Movement is white, middle class, and racist. It excludes and alienates so many women because of this and

**"Straight after the hui I felt light. I sat in the marae for two hours. I didn't want to go home."**

—**Hilda**

then points the victim-blaming finger and asks: Why don't black women get involved in the Women's Movement? Instead they should be asking 'What is it about the structure of this movement that keeps black women out.?' We're certainly not apathetic — and this was evident at the hui.

"What did I get out of it? Well, for one thing, Dishpan hands. Ironic for one who was to take the Politics of Housework workshop. But who the hell wants to discuss anything as mundane as housework when you can find out why you haven't had an orgasm in three years at the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm workshop?"

"Anyway, with no one to enlighten I was relegated to the kitchen. If I ever have to take that workshop again I'm going to change the name. Something that'll draw the crowd like: 'Fuck Housework!' Then again, I don't particularly like the bond that the name suggests.

"The main buzz I got out of the hui was knowing that black women are interested in feminism, and have finally been given the means to express their own feelings.

"Since the hui more and more black women have expressed interest. We used to be so isolated but we've had our catalyst. There's obviously no turning back. We will meet, consciousness-raise, support each other and have conflicts. We're on our way at last!"



# TAMPONS

## the vaginal time-bomb

SARAH CALVERT looks at the tampon controversy

For the past few months the New Zealand Women's Health Network and **Broadsheet** have been trying to launch an investigation into tampons. Both were concerned at the possibility of additives and chemicals in tampons which might prove harmful to users. Suddenly, the Department of Health flashed into prominence with the suggestion that women refrain from using all brands of tampons.

The action in New Zealand followed the removal of one brand of tampon, Rely, from the market in USA. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which controls drugs and mechanical devices such as IUDs and tampons, had ordered this action after the deaths of 28 women from toxic shock syndrome (TSS) after using tampons. Rely is implicated in two-thirds of the deaths, but the other third relate to various unspecified brands. In the US several other brands are being investigated and may be withdrawn from the market.

TSS is similar to a host of infectious diseases women are prone to contract while using IUDs as well as tampons. The symptoms are a high fever (which comes on very rapidly), vomiting, diarrhoea, muscle pains, pain in the lower back or abdomen, shock syndrome and occasionally skin discolouration or a rash. Many women feel only a sense of dizziness and being off-colour.

There is actually little concrete information of the causes of TSS. It may be caused by the use of tampons in general, or the super-absorbent tampons may be the problem. The latter is perhaps more likely since the organism which causes TSS, staphylococcus aureus, needs certain conditions in which to develop and these may be

found in the moisture-deficient atmosphere caused by super absorbent tampons. It has also been suggested that super-absorbent tampons create more likelihood of infection finding its way into the uterus through the widening of the cervical os. There are no answers to any of these questions at present.

It is interesting that this furore should erupt after the women's health movement both here and in the US has tried quietly to encourage a closer look at tampons following reports of health problems caused by tampon use. As yet it is unclear whether it is the use of internal menstrual flow collectors, or the insertion of a hard object high into the vagina and against the cervix which is causing the problems. The latter reason is probably behind reports of cervicitis and cervical erosion, but another reported problem, vaginal ulcers, seems to be caused by the drying out of the vagina and cervix by the tampon, particularly the super-absorbent tampons which contain larger amounts of cellulose.

However, the concern of the women's health movement has centred on the possibility of chemical additives. Not only has the proportion of cellulose in many brands increased but it has been suggested that other chemicals — to bleach the cotton, or as bonding agents, for example — might be found in tampons. In New Zealand, **Broadsheet** has so far been unsuccessful in getting tests done to check for the presence of asbestos. The Consumers' Institute is testing tampons as part of its 1981 programme. We may also learn more about the composition of tampons when the NZ Health Department produces the full results of its tests.

Although the Health Department



ILLUSTRATION: DONNA HOYLE

has now removed its warning against tampon use the call for a boycott did seem out of proportion when one considers the millions of women using tampons without severe illness, and even more so, when we consider its attitude to Depo Provera, the Pill, IUDs and so on.

It is, however, a good opportunity to suggest the use of natural sea sponges instead of tampons. They would seem, with proper use, to be free of many of the identified problems. Write for more information to **Broadsheet** or the NZ Women's Health Network. If you decide to keep on using tampons, these are suggested guidelines for use:

- Change tampons (or wash out sponges) at least four times a day.
- Do not use tampons at night.
- Wash hands when changing tampons, bath or shower once a day during menstrual period.
- Stagger the use of tampons with pads.
- Do not use tampons if they cause pain or discomfort. This may indicate an abrasion or ulcers from their use.
- Be careful of tampons with applicators. These are more likely to cause abrasions and also to place the tampon against the cervix.

### SEA SPONGES

available from  
**Women's Health Centre,**  
63 Ponsonby Rd,  
Auckland  
for \$1.00  
or send \$1.35 to  
**Broadsheet,**  
PO Box 5799,  
Auckland  
we will mail one to you.



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# No longer the Lady Principals

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**SARAH CALVERT** talked to Joy Drayton, head of Tauranga Girls' College, and Jean Calvert, head of Palmerston North Girls' High School, two of the "new breed" of girls' school principals.

Women have always provided the backbone of education in New Zealand. As mothers they educate their children in the home; within the education system they are the teachers, the secretaries, the researchers and the clerks, the members of parent groups, the fund raisers. It is however only occasionally that females rise to the top of the system and gain power and control. Even now, most women principals are found in single sex schools. Few women have become principals of co-ed secondary schools; few hold positions of power within the Department of Education or in tertiary institutions. Until recently, women who gained power as principals of girls' schools were seen as "lady principals" slightly apart from the wider education system, and charged with turning out well rounded, manageable young ladies.

Today women who have achieved this position are no longer "lady principals." Most of them have been active in the battle for women's rights, have belonged to women's organisations, and see themselves as fighting on behalf of women for equality in the education system. Jean Calvert of Palmerston North Girls' High School and Joy Drayton of Tauranga Girls' High School are two such women. Sarah Calvert talked to them about their backgrounds, their careers in education, their present jobs, and their views on the position of women and education, single sex schools, and the women's movement.

Both women have similarities in their backgrounds. They come from families who could not afford to send daughters to university. Joy Drayton comes from a family of strong women; both her mother and grandmother were

suffragists. Her grandmother wanted her to become a lawyer and to fight for women's rights. However, Joy's dream of tertiary education and becoming a doctor faded into the distance when her mother was taken ill and Joy left school to nurse her. Fortunately the headmistress of Wellington Girls' High School, Mrs McLean, offered for Joy to go to university if she would become a teacher. At university she debated, startling her audiences by speaking about those women, usually forgotten, who had achieved in our society. She gained a history degree, with honours, and won the Lizzie Rathbone Scholarship in English and history. Joy next became politically active, speaking and writing. She worked for "Women Today" an early paper arguing for women's rights, edited by Elsie Locke; she also worked for the Labour Party. At the same time she gained experience in a wide variety of teaching jobs at Wellington Boys' College, Timaru Girls' High School, Whangarei Girls' High School, Ashburton College and Seddon Tech. She began to develop a career, moving through positions of responsibility, freed from some of the constraints on women professionals by the effects of the war. "I was determined to mix my family responsibilities with my job." But despite her views and her commitment to her career, the prejudice against women prevented her from applying for headships of co-ed schools. "I had heard about females who did." This prejudice against "females" didn't however, prevent her from becoming the senior woman teacher at Seddon Tech. There, Joy was the first woman to be invited into the lunch room, and the first to work on the timetable. Working in such a male-dominated atmosphere provided her with a grounding in the technical world, as well as giving her the organisational skills needed to run a big department. She has been head of Tauranga Girls' High School for twenty-two years now, and sees herself in that time as working to

further the position of women "so as to awaken young girls to the need for new visions." Among her tactics she has deliberately had women speakers at both prizegiving and sports events and tries to use women as examples wherever possible.

Jean Calvert also had a varied career prior to becoming a headmistress. She went to Bridlington Girls' High School in England on a scholarship, and on to university. Her image of women teachers was shaped by the example of the dedicated professionals who worked at her school. They encouraged all women to excell, but most girls wanted only to marry. After leaving university Jean became a youth worker in England, organising youth clubs and training other workers. Later in New Zealand, while bringing up her young daughter, she worked voluntarily for the Girl Guide Movement training leaders. When her daughter was twelve, Jean returned to teaching at Horowhenua College. During her fifteen years at that school she felt that the position of females improved markedly. "When I went there it was a boys' school, with girls allowed in only because there was nowhere else for them to go!" The books were all male oriented, for example, "I was a forceful, strong woman, the image of success, and I feel the girls grew in self-esteem, they gained scholarships and became dux."

After six years of organising courses for

women in management, she decided to try for a management position for herself. Jean felt that becoming the principal of a co-ed school would be next to impossible, that society is just not ready for it: "The barriers are mostly put up by men, because there are women who are able and prepared." There is a need to educate women and get them to try for jobs but men still find it difficult to have a woman boss: "Society expects a principal to belong to Rotary or Lions, or to play rugby. I have played cricket, but that's not good enough — you have to be positive in your own mind that sex has nothing to do with doing a good job."

Both Joy Drayton and Jean Calvert commented on the problems of women with family responsibilities. Women who wish to pursue a professional career while also bringing up a family have, in fact, two jobs. Without a supportive husband and a realistic attitude to household chores it is not easy to do both. Jean Calvert comments: "My child benefitted from having a mother who had taken up her profession, but you have to get your priorities right — there was often dust on the mantelpiece." Both women were made to feel that their choice to pursue a career was wrong. Joy Drayton remembers being told: "Why don't you take up voluntary work?" and feeling "I am a trained professional — why should I take up voluntary work?"



Jean Calvert



Joy Drayton

Because women professionals have a largely unrecognised situation, Jean Calvert feels they need special management training programmes. She sees these as motivating women, challenging social expectations about women, giving them confidence and support, skills and training. Practical issues like the provision of creches and the giving of responsibilities to women also need to be dealt with. Both women strongly believe in supporting women from the top — something which is not always done. Jean Calvert says:

“The Department of Education is as hidebound as the rest of society, it is a bastion of sexism. There are no women at the higher levels; all the decision making is done by men. In this school I am the boss; at least here a woman has the final and absolute say and the girls know that.” Joy Drayton and Jean Calvert both feel strongly that single sex schools benefit young women by showing them examples of success, women in managerial positions and positions of power. “In a single sex school women teachers can be encouraged into positions of responsibility, they can be given opportunities for leadership and responsibility, and can develop new skills.” Jean Calvert notes that she intends to give all teachers in her school, including junior teachers, the chance to handle responsibility and gain skills. A woman principal sees women with a more open mind and, as Joy Drayton comments, “When women have power in a school they can encourage changes in the curriculum, so that a wider range of career courses such as horticulture and technical drawing are available to women.” Girls can be actively encouraged to study non-traditional subjects; at Tauranga Girls’ High School, maths is the second largest subject. At a single sex school there can be fewer pressures on girls to conform to a rigid sex role stereotype.

Women clearly have special problems in maintaining a career. They get behind professionally if they leave the profession to have children, and it takes them longer to catch up. There are more social pressures and responsibilities on women today.

Although it is easier to go back to a career now, Joy Drayton feels that women had a higher profile forty years ago, when many women made a conscious choice to become career women and not to marry. “Today many people, men especially, take the view that if you can’t beat women you should try to co-opt them.” Men feel they can’t oppose women any more, so they will

flatter them. Joy Drayton feels the selling of co-ed schools as being more equal for women is an example of this.

Jean Calvert points out that the pervasive attitudes against women prevent them from even applying for jobs, and that when women do apply they often do not get the job. “People still say a man would be better. You need to have a thick skin if you are a woman.” She also says that no-one expects a woman to be able to understand architectural plans, drainage, audio-visual equipment, etc., and so they do not feel women are able to do a principal’s job. However, many men do not understand these things either.

Both Jean Calvert and Joy Drayton hold strong views on a wider level about politics and the position of women in society. “The state of New Zealand politics fills me with horror — no-one cares about the people on the bottom. We are moving away from the welfare state, the state no longer cares for people.” Joy Drayton feels that she has lived in her own way to stand up and battle for women. It annoys her that men still feel they are better than women — “women need extra help.” She has joined women’s organisations, attended United Women’s Conventions and focused her attentions whenever possible on improving the position of women, encouraging them to be independent. Jean Calvert feels, “I have always been a feminist, but I didn’t realise it until 1975 — International Women’s Year. Even today feminism is not fashionable but, as a principal, one is now able to say things in public that one may have felt for a long time.”

Fighting for equality is tough; women can use something like the Sex Equality Committee to monitor and challenge the system (for example, looking at sexism in teaching materials, the situation of part time workers, removal expenses for women) but society is still changing very slowly. Those women who have achieved some power in the education system today are motivated by a sense of the oppression of women. They strive to challenge that oppression by creating opportunities for women. They are also aware of, and involved in, the wider issues of women’s rights. Altogether it’s a welcome change from the idea of “lady principals” turning out well-mannered young ladies for the marriage market. Within their own field these women are dedicated professionals working on a variety of levels to change the position of women in our society. ■

***glimpse of a stranger/my neighbour***

*purple rinse  
powdered cheek of lines  
rolling fat  
ripples on wrinkles  
wart on nose soft fingernails  
the body fifty-three  
hands a translucent sixty  
mind still thirty-nine  
soul is twenty*

*pearl pink lipstick perfume of violets  
varicose veins  
hooded eyelids  
swollen ankles disappeared knees  
measurements generous  
so is the heart  
the world is a stage  
she knows her part*

*- penny chappell*

# POETRY

***She***

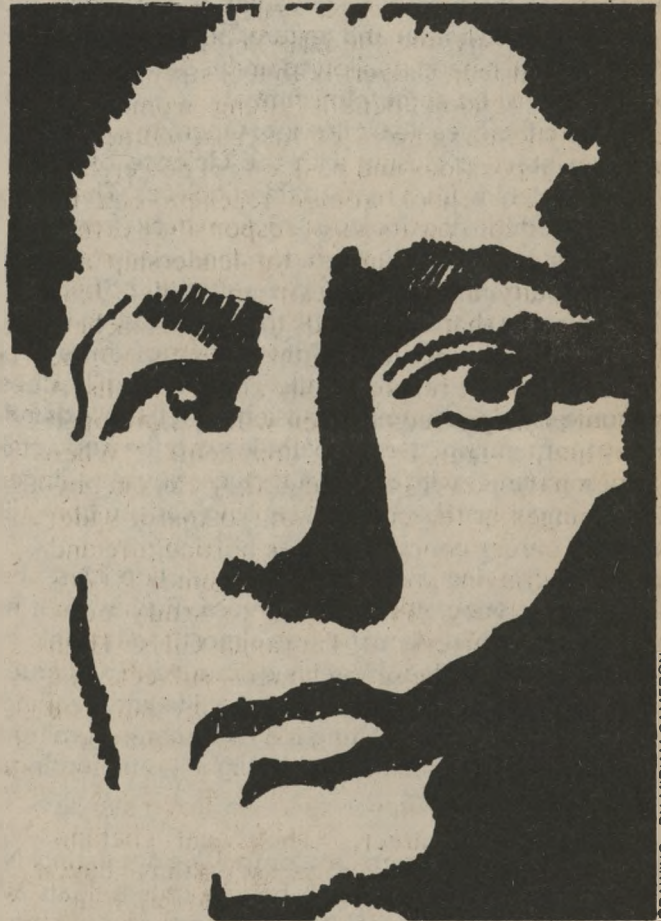
*Who is in there? She  
Looks at me so sadly. Is  
She sorry for me?  
She is older. Crushed tissues  
Surround her round eyes. Can  
She cry? Why  
Doesn't she go away and  
Let me go away and I  
Am not enjoying this.*

*She looks bitter now with  
A hint of fear in her  
Eyes her nostrils edged in  
White her mouth is  
Clamped to hide from  
Me her fear of  
Me her fear of . . .*

*I can see in her  
Clamped shut look that  
We are not friends and  
We could be friends but  
She won't surrender to me. Her  
Eyebrows need plucking. If  
I pluck out her eyes will she*

*Bleed? I need to know I  
Need to know is  
She in common with  
Me? She is ugly and old and too  
Too too too afraid to  
Be me.*

*- Claire*



DRAWING BY MIRIAM CAMERON

# Anorexia

**I.** Describe the vomit. Variation on a theme, on anorexia. Compulsive eating coupled with compulsive vomiting.

The see-sawing of "to vomit or not to vomit, to be normal or to lose weight or to sleep it off or to call it a day".

Two fingers down throat, turning up of radio so flatmate won't know. The clinking of Friday evening cooking pots and voices in the kitchen upstairs. Will they hear the coughing, heaving, gagging?

Describe the fingers, the familiar position on the back of the tongue, pressing down, like Romans at a banquet, not to eat more but less . . . pressing fingers on delicate tissue sometimes coughing up blood and its soreness, soreness next day.

The ease of bulk is semi-automatic. Out it comes, nearly recognisable. Blindly as all the food was shoved in, so, inversely, much more clearly it comes out. Each colour and texture. Sometimes the stream fills the mouth if it has only just been swallowed and is near the top, it's almost easy. Not too easy, must be some punishment.

Describe the eyes, tears flowing. Opening or shutting, looking down to the toilet bowl or closing with the violence of heaving and struggling. Stomach retching from many different places. The weeping, blinking eyes, puffy, distorted face looking stricken back from the bathroom mirror afterwards. Hot flannels, washing hands, cleaning teeth and mouth, leaving a peppermint foretaste and an aftertaste of bile.

Describe the shame. Describe the headache, the relief, the fullness gone but nausea lingering. Nuances of vomiting, of time and place and content.

Describe the taste of vomit. The burning belches. The acid, thin, ammonia-tinged sputum convulsing from the pits of indigestion, shuddering and tormenting its cruel path, leaving the body chilled with fever. So strong sometimes with acid that it stains. Sourness lingering on the fingers. Does it linger on the breath, causing cancer from disruption, life core rotten?

So solitary a vice. The horror is an addiction. Describe the first time, two years ago, anorexia if not too nervosa. Perhaps not nervosa enough!

As a sunny child vomiting was almost too horrible to be sustained, an aberration to be feared. Now it's deliberate. Cruel cruel vice gripping sad sad soul. Oh horror, taking the staff of life and bending it to such corruption, taking a joy and making it a nightmare. Turning food — and all its associated warmth, security, and delight — and turning it in self-abuse, the knife-edge of despair.

**II.** Describe anorexia. Compulsive not-eating. No longer vomiting, no longer eating. Playing with hunger until it floats away with the soul, playing with the body until it is no longer. Hunger goes, nausea follows, power through deprivation. Swallowing strychnine, tight jaw, the lines creep in.

The eyes like saucers, hip bones hurting against seam of jeans, wrinkles deepening. Skin turning crepey, old womanly, like the fingers of LSD exploration when the floating surface of the face, dangerously, almost lifted off in the fingers.

End of the trip, curling foetus-like in bed watching the Ankor Wat stone-rubbing people paddle their war canoe across the wall, animated sea devils and tyrant sea captains battling against flickering eyeballs.

Anorexia is equal madness. The eyes of anorexia are witness and mask,



**WHEN THE D  
TO ST**

**ANOI**

carrying or revealing the secrets. A body turning in on itself. A canker of behaviour. Wild obsession. Mirrors and fashion and concentric circles edging around like hoopla.

Must heal. See no way to be normal. Fat showing abnormality, can't lose fat. Saying no's now like a scorpion, angry bile will poison. Will not live, will not bloom again with apricot arms against white cotton, hair on shoulders. A protest, a woman's plea. "Take care of me, I am unable". So weak now, the body shows it. Process of reduction. Reducing curves, horizons, expanses, size, friends, mind.

Describe anorexia, describe evasion, describe passivity: anger equals canker if mixed with stomach acid. □

Anon

## Lifting through clouds

One morning — Jamie walking to breakfast saw the sun. As mornings go this one was new and with the quality of having an entire day ahead, if you are young enough at heart to think in those terms. Jamie thought in those terms that morning when the whole day lay ahead. Seeing not for one moment the dark clouds . . . walked past breakfast and on to school. Seeing not for one moment the left behind breakfast, she also walked past lunch, and at dinner time saw the dark clouds for just long enough to walk past food for a whole day.

The night before, alone in bed, she had looked at the dark clouds and even harder at Jamie than she had ever dared. She saw fat cells magnified a hundred-and-twenty times through binocular vision, ultra-sensitive fingertips shaped the uncomfortable rolls of fat stomach and visionless thighs remained together in soft resignation.

In the morning, with the sun and the day ahead of her she forgot the fat girl of the night before and resisted willfully her love of food and unknowingly her ever-feeding, open-mouthed mother.

Unconsciously lifting through clouds as she shaped her own destiny. Her mother, not seeing the thin girl of a few months time, encouraged the fat girl, pampered the thin girl and ignored the young girl's requests for recognition. Unspoken though they were.

The mythical cellulie melted, the self-inflicted rolls of stomach fell around her and thighs gained new strength of character, no longer satisfied with their soggy plight.

Jamie, now having reached normality, continued to walk past meals and her now protesting though open-mouthed mother.

When Jamie lost her womanhood it was not a loss . . . but another cloud. Clouding her vision stood the ever present "just another half stone" until it seemed that gaining the little girl was to be a triumph in itself — gaining the concern and recognition she had unconsciously set about to achieve.

Falling with long ago fat form were the delicate hairs gained at puberty — and any self-confidence she had ever hoped to have.

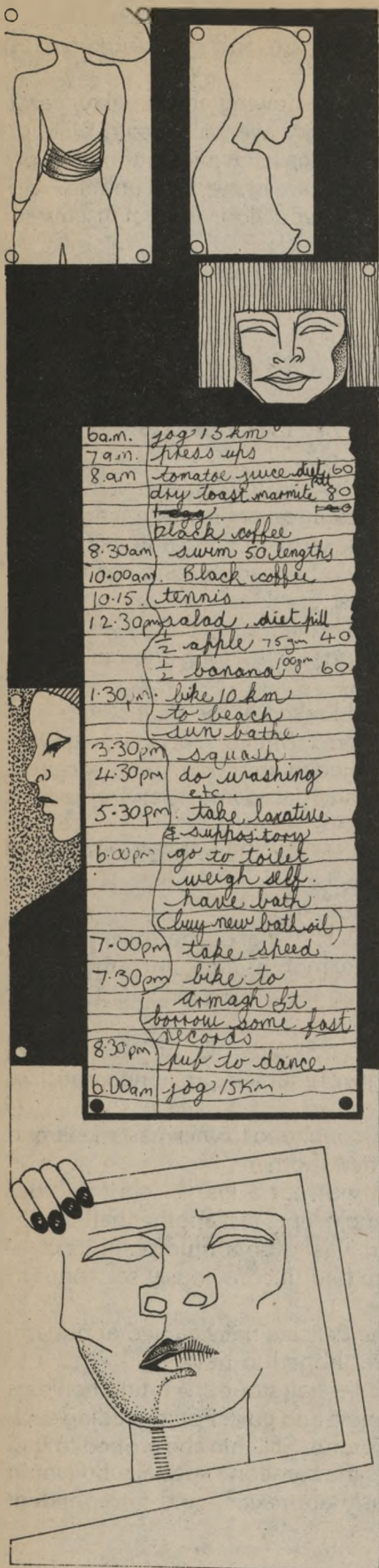
Tragic when not far away from five-and-a-half stone she found her fears lining the hospital walls. White with paranoia and guilt. Force-feeding each mouthful all the way to eight-and-a-half stone. Still thin she groped to find on one of those end of the day evenings the someone special who would later laugh and say, "Were you seriously anorexic?" and for confident Jamie, lifting through clouds to say "Yes". □

Sue Matthew



ETING TURNS  
ARVING

REXIA



**Only a third of anorexics completely recover. Sandra Coney talked to Marie, about the winter she stopped eating.**

"I couldn't really pinpoint a time and say, that's when I stopped being happy, that's when I started screwing up. It's something you don't even notice yourself. When you're anorexic it's so much hiding from yourself and from everyone else. So you just cover up anything you don't want to know. You suppress emotions that in a normal state you might recognise. Although my friends and my mother noticed, I was not aware that anything was wrong. You're not aware of other people's reactions either. You become very introverted and don't relate to people the way you would in normal circumstances.

I just stopped eating — because I was very busy, I just never had time to eat. I did things — went to varsity, sewed a lot . . . I can't actually remember that well. I think I kept up a reasonably active social life right through. I never got anything out of what I was doing, not at the peak time, you just can't, it's impossible. You're not a full person, you can't physically. At varsity, because I really enjoyed the papers I was taking, I was able, through some supreme effort of will, to absorb some of the work, so I passed everything at the end of the year.

I ate too little all the time. I took off two stone, and I'm normally eight stone, four ounces. Until I was seven stone it wasn't too drastic, but at the peak period I lost a lot over a few weeks. I never had stomach pains. I don't remember on the downhill road ever being hungry. Because of your psychological state at the time it doesn't suit your purposes to feel hungry, so you don't, and that's that. Hunger's natural, but if you're trying to control yourself, feeling hungry is a sign of weakness, so you don't do it.

I felt physically I was OK at the time, that it was normal to be that thin. It's a different sense of reality — like Alice in Wonderland . . . I can't remember how I actually felt at the time. I don't know whether I'm subconsciously

cutting it off. It was a bit euphoric in the last days. The thing is, you don't feel normally at all. The time I remember feeling again was when I thought, my god, how can I have done this to myself. There was no definite point at which I decided I'd had enough, no positive event triggered it off. In my case it was like running its course. You decided you wanted to get back to life again. If you have anorexia, it's like getting off for a while, it's a way of . . . instead of cutting your wrists, you stop eating instead. It's the same thing, a refusal to live as other people live. And I think that when I decided I wanted to get back in again, it was just natural to start eating again.

Despite a great deal of thought I've never been able to guess what started the whole thing off. There were several experiences, which, looking back, I obviously wasn't able to handle at the time and whether that contributed I don't know.

I think insecurity is the central issue. You fear that you as a person aren't worth anything. Not eating is your only sign of strength. The counsellor I saw suggested it could have stemmed from the time I went overseas as an exchange student for several months. I'd come from a very protected environment, but away from home, there was no-one to say, you shouldn't do that, no-one to excuse your actions, you were left entirely to stand or fall. I just couldn't handle being responsible for myself. There'd always been someone to explain why you did things. I'd always been conscious of a feeling of family support . . . I don't know, maybe . . . sometimes I think perhaps that was the trouble. I'd had too much support. I'd never really had to face facts, so it gets to the stage, if the support isn't there, you're lost without it.

I feel I learned a lot about myself through the experience. In a way, it was an enforced growing up. I'd always been a person who tended towards intensity. I used to be either very happy or very upset, I've reached a much more even keel now. I've become more accepting. I think it helped me to achieve what other people do without having to go to such drastic measures." ■

ILLUSTRATIONS: ROBYN CONWAY



# Anorexia

*Why does it happen?  
What is it about? SARAH  
CALVERT looks at the  
problem and how it  
affects its victims.*

In the midst of our relatively affluent society some young women are, literally, starving to death. They are victims of anorexia nervosa, a disorder characterised by extreme weight loss and emaciation brought about by failure to eat or retain food. Some victims actually do self-starve to death — the mortality rate is between seven and fifteen percent. Although anorexia was first reported in medical literature over 300 years ago, today it appears to be on the increase, with a reported incidence of one in 100 adolescents. It primarily affects adolescent girls between the ages of 11 and 23 (only one in ten victims is male) which is a period of rapid biological growth resulting in dramatic body changes and possible role conflict.

Women who suffer from anorexia nervosa have a desperate need to be thin, to avoid normal adolescent weight gain. This fear of weight gain is often due to anxiety, anger, and feelings of helplessness and rejection. The anorexic may also withdraw from social relationships and activity.

Other physical symptoms also occur. The periods stop and fine hair grows on the body. The skin becomes rough, and stained or discoloured and the victim may experience cramps from poor circulation. There are other metabolic disturbances; severe constipation may mean a bowel movement occurs as rarely as once every two to four weeks. But, unlike most other victims of starvation, anorexics often display amazing energy and hyperactivity; involvement in athletics is quite common.

The characteristics of anorexia reveal much about how women see themselves. Anorexia especially shows the feelings of helplessness and powerlessness, the loss of control, women experience in our society. Most anorexics have an overwhelm-

ing sense of ineffectiveness. Their only power is in their ability to control both their own eating and their own weight.

*Who is the anorexic?*

She is most likely to be the sensitive and intelligent daughter of affluent middle class parents. She will have been a model child, never causing problems. She may be slightly overweight prior to becoming anorexic and may have been goaded into dieting by her family. Within her family there may be a problem of overnutrition and a tendency to leave control of food to the mother who may display contradictory attitudes towards food herself. The physical changes of puberty may have happened early for her and been rapid, causing conflicts within the family. It is usual for members of her family to suppress normal emotions and to find it difficult to negotiate with one another. Her family does not encourage self-expression or self-motivation. The anorexic woman will probably be ignored until her emaciation is critical.

*The anorexic body*

• Anorexics have distorted body images. Although they can quite accurately perceive the weight of others, they have difficulty assessing their own weight. They consistently perceive themselves to be fatter than, in fact, they are. Unlike men, women in our society often experience a dichotomy between their real selves and their ideal selves. Women are presented with contradictory messages by society: we are expected to be voluptuous, yet slender; strong, but dependent; childlike, but womanly; intelligent, yet unassertive. Women are taught that their role is one of self-denial, of giving and responding to others. For the anorexic, the focus of the contradiction becomes the female body. Almost all anorexics tax their bodies to the limit of human endurance. At the same time they have a perverse fascination with food and will talk about it or provide sumptuous banquets for friends and family. Some anorexics go on secret eating binges until they feel sick; they then induce vomiting to rid their

stomachs of the food. Studies of anorexics have revealed that they are, in many ways, women attempting to accept a single set of the social messages in their lives.

Anorexia is very similar to another primarily female disorder called bulimia (binge eating) which has a self-starvation component. Women who suffer from bulimia overidentify with the female role; they desire pregnancy and a passive female role. They make exaggerated attempts to be "feminine" and strive obsessively for intimacy with men. While anorexics have an opposing set of desires, the problems of both groups are merely extreme manifestations of the difficulties normal women have with their roles and in accepting their bodies.

*What anorexics fear*

Anorexia reveals what we might call the psycho-sexual conflict faced by all women. This conflict occurs as women mature and must accept to some degree the adult female role. Fearing adult sexuality women describe their desire to remain a neutral shadow. At the same time young women often feel inadequate as women and fear that they will not be able to get a man. Part of the psycho-sexual conflict is also a fear of losing dependency. Young women who have learned to approach life in a passive and accommodating way fear isolation and abandonment.

But at the same time as fearing independence young women also fear being controlled. They long for control over their lives and environment. When anorexics speak about control, they are talking about the power to regulate, command and govern their own lives and actions. In this sense, anorexia represents the control paradox. Anorexics are trying to solve the problems of powerlessness and denigration women feel, by engaging in an internal struggle for self-control. This struggle takes the form of an attempt to transcend the body which debases them; an attempt to achieve self-respect through denial. Anorexics respond to the message that for women denial is the highest form of morality. Yet while anorexics (in the

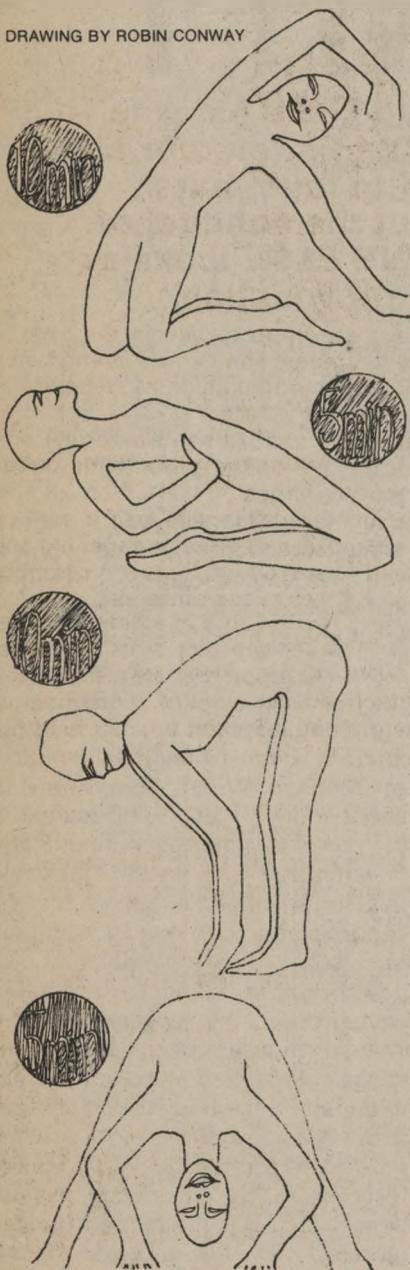
name of moral denial) strive to control their shape, size and body functions, they continue to experience themselves as being out of control.

### Treating anorexia

There is no single approach to the treatment of anorexia. With existing treatments one-third of victims improve; one-third remain the same, and one-third deteriorate. The four common methods of treatment are:

- *Individual psychotherapy* aims at helping the patient develop her self-identity, assertiveness and autonomy.
- *Extended hospitalisation*

DRAWING BY ROBIN CONWAY



aims to help the patient gain weight within a protected environment. Psychotherapy and medical procedures are used to encourage good eating habits.

- *Family therapy* is based on the premise that anorexia is a family-caused disorder which calls for treatment of the family.

- *Behaviour modification* aims to promote weight gain through reward and punishment. Privileges such as visitors will only be granted if adequate weight gain occurs.

Normal treatment methods include complete bed rest, the occasional use of drugs, commonly tranquillizers and anti-depressants, and continual pressure on the patient to eat. No standard procedure is used to encourage weight gain but usually the patient is required to eat set amounts of food; she will be weighed frequently and given rewards for gaining weight. Achievement of weight gain is usually seen as evidence of recovery. However, treatment which focuses on weight, ignores the reasons behind the problem. In addition, the emphasis on weight gain tends to intensify the basis of the anorexia — passivity, lack of control and so on. Similarly, behaviour modification methods have not proved particularly successful. There is high relapse rate

where psychotherapy is not used. Most anorexics seem to benefit from being in groups with other women and in both the UK and the USA anorexic support groups have been established. It is crucial that any treatment should not be punitive thus intensifying the woman's existing conflicts about power and control. Early diagnosis and preventative treatment without the need for hospitalisation is also essential.

Anorexia is only an extreme example of the way women attempt to live up to an impossible stereotype: to be thin, beautiful and alluring to men; to have control over your life; to be a good and moral woman — women receive all these powerful messages. The cure for anorexics is the cure for us all — to gain real control of our lives, to feel valued for ourselves, to have a positive self-image. In the long-term, however, we need to change a world that traps women in a cage of self-destruction — the Golden Cage.

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Susan Orbach, *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, Signet, 1978.

Marilyn Lawrence, "Anorexia Nervosa — the Control Paradox" in *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, 1979, Vol. 2, pp93-101.

Marlene Boskind-Lodahl, "Cinderella's Stepsisters: A Feminist Perspective on Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia" in *Signs*, Winter 1976, pp342-355.

Hilda Brunch, *The Golden Cage*, Open Books, London, 1978.

### The Dieting Woman

peels off the layers of her thinner selves: down to the white diminishing bulb of her body.  
The face that now confronts her in the glass is a poorer cousin  
of the inflated and puffy one she first hated,  
it has taken on a hollow consumptive look.  
And her body is changing, becoming its own working model, as it reveals bones sinews and veins: bumps and hollows held in place by the skin. She meant to stop before this, but privation has its own fascination, she eats numbers obsessively. Besides — it has its advantages. These two mushroom - coloured breasts have become hard small lemons, fixed high onto her chest, and even the bleeding seems to have stopped.

— Anne French

This poem was originally published in *Landfall*



# THE KILLING OF LEIGH MINNITT

**On May 15 this year Dr David Minnitt shot and killed his wife, Leigh Minnitt. In September Minnitt was acquitted of murder but convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. Feminists are concerned about the conduct of the case and the implications for women. ANNE ELSE looks at the case in some detail and the issue of provocation.**

Without access to the trial transcripts, it is not easy to establish the facts of a case from newspaper reports. Not only are these highly selective, but each paper prints its own selection, so that they vary considerably in the information they provide. Inconsistent dates and other facts appear and need to be checked. In this case the pre-trial hearings and statements made earlier to the police contained further information.

**The main source for the account which follows is of course Minnitt himself, as reported by the press. Other witnesses or sources are identified. Material which did not come out during the trial proper is in italics.**

**1966** David and Leigh Minnitt were married. She was 21, he was 42, and had then been a GP for 8 years. There were no children by the marriage because he had a low sperm count.

**The rifle** He had started using a rifle for a hobby at the age of 11 or 12. Until about 1973 he had been a keen hunter. He kept the rifle, cartridges and cleaning gear in the bedroom wardrobe.

**February 1977** The marriage "was a happy one and serious disagreements were relatively rare". There had been four occasions of violence. The first was in February 1977 when he discovered that his wife was unfaithful. He struck her and they separated briefly.

**Gordon Black, Leigh's legal adviser:** *Stated to the initial court hearing that she had come to see him three years ago with a black eye. He advised her about rights and told her to get a medical report on the injury. He was not questioned about this incident during the trial.*

**1978** Minnitt suffered a heart attack and had open heart surgery. He agreed that he had become more difficult to live with afterward, and shown signs of depression, waking early and being more irritable.

**In September or October 1979** his wife had gone to visit a male friend whose wife had recently tragically died.

She came in at 4 am and went to bed in the bottom bedroom. He asked her where she had been and when she said she had been smoking outside he slapped her three or four times across the face.

**Just before Christmas** he noticed she was drunk and struck her three or four times on the arm with his arm as he was driving her out to dinner.

**In February this year** he and his wife had a serious disagreement. She picked up a steel waste paper bin and raised it over his head to strike him. He lost his temper and kicked her several times in the buttocks.

**Gordon Black:** He went to see Leigh in a hotel with her parents in February. She showed him bruising on her thighs and he advised her to report this. He also advised her to come to his office and sign a notice of matrimonial property claim. She did not keep that appointment but kept another on March 20, when she signed the notice. (*i.e. in a period which Minnitt described her behaviour as "she was initially hostile but soon thawed"*). As far as he knew she had not gone either to the doctor or the police.

**February 20** She left him to stay with her parents in Matamata. X, whom she had met two years earlier, saw her there.

**March 18** She returned home. She was initially hostile to Minnitt but soon thawed. She went back to Matamata to collect the dog on March 23, and returned five days later. Things were excellent and they spent the next day in bed. He left home late in the afternoon and left her a note, as she was asleep, to say he would be home at 7.30 that night. She was gone when he got back. She came home at 7.30 the next evening, changed and went out again. She spent the night with X. The next day she returned, and they talked about their problem. The next month was "the happiest of their married life".

**May 6** He thought he heard her say in the middle of the night that X had asked her to go and see him. It might

have been a dream, as he took pills that made him dream. **May 8** She told him she was going to Hastings (where X lived) next day for the weekend. Then she changed her mind, but did go after all, leaving him a note.

"Dear David, Contrary to my early morning thoughts I have gone to Hastings. I hate myself and care for you. However, my acts don't show that too well. I'm feeling terrible (lack of confidence). Please believe me and don't go and see Adie. Look after Stoke and the cat. I don't expect you to care about me. Sorry about the booze but I don't cope too well. You're too kind to me."

Adie was his sister and Stoke was his wife's dog.

**May 14** He saw his sister, who telephoned his wife in Hastings. She said she was coming home.

**Statement were made to the police that the sister had telephoned because Minnitt was wandering around with a loaded rifle and threatening to kill himself if Leigh did not return. The sister was not called as a witness by either side.**

Minnitt said that when she returned she was initially hostile but that melted. She sat on his knee and they had a long talk. The evening ended in a normal, affectionate way and they slept together.

Cross examined, he said he had given her hemuneurin pills on May 14 to start taking the next day. She complained of nausea next day and he told her it was because she took the pills with alcohol. He gave her two largactyl pills to take.

*Hemuneurin is used as a hypno-sedative and anti-*

thought if she had been drinking and taken the pills he gave her she would sleep heavily and not be awake.

**Crown Witness:** 208 mg of alcohol per 100ml were found in her blood. (Minnitt later said he had been astonished to hear this. He could see how much she had drunk because she had started a new bottle of his whisky.) Traces of valium were also found. This would have accelerated the effects of the alcohol. There were also traces of another drug (presumably the hemuneurin, though this is not reported).

*Tranquilizers such as valium can cause drowsiness, fatigue, loss of balance and confusion, nausea, headache, blurred vision, rashes, and addiction. Taken with alcohol, they can cause loss of control to the point where a person cannot remember their actions. (Expert information.)*

Minnitt then said he counted out \$200 for her to take. He sat on the bed and tried to get her to answer but she did not. He told her she was playing possum, and shook her again. Then she sat bolt upright in bed and started screaming at him. She had never been like that before but he had seen "a hint of this mental behaviour" on two previous occasions. She called him a domineering bastard and a penny pincher, said he bored her to death, that she wished she had never met him because he had given her fourteen years of unhappiness and ruined her life, he was a sterile bastard and a geriatric fool. All she was was his bloody flunky, she got nauseated when he was around and he physically repulsed her. He was a terrible



There is a collective unwillingness to believe that men like Minnitt are capable of such actions, since recognition of this would undermine the whole fabric of society.

*convulsant, to combat acute alcohol withdrawal symptoms and delirium tremens, also as geriatric sedation. It can give rise to headaches, gastro-intestinal disturbance, and coughing. It can become addictive. Largactyl is an anti-psychotic agent. Other drugs in the house were valium, mogodon, pethidine and heart pills.*

**May 15** They woke at 4 am and lay close in bed talking. Minnitt went to work. When he returned at lunchtime she was still in bed. Asked in cross-examination if he had noticed she had been drinking then, Minnitt said he had not. The prosecuting counsel then read part of Minnitt's statement to the police in which he said she had been suffering from the effects of alcohol or hemuneurin at lunchtime.

He returned home at 6.45 pm. She told him almost as soon as he arrived that she had made up her mind to go to Hastings and take the dog with her. According to Minnitt, they talked for about two hours and he told her that he accepted it, he would stay in a hotel the next night and give her money to take with her. He asked what he should do about the formal matter of their marriage and she told him not to do anything because she would be back in four to six weeks. He told her not to trifle with him. She told him to go and visit a patient who had phoned.

He got back, he says, at 8.30 pm. She was still in bed. She seemed to be asleep. He sat down and started talking to her. She did not say anything. He wondered if he should leave the conversation till the morning but he

lover and his penis was too small. He could not recall everything she said. It seemed like five minutes but was obviously less than that. He begged her to stop. It was not only her words, it was the contorted method, her manner of delivery, her face was contorted and she was demented. Asked if he was calm or otherwise, Minnitt replied "Calm for a start I suppose, oh no, not calm, I could not have been."

In cross examination, the prosecuting counsel, Larsen, asked if he had made any allowance for the effects of the alcohol when she made her comments to him. He replied "Oh yes, but she did not appear to be drunk to me". He agreed that he was accustomed to dealing with irrational behaviour and allowing for the effects of alcohol.

He reached for the rifle from the cupboard at the foot of the bed. He loaded it in seconds. She had stopped. She lay down and pulled the sheet over her face but pulled it away when he loaded the rifle. She leapt out of bed and grabbed it. He pushed her violently away. She fell back at an angle across the corner of the bed and he pulled the trigger.

*In his first statement to the police Minnitt described this as follows: he had pleaded with her not to leave and she had shouted at him. They had a slight squabble during which he pushed her away while he loaded the rifle. She saw him point the rifle, lowered her head and he shot her.*

con't on P28

# THE LAW REPORT

In 1976 the Criminal Law Reform Committee produced a report on culpable homicide which dealt at length with the problem of provocation. Relevant section of that report, and comments, follow.

## "The problem of provocation"

*Provocation developed in the common law at a time when the penalty for murder was death. The law recognised that in certain circumstances almost any man could be driven to kill, and it came to be the law that if the accused lost his self-control in circumstances where any reasonable man might also have lost control the accused should be convicted not of murder, but of manslaughter. This change in the nature of the crime has never been extended to any other offence. . . . Provocation as a defence to a charge of murder has therefore become something of an anomaly in the law, and we think that with the abolition of the death penalty its original reason for existence has almost evaporated."*

Then follows a fascinating example of how the law has been developed along sexist lines:

*"Provocation at common law became restricted in several ways. If a man found his wife in the act of committing adultery he could plead provocation if charged with the murder of either wife or lover. But if she merely confessed to her husband that she was an adulteress, and as a result he lost his self-control and killed her, he could not raise the defence, and would be guilty of murder. Other anomalies developed until our Criminal Code Act of 1893 gave the defence statutory recognition in s.165, by which the scope of provocation was somewhat widened. This became s.184 of the Crimes Act 1908."*

*"But there remained several limitations upon it, and criticism of illogical results led to a further complicated change in the Crimes Act of 1961. By s.169 of that Act provocation was widened in one way and kept narrow in another. The section reads: **Provocation** (1) Culpable homicide that would otherwise be murder may be reduced to manslaughter if the person who caused the death did so under provocation.*

(2) Anything done or said may be provocation if -

(a) *In the circumstances of the case it was sufficient to deprive a person having the power of self-control of an ordinary person, but otherwise having the characteristics of the offender, of the power of self-control; and*

(b) *It did in fact deprive the offender of the power of self-control and thereby induced him to commit the act of homicide.*

(3) *Whether there is any evidence of provocation is a question of law.*

(4) *Whether, if there is evidence of provocation, the provocation was sufficient as aforesaid, and whether it did in fact deprive the offender of the power of self-control and thereby induced him to commit the act of homicide, are questions of fact."* Subsections (5) to (7) not quoted here.

In the Minnitt case, the judge referred to point (3) when he told the jury that the Crown had not fundamentally challenged Minnitt's account of his wife's words; his further directions to the jury were based on point (4), but Bungay, presumably realising that they were not specific enough, asked that he elaborate on them. His elaboration could in fact have prejudiced the jury/against Minnitt, since it made clear that they must decide he had lost control *sufficiently* to shoot his wife. Had he not explained more clearly, however, the verdict could have been overturned later - hence Bungay's insistence. The question of whether what Leigh Minnitt is alleged to have said was sufficient provo-

cation appears to have been very easy for the jury (containing seven women!) to decide, since they retired for such a brief time.

The Working Paper of the Committee (Appendix II) contains more passages which are important in this case.

## "Mode and Time of Retaliation"

21. *As the law governing provocation evolved it was thought that it should not lead to the reduction of murder to manslaughter where there had been ample time for the offender's passion to cool or where the retaliation was grossly disproportionate to the provocation received. It was also thought that regard should be had to the mode of retaliation - whether, for example, it was a blow of the fist or a stab with a stiletto - as this evidence could be very relevant on the question whether the killing stemmed from the provocation and occurred during a sudden loss of self-control.*

23. . . . *But it has been suggested that there may be cases in which provocation, especially by words conveying information of an inflammatory kind, had a different time scale. It is said that the words used may not produce an immediate loss of self-control but may do so later. The metaphor frequently employed is that of a slow-burning fuse."*

"26. *That the mode of retaliation is a matter properly to be taken into account we have no doubt. The weapon used, for example, may in all the circumstances be most cogent evidence on the question whether the killing was premeditated and carried out while the offender still had, or had regained, his self-control."*

The Committee recommended that the present division between provoked and unprovoked killing (i.e. between manslaughter and murder) should be eliminated. This would mean the repeal of ss.169 and 170 on provocation. They go on:

"19. *We propose that where a person is convicted of unlawful killing the sentence of the Court should be -*

(a) *that he be imprisoned for life; or*

(b) *that he be imprisoned for a fixed term, and, where the term exceeds two years, that he be liable for the rest of his life to be recalled to prison; or*

(c) *such lesser sentence as the Court may now impose for manslaughter."*

The whole report makes it clear that the Committee (which included one woman for part of its work only) was still thinking along male-biased lines. Throughout, words rather than acts are concentrated on. The concept of instant or near-instant retaliation in the heat of the moment with any weapon to hand (or hands alone) is obviously based on the picture of possible, sudden, male "loss of self-control" and "ungovernable rage". The case of Violet Roberts, who killed her husband, and whom a Sydney court convicted of murder and jailed for life in 1975, shows another side of how the law works against women. As Spiro Zavos, comparing her case with Minnitt's, wrote recently in the **Sydney Morning Herald**: "For provocation to succeed as a defence, the killing must be done "in the heat of passion". But as supporters of Violet Roberts point out, this puts women at a disadvantage. If they attack while their husband is abusing them, they run the risk of arousing him to even greater fury. . . . Dr Minnitt, who was only orally abused but who retaliated immediately, committed manslaughter; Mrs Roberts, who had been subjected to years of physical and verbal abuse and bided her time before retaliating, was found guilty of murder". The proposed changes to the NZ law would do nothing to right this form of injustice. They would probably make little difference to the Minnitt case either, save to avoid the issue of what to call Minnitt's crime. The provocation issue would be just as vigorously pleaded, in order to mitigate the sentence; and the prosecution would have even less cause to oppose it, since neither the label of murder nor a mandatory life sentence could result. ■

con't from P26

**Depositions and Crown witnesses:** The position of the body by the bed indicated she was kneeling or stooping. The doubled over body position could however have been consistent with the deceased sitting on the edge of a bed. The bullet entry wound was in the back of the head on the left. Other injuries included grazes inside her right hand, a cut on her right ring finger, bruises on her arms and legs and a neck abrasion wound. The bruises on the legs could have resulted from bumping into things. It was the medical expert's opinion that the bruising had occurred previous to the last 24 hours. (*This testimony was heard at the beginning of the trial.*)

That is as straightforward an account of events, as can be pieced together from the available material. The jury was of course not present at the initial hearing, so it did not have as full an account of previous events as was revealed then. Important statements were given to the police but not brought up at the trial; about what the sister had told Leigh that induced her to return. Naturally, the defence would not present such evidence. The extent to which the prosecution accepted the defence's presentation can be seen from the press reports of the final addresses:

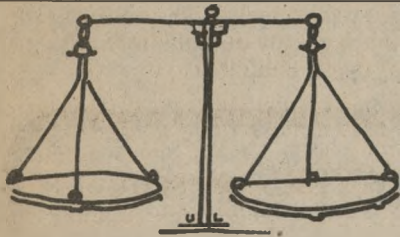
**Larsen** (prosecuting) said it was terrible to see a mature, educated, articulate man present such a pathetic figure. There was no doubt Minnitt was remorseful, that what he did was out of character, or that he shot his wife. His life and career were in ruins. It was not a premeditated murder. But the issue only had to be brought into the open to

person of his self-control, and whether in fact Minnitt was deprived of his self-control and induced to shoot his wife. "In effect, Mr Larsen was submitting that Mrs Minnitt was unfaithful, and you may think she was heartless in the way she treated her husband. But there are many men and women who are unfaithful and heartless, and death is not their lot for that. Mr Bungay "alleged the Crown had failed to eliminate the reasonable possibility that Minnitt acted under provocation. What happened that night and what Mrs Minnitt said to her husband was so unexpected and of such a nature that past quarrels were irrelevant, he put forward.

The jury retired at 10.55am. It was recalled after half an hour because defence counsel wished the judge to elaborate on his remarks about self-control. What he should have said was that what happened had to be sufficient to deprive an ordinary person of his self-control to the degree that had occurred.

At 12.52 the jury (7 women, 5 men) found Minnitt guilty of manslaughter.

**In his address before sentence, Bungay** said: Minnitt was a man of impeccable character. He was held in the highest esteem by his professional colleagues. (Bungay had earlier said there was no more domestic disharmony than in any other marriage). What was said and done by his wife would have provoked an ordinary person. Through no fault of his own the accused had lost complete control of himself. The provocation led to the killing within a few seconds. There had been a build-up of



The tragedy of the affair was apparently not the abrupt and untimely ending of Leigh's Minnitt's life . . . but the ruination of an upright man's reputation, life and career.

see it was not acceptable to say it was under provocation. There was an amount of deliberation and a continuance of the intention to kill. The jury had to decide if they would have reacted in a similar way to such comments. "Would a person with ordinary powers of self-control lose control enough to shoot his wife?"

**Bungay** (defending) stressed that the onus of proof of murder was on the Crown. This had not been proved beyond reasonable doubt. To convict of murder the Crown must completely eliminate provocation. "Can you say to a very high degree of certainty if the ordinary person would not lose control in such circumstances?"

**The judge summed up as follows:**

It had been a sad and tragic story that had been unfolded by the evidence. One person was dead and another person's life substantially destroyed. There was no real conflict over the facts. But the Crown had the onus of proving the charge. Also the Crown had to prove that provocation was not open in the circumstances of the case. It was not up to the defence to prove provocation was not open in the circumstances of the case. It was not up to the defence to prove provocation. Practically only two verdicts were open — murder or manslaughter. The jury must ask itself three questions. The first was whether it believed the accused's account of what his wife said to him that night. The accused's account was fundamentally not challenged by the Crown. If the jury believed it, it must ask itself whether that was enough to deprive a

marital disharmony with faults on both sides, but the accused had tried a moderate and reasonable approach to the problem. The provocation was very sudden and ferocious and Minnitt must have been emotionally battered. He had no history of violence. The case did not call for anything other than a merciful sentence.

**In passing sentence** the judge said that the case was a tragic one. Because the shooting of his wife was under provocation it was not murder. There was no need for the sentence to reflect any deterrent element as far as Minnitt was concerned. But the Court must also express the community's condemnation of the use of firearms and its rejection and denunciation of what the accused had done. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment.

**How the trial took shape:**

Throughout the trial, attention seems to have focussed on the good character of the accused and the bad conduct of the deceased (who could not of course speak for herself). There do not appear to have been any witnesses to the character of the deceased, as it was generally known to her friends and acquaintances. Minnitt's own references to her character served mainly to show him in a good light, rather than change the impression given by his account of her behaviour. The tragedy of the affair was apparently, not the abrupt and untimely ending of Leigh Minnitt's life, since that life was presented as of little value, but the ruination of an upright man's reputa-

tion, life and career. Leigh Minnitt's death was almost a side issue.

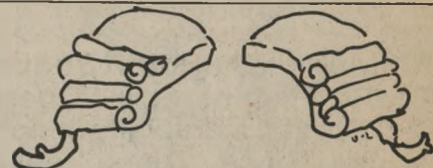
### How was this done?

Although it was the final "tirade" which was legally held to provide provocation (see the law report), the impression the defence wanted to create was clearly that Leigh Minnitt's behaviour over the last three years had been heartless, difficult and irrational — such, in fact, that Minnitt had already displayed enormous self-control and forbearance in dealing with her. The defence stated that there were two problems in the marriage: her addiction to alcohol and her affair with another man. The violence was not a problem, just a normal part of married life. Its true extent does not appear to have been gone into. There does not appear to have been any mention of **why** Leigh Minnitt had begun drinking heavily or started an affair with another man, or why her husband had given her powerful drugs of various kinds. The pos-

sible effect of these drugs seems to have been brushed aside. Above all, although the police had statements about Minnitt's behaviour the day before his wife's final return which would have radically altered the impression given to the jury, this information was apparently not used in court.

**The violence was not a problem, just a normal part of married life. It's true extent does not appear to have been gone into.**

DRAWINGS BY VANYA LOWRY



Finally, she expressed anger against her long-suffering husband, in particular denigrating his genitals and his sexual performance. The sole account of what she said and how she said it was provided by Minnitt himself. The fact that she was then under the influence of alcohol and drugs, including a powerful drug she had taken that day for the first time; that her husband knew this and was supposedly used to dealing with people under such influences; that he "shook her" to wake her or attract her attention; that her outburst was quite uncharacteristic; all this made no difference to the conclusion reached: what she said was sufficient to provoke him, as it would be to provoke any ordinary person, into taking his rifle from the cupboard, loading it, and shooting her point blank.

**Why was the trial conducted in this way?**  
Minnitt was a doctor, a middle-aged upper-class white professional man. Paradoxically, less blame attaches to such a man who assaults or even kills his wife than to someone of low status who has been a burden on society all his life and could not be expected to know much better. There is a collective unwillingness to believe that men like Minnitt are capable of such actions, since recognition of this would undermine the whole fabric of society. It was therefore in society's interests, when it could not deny that he shot his wife, to find exonerating circumstances — to prove that he was not to blame for what he did. The only way to do this was to present the victim as worthless and heartless, an alcoholic who slept with another man and finally turned on her husband in anger and insulted him, provoking him beyond endurance. She was solely responsible both for the breakdown of their marriage and for the shooting. It was entirely her own fault, as the verdict of manslaughter and the sen-

tarred with this brush. The worst insult to a man is just the opposite — that he can't get it up, and it's not worth getting up anyway. This is such a dreadful thing to say that it excuses even killing the speaker. The double standard has never been more clearly demonstrated than it was in the shooting of Leigh Minnitt. ■

LAETUS PLAYERS present . . .



BY

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# Brainstorms

# the reform toolkit

Although Charlotte Bunch's "Reform Tool Kit" appeared in "Quest" in 1974 we feel it is still a crucially important piece of writing. Since "Quest" enjoys only a limited circulation in this country we are, with permission, reprinting the article for the benefit of New Zealand feminist activists. Since it is a very long article we are reprinting it in two parts.

## Part One

In recent political discussions among feminists, the question of reform continually comes up. One "revolutionary veteran" states flatly: "What is there to do today that isn't reformist?" Another woman who has worked on women's reforms for four years declares that they are a dead-end and that she has to get out, to go beyond. There is a lot of concern, confusion and rhetoric about reform and revolution, about our survival as women, and our fears of co-optation. Often, however, it is hard to discern in these discussions what is really at stake, what is essential for feminists. Some women want to abandon the old terms, "reform," "revolution." I do welcome language that clarifies those questions. However, until we create the new language, we must sort out the old language, examine what has happened, see what the basic issues in the debate are, and determine how we can resolve them.

In this article, I begin with a discussion of terms, explore the history of both reform and radical wings of the women's movement, examine the relationship between reform and our long-term goals/strategies, present some criteria for evaluating which reforms are most useful, and, finally, discuss conditions necessary for feminists to work on reforms. Certainly there are other ways to approach these questions. Women with different experiences will undoubtedly continue this debate. This paper is an initial probing of the topic, not the final answer. We plan to publish letters, other articles and perhaps an entire issue of *Quest* on this area in the future.

### Reform and Reformism

What is reform? What is reformism? What is revolutionary? Stereotypes for these words abound. Common stereotypes of what is reformist are white middle class professionals and politicians working to get a bigger piece of the pie for themselves, organizations lobbying for new legislation, or

university women creating a comfortable niche called "women's studies." Stereotypes of what is revolutionary tend toward one of two extremes: either bombing and violent take-over of the government or complete withdrawal from the system in order to create a totally separate feminist community.

When we probe these stereotypes, we find that they primarily reflect *style* (how one lives or the comparative virtues of lobbying vs. shooting) and *surface content* (how far out or different it sounds from the way things are now) rather than *substantive content* (how the activity affects different classes of women and what happens to the women working on it) or *ultimate goals* (where the action leads in the long-run and how it will get us there). Style is not irrelevant to the processes of change, but it has become too important a factor in our attitudes toward reform. To get beyond these initial stereotypes, we must define reform and examine it in terms of substantive content and goals.

A reform is any proposed change that alters the conditions of life in a particular area, such as within the schools or throughout the legal system. It *re-forms* or forms anew the ways things are. It can alter them in a way that is helpful or destructive. A reform, simply put, is a change or a programme for change. It can be a change that alters existing male-dominated institutions directly, such as Equal Rights Amendment legislation, or a change through the creation of women's alternative institutions, such as a record company or a health clinic. Reforms or proposed changes can be part of any group's programme, whether conservative or revolutionary in ideology.

*Reformism*, on the other hand, has come to mean a particular ideological position. That position is that women's liberation can be achieved by a series of changes that brings us equality within the existing social, economic and political order of the USA. Reformism assumes that the interests of women are not in fundamental conflict with the American system and that therefore, through a progression of changes (reforms), it will grant us freedom through equality. By contrast, a radical analysis sees American society rooted in patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy and therefore in fundamental conflict with the interests of women; freedom for oppressed groups ultimately does not come through reforms or equality in those systems, but through a total restructuring of the ideology and institutions of the society. I will use this definition of reformism as an ideological position within the women's movement. It is crucial to separate the word "reform" — a change or strategy that might be used by women of varying



politics, from "reformism" — a particular politics.<sup>4</sup> The failure to make this separation has been a problem in the women's movement.

### Radicals and Reforms

"I thought getting a good job was immoral until I ran out of money," remarked one middle class feminist as we discussed reforms, class, and feminist revolution.

Generalizations about the history of the women's movement are always controversial. The following observations have been discussed with others but are based on my own experiences in the New Left, Women's Liberation, and Lesbian Feminist Movements in the past ten years. In the middle and late 60's, Women's Liberation grew from two different directions. The National Organization for Women (NOW) and similar groups were explicitly reformist; NOW stated that its purpose was "to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society."<sup>1</sup> Such organizations developed programmes to bring about this equality.

Meanwhile, other small groups began meeting to discuss female oppression and to define goals quite different from equality in the American mainstream. These groups, first called "Women's Liberation," sought a politics that questioned the whole structure of society. The groups were generally composed of socialists who focused on capitalism, or radical feminists who focused on patriarchy, and sometimes those who tried to combine these two approaches.

Over the past six or seven years, both the reformist and radical trends have developed and changed in many ways, altering and sometimes confusing both their ideologies and their programmes. NOW and some reformist groups were forced by the radicals' analysis, by women joining their groups, and by women leaving their groups to deal with more than just "equality." They were challenged to take up issues that had originally been avoided as too controversial, such as abortion and lesbianism.<sup>2</sup> They adopted some radical rhetoric (including the term women's liberation) and a broader programme of reforms. But, generally, they continued to operate with an ideology of reformism, not challenging the premises of the whole society and only occasionally moving away from their initial goal of equality within the American mainstream. More conservative women's groups, such as the Business and Professional Women's Club, have worked for reforms that would explicitly bring privilege within existing systems to some women, usually white, heterosexual, middle class professionals. Such reformist groups aim to get a few women integrated into higher echelons of society; groups such as NOW, because they are more diverse and sometimes responsive to radical ideas, are more ambivalent.

Meanwhile, those feminists who challenged the whole system, with visions of a very different society, splintered in many directions in search of an elusive political clarity. (I am using the term "radicals" for all those, including myself, who have rejected a reformist ideology and who share a belief that more basic changes in society are necessary. Obviously, such groups as socialist feminists, radical feminists, lesbian feminists or cultural feminists differ from each other and have divergent strategies, but they usually share the desire to go beyond reformism. Most of the following observations apply to all these groups in varying degrees).

Radicals found ourselves caught up in an effort to develop a new kind of politics that could not be co-opted by the system. This involved numerous struggles over ideological, organizational and internal issues fundamental to the future of feminism: collectivity, leadership, lesbianism, class, power relationships, etc. With few exceptions, however, these

struggles did not lead to organizational or ideological coherence or to programmes that involved large numbers of women.

One reason radicals have difficulty developing programmes is our fear that reforms will co-opt us or pacify too many women without overthrowing male supremacy. The American system co-opts our visions by incorporating radical rhetoric while distorting the original meaning of the words and ideas; it co-opts our leaders by offering token prestige, power, or money if we co-operate, and by isolating and destroying those who won't be bought. It co-opts our people by adopting some reforms that improve our lives but leave intact, and often even improve, the structures of patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy. Some women also fear reform because it means involvement with power (seen as male) within the slimy institutions we want to destroy: they ask whether we can keep our souls and not be corrupted by such involvement.

Such fears of co-optation are justified, but sometimes they have resulted in the attempt by many to remain pure, to be uncorrupted by association with *any* reforms. For example, radicals who consider working on the ERA, in women's studies or women's trade unions can become immobilized by uncertainty about whether or not we can keep our politics and souls alive. As a result, we often neglect the creation of conditions that could make these actions more progressive, as well as keep us honest. Purism taken to its extreme results in immobilism and cynicism; if we can't achieve the final good now, then we feel we can't do anything at all because it might be co-optable.

Radicals of various ideologies push the hard political questions and project visions of what we could do and what we could be. This process is a source of vital ideas and changes. But we have failed to create the tangible programmes or organizations that could show women our potential for power or that could provide concrete steps in involvement in change. For example, some have accurately challenged the white, middle class bias of most women's reforms, but too often the alternative has not been a better programme but no programme at all. Our strength has been the willingness to raise basic questions but it has also led to our weakness. Our questions often are so basic, such as those examining power relations in all parts of our lives, that we are unable to move far on them. Not knowing what to do with the immensity of what we question, we often become isolated, discouraged and immobilized.

Enter "Reformism." Where radicals have failed, reformists have flourished. Reformist groups and activities attract many women primarily because such groups are well organized and provide involvement in programmes of action that can produce immediate results and tangible — though limited — successes. Women working on reformist programmes often have a radical analysis of society but find few places to work concretely on that analysis. For example, a lesbian may be, ideologically, a lesbian-feminist, but if she wants job security in order to "come out," she may well put her energy into the organization working on the reform that will guarantee that security, no matter what its overall ideology. Most radical groups fail to develop concrete reforms as a part of our programme and direction, because we have not realized that such reforms need not be tied to a reformist ideology.

Other problems have grown out of our focus on internal change — the effort to make our lives and groups reflect the same changes that we advocate outside, such as collectivity, equality, etc. Again, this is important, but it cannot be achieved quickly or be separated from the struggle to change the structures of the whole society. The failure to transform ourselves and others more comfortably has left some women

feeling defeated and cynical, or consumed by efforts to achieve that change. Similarly, many service and cultural activities, while providing concrete activity, have come to a dead-end because they do not confront society directly and are not integrated into an overall ideology or programme for liberating women.

Presently at a crossroads in the question of reform, large numbers of women who call themselves radicals are asking, "What is the role of reform in our movement?" Simultaneously women who work on reforms or in service projects are asking, "What is the political framework for the future that goes beyond reformism and can be used to evaluate our work?" From our different places, we can look anew at women's reforms and political ideology.

### Reform and Long-Term Goals

*Between social reforms and revolution there exists for the social democracy an indissoluble tie. The struggle for reforms is its means; the social revolution, its aim. . . Formerly, the activity of the Social Democratic Party consisted of trade-union work, of agitation for social reforms and the democratization of existing political institutions. The difference is not in the what but in the how. At present, the trade-union struggle and parliamentary practice are considered to be the means of guiding and educating the proletariat in preparation for the task of taking over power."*

Rosa Luxemburg<sup>3</sup>

Those interested in fundamental social change or in revolution have long debated the role of reforms. As Rosa Luxemburg put it above, the point is not the opposition of one to the other, but the relationship between them. The primary issues are: What is our long-range goal? How does a specific reform aid or detract from that goal? How should the reform be carried out to advance our goal best? To state it another way, reform is not a solution but a strategy toward a larger goal.

In using these points to evaluate reforms in the women's movement, we must first ask, what is our goal? We want an end to the oppression of all women. What does that mean? What is our analysis of why and how women are oppressed? Women's oppression is rooted both in the structures of our society which are patriarchal, and in the sons of patriarchy: capitalism and white supremacy. Patriarchy includes not only male rule but also heterosexual imperialism and sexism; patriarchy led to the development of white supremacy and capitalism. For me, the term patriarchy refers to all these forms of oppression and domination, all of which must be ended before all women will be free.

Stated positively, we need a new social order based on equitable distribution of resources and access to them in the future; upon equal justice and rights for all; and upon maximum freedom for each person to determine her own life. How will we bring about these changes? What is our long-term strategy? What kind of process does this involve? What types of power must women have to make these changes? These must be in our questions.

The socialist tenet that the first phase of revolution required the taking of state power by the proletariat and the destruction of capitalism guided Luxemburg's discussion of reform. Following her framework, I will sketch initial goals and strategies for our discussion of reforms. In order to create a new society, women must have power. We must have power in all spheres. We must have power in all spheres — political, economic, and cultural — as well as power over our own beings. Since we seek power as a means of transforming society, we must also transform power or find new ways of exercising

power that do not duplicate the oppressions of today. We must discover how women can build our own strengths, create these new forms, prepare for, and gain such power. Since all this cannot be accomplished within American society as it now exists, my long-term goal is not the achievement of piece-meal reforms but a feminist revolutionary process that alters the entire social order. Reforms, therefore, are not an end in themselves but an important *means* toward reaching this larger goal. They must be evaluated in terms of it.

Some argue that a revolutionary women's goal is the end of power — to create a world not based on any power dynamics — and that association with male power will necessarily corrupt us. Perhaps, ultimately, we can dream of an end to power. But before we can accomplish that, women must first gain enough control over society today to end patriarchal domination and destruction of the world. In that process, hopefully, we can change the nature of power, but we cannot avoid or ignore it.

Radicals often debate when people can be expected to act: when the situation is most unbearable (intense repression or economic depression) or when reforms are making things better and raising expectations. I would pose the question differently. Most people are willing to risk basic change when a movement (or party) has done three things: 1) raised their hopes by pointing to concrete visions of ways in which life could be better; 2) provided organization and strategy for how to achieve those visions; and 3) demonstrated that the existing system is not going to make those changes willingly. As we gain more power both through our visions and our institutions, we will encounter more opposition from the system. We can mobilize more people to fight with us at that time if they can see and believe in what we have done. I would never favour making the conditions of people's lives more difficult just to "raise consciousness." But if repression comes, then we must adapt our strategies to use it.

The crucial point here is not whether the government is liberal or repressive. What is crucial is that we are able to demonstrate that we can organize society anew in a way that is better for people and that we have a chance of winning in a battle with traditional forces. If women are to achieve political power, we must convince large numbers of people that we can do all this. We are far from that point.

Programmes of reform, including the institutions that we build, are part of the means, the strategy, by which we demonstrate what we can do. The effect of those reforms depends not only on what is done but also upon how it is accomplished. The "how" includes questions about the ideology, structure, approach, and type of group carrying out a reform. This leads us to a discussion of the criteria to be used in evaluating specific reforms.

### Footnotes

1. National Organization for Women, Statement of Purpose, Washington D.C., 1966.
2. These issues were considered illegal or outlaw in 1968; NOW was primarily involved with job equality and legal issues at that time.
3. Rosa Luxemburg, "Reform and Revolution," 1900, in *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, ed. by Mary-Alice Waters (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), p.36.

This article will be completed in the December issue of *Broadsheet*. Reprinted from *Quest* — a feminist quarterly, Vol 1, No 1, Summer, 1974.




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# The Feminist Eye

## Her Brilliant Career

**SANDI HALL** talks to Margaret Fink, producer of the film "My Brilliant Career".

In New York, a returning visitor told me, *My Brilliant Career* is still clapped by the 5 o'clock's audience. In Auckland, the film has been placed at the New Berkeley in Mission Bay (nice for the New Berkeley). Even being several miles out of Auckland hasn't stopped this film from being so popular that even the two and five o'clock sessions are booked out if you don't get there an hour ahead.

Naturally, when Margaret Fink came to



Producer Margaret Fink

town, I was eager to be one of the people who got to interview her.

She's a very pleasant woman, Margaret Fink, easy to talk to, open, matter-of-fact. And a feminist, skilled at her job, obviously with a flair both for a good story and a good person. All of the above the line talent she hired for the film were women: "Not a conscious decision, no," Margaret Fink tells me, "I just looked around for who was best in the field and, by sheer good luck, they were all women. Even our accountant is a woman — the two best accountants in Australia and New Zealand are women." We grin at one another as if we'd just heard a piece of good news; which, in a way, we have.

I learn fragments about her life: that she is a "born" Australian, that her close friend Germaine is in fact Ms. Greer; that she actually did get married wearing a raincoat (navy blue) because she loves raincoats and wears them all the time (she's wearing a beige one today). I also learn that she tried for five years to raise the finance to do *My Brilliant Career* and that it was undoubtedly personal prejudice that stopped the Australian Film Commission from investing in the film. What eventually happened was that a wealthy "angel" promised to read the film script and proposal over the weekend, and did so. He then rang Margaret at 8.30 on Monday morning, said he loved it and would "put in" \$200,000. Not a bad beginning when your goal is \$850,000. To date, the film has grossed \$8,000,000.

Margaret Fink's feminism operates through her work: "I'd like to inspire women to the vast possibilities that there are around. We can do anything. One of the most brilliant things about this film to me has been the discovery of the informal network of women, all over the world really, helping one another. From the woman on reception onwards." The film is excellent (see review *Broadsheet* October), but neither of her next two projects is distinctively feminist. A pity I thought, that she hasn't sought after the film rights for any of the increasingly fine range of feminist literature. Because so much of it deserves the skills and demonstrable flair of a producer like Margaret Fink and a director like Gillian Armstrong. Oh well, maybe it's up to New Zealand to lead the way there! ■

Sandi Hall

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### book reviews

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**Female Sexual Slavery,**  
**Kathleen Barry,**  
**Prentice Hall, New Jersey,**  
**1979, \$13.70 (hbk)**

Dealing with horrifying topics is something you think you'll get used to as a feminist. You read *Against Our Will* by Susan Brownmiller and feel restless and angry, weepy and frightened. You feel that all the horror in the world is directed against women. That feeling is heightened by other books: Mary Daly's *Gyn/Ecology* with its fear-creating middle section on female oppression; Fran Hosken's *The Hosken Report* on genital mutilation. At

some stage you decide you are numb with the images. Then comes another book about the direct physical, emotional, psychological oppression of women by men. This time one that covers sexual slavery, prostitution, violence, and pornography, as well as rape. As Kathleen Barry points out, sexual slavery affects all women, for it represents the logical end point of male attitudes towards women. You feel frightened yet again.

The book covers a wide spectrum of this slavery. Firstly there is the actual enslavement of women by pimps, procurers and slave traders. Then there are women forced into marriage, into polygamy, into violent situations. There are the thousands of women enslaved by the images of pornography, by cultural attitudes towards women. Within our own culture the experience of Patty Hearst provides an example of female slavery, women forced into submission and then blamed for their own victimization. Kathleen Barry asks what is it in our culture that promotes sadism, pornography, rape, violence. She finds her answer by assessing the fundamental values and assumptions of male society:

"The core of women's oppression in sexual slavery reveals the interconnection and interdependence among sexual domination, economic exploitation and discrimination."

Kathleen Barry argues that individual liberty is the essence of feminism. How we get there, the means to liberation, are critical in determining what sort of society we will create when we succeed. She attempts to demonstrate the links between the issue raised by her and other feminist issues. In addition she demonstrates the herstorical relationship of this issue to other struggles for women's liberation.

There is a great deal of personal trauma in this book. Ms Barry interviewed many women who had been victims of sexual slavery as well as analysing those who profited from it. It is an indictment of the forces of "justice" which are supposed to prevent such crimes. These aspects make the book painful to read. One is forced to think of the pain of the individual women sold to Arab harems, forced into prostitution or beaten into submission. However the political statement she is trying to make is clear: sexual slavery occurs as a natural result of the oppression of women. Until we end that, we will be ineffective in freeing women from its bondage.

Sarah Calvert.

**Vida,  
Marge Piercy,  
The Womens Press 1980 \$16.30**

\$16 for a larger than usual format 400-page paperback. Who could have imagined that a few years ago? But we'll have to grin and bear these prices for tomorrow they'll be worse. So yes \$16 is god-awful, but it is worth it. Marge Piercy has turned out a powerful story about a woman on the run in America.

Vida, a political activist from the 60s, goes underground after participating in bombings of selected capitalist targets. We travel with Vida around America and learn what it's like to be wanted by the FBI. It seems to the reader as though Vida is paranoid in the precautions that she takes — the assumed names, the disguises, the elaborate ritual for phone calls from pay phones, the more than low profile she maintains for every transaction — but then as others in the Network get picked up it seems that Vida is still at large because of her super-care. We see that the strong student-based anti-war movement of the 60s has slowly become less broad-based with the withdrawal of America from the Vietnam conflict. Those who were at the core of Vida's group have slowly defected, withdrawn, been co-opted, been killed. This increases the pressure on those who are left. And as the tempo increases, Vida experiences the FBI net closing in.

Vida exposes her loves throughout this long novel; the very warm close relationship she has with her mother, her sister, a woman lover and her men. But her main love, her life blood, is her politics; and so although taken intimately into Vida's life, it was a feeling of proudness for her achievements that I had, rather than a surge of love for her.

The picture Piercy draws of Vida's life is compellingly real. While I was reading the book I found it difficult to distinguish between things I'd read in the book and what I'd heard on the news that morning. Although there is the disclaimer "All the characters in this book are fictitious" Piercy's background of involvement with civil rights in the 60s means that she's drawn her characters and situations from first-hand knowledge.

Almost half the action takes place in substantial flashbacks and if I had a criticism of the plot it would be the work necessary to keep track of the large cast as we move backwards and forwards.

The tension and climax that Piercy creates at the end of the novel are heart-rending and yet totally appropriate and — and I'm not going to tell you whether Vida gets caught or not.

Anne Macfarlane

# Vivian Lynn's "danse macabre"

**Vivian Lynn: an exhibition of drawings, collages, prints and book construction, New Vision Gallery, Auckland, 22 September — 4 October.**

The images that keep returning to me after viewing Vivian Lynn's work at the New Vision Gallery are the ones titled **Iron Maiden**, a series of three-dimensional comments on the other side of birth: the spina bifida baby, the wailing infant with thalidomide legs, the mongoloid child encased in a black womb. These aspects of death/life are seldom illustrated in the art world, and seldom so powerfully. Though each model is less than three inches long, well-angled mirrors and magnifying perspex burn the images into your brain. It's a bit like being very short-sighted and suddenly being given the right pair of glasses to look through.

The exhibition is gratifyingly visual. Ms Lynn's fine sense of line is most evident in her work in coloured pencil gouache, where shells are the central motif. Her feminism underlies her perspectives again and again. An oil pastel titled **Ichthus** (Jesus Hominum Salvator — Saviour of Man) shows a gaping mouthed fish penetrating a woman's womb; no doubt here that rape is the message. Equally powerful is another rape picture, this one taken from the classics. Here are Leda and the Swan, but with none of the sickly romanticism one usually associated with the story; the swan towers behind Leda, claws viciously holding her thighs as the furious penis curls forward to pierce her. The delicate pastels and precision pencil lines serve to

heighten the force of the work.

The **Book Construction** is fascinating. Here, Vivian Lynn has managed to combine an instructive manual on the creative process of screen print work with an array of images of women portrayed in the media (especially advertising); these are overlaid with words, statistics, and comments from doctors, lawyers — people who affect our lives. The book is a little daunting to tackle. It takes a good twenty minutes to savour it fully, and much longer to absorb it.

Vivian Lynn has also included in this exhibition a series of collages based on work done while she was at the Canterbury School of Art from 1949-51. Here, amid the



Artist Vivian Lynn

fusty tones of academia are subdued, almost obscure statements of women's place in the order of things. But each has a twinkle of humour that undoubtedly led to the painful but victorious growth process feminists the world over are familiar with: marriage, children, separation, rediscovery of self and the discovery of something urgent to say. Vivian Lynn says that the "sprite" of her creativity was to be 'ironed out' by wife and mother-hood; but as this exhibition shows, the sprite is alive and well and recording the "danse macabre".

**Sandi Hall**

Some of Vivian Lynn's work will be shown in Wellington in the future.



## UNITED WOMEN'S CONVENTION — HAMILTON 1979

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**1981 Moon Calendar, Gretchen Lawlor, illustrated by Kath Algie and Sharon Alston, \$4.50**  
**Zusters Photos for 1981 Calendar, Photographed and produced by Jane Zusters and Stephanie Beth, \$4.95**

To have two NZ feminist calendars on sale prior to Christmas is still a novelty, and both of these will be pleasurable to have at home or work. The **Moon Calendar** follows the successful formula of last year, with each phase of the moon being accurately fixed in astrological as well as astronomical terms. For women who feel the effects of the moon (and there are many), the calendar will undoubtedly provide a mandatory reference vehicle. The days are each given enough space to write cryptic (or otherwise) comments on. At the beginning of the calendar, Gretchen has done a general overview of what's in store for each sign in 1981; you're in luck if you're a Libran! As well, she has intriguing comments on Festivals of the Southern Hemisphere and Sunspots and Catastrophies, 1982, to single out two. Kathie Algie's cover is graphically cosmic; my only complaint is that the wit of Sharon Alston's pen is evident only in the slightly stoned looking moons — I miss her astrological drawings.

In the **Zusters Photos for 1981** calendar, Zusters' clear eye for colour and composition jumps out from each of the seven full colour photographs. Arranged in a sequence that suggests moving into an entirely separate reality, the photographs were all taken during the closed workshop of 16 women run by Maggie Eyre and filmed by Stephanie Beth. (The film will be released very soon; titled **IN JOY**, don't miss it). My favourites of the seven are the cover photo of Maggie, looking like Isadora Duncan in a serious moment, and the staggeringly powerful shot of a woman

wearing war-paint. The days are marked in clear, easy-to-read-from-a-distance numerals, with no space for notes. But this calendar is, somehow, too attractive for that anyway.

I recommend one of each, the **Moon Calendar** by the phone and **Zusters** somewhere in the lounge. Both are available at most bookshops, or through Broad-sheet.

**Sandi Hall**

**Stepping Out, Radio NZ/Continuing Education, P.O. Box 2092, Wellington.**

Step up for a free 16-page handbook which is a useful, well-designed guide to jogging for women. On the credit side — clear photos, lots of factual information (only after energy from the blood sugar has been used does the body switch to energy from stored fat, and this continues to burn for several hours after the run which means you don't feel hungry for some time); and helpful tips (jog in a towelling track suit if you feel self-conscious about your body). The inclusion of the **Auckland Star** 7-week jogging build-up is useful too — it's a hand-holding confidence booster. Day 1: walk 5 minutes, jog 3 minutes . . . Day 50: 40-50 minutes easy-paced jogging.

On the debit side — a type face which is not particularly easy to read, but, more disturbingly, and at times patronising stereotyped attitude to women. So, not only will you lose weight, but you'll drop a size or two in clothes; not only will your jogging give you self-confidence, cure depression and give you more energy, but it will make you feel really good, and, "The exercise will make (your body) more shapely" . . . grin and bear smart remarks while you're running, some of them will be true . . . most women will want to know how far they've gone — "Everyone will ask you how far did you go today and you want to be able to tell them."

Under the heading "Fitting it into your day" we learn "women seem to find all sorts of solutions to this". We are cautioned though, that if we run in our lunch hour we need to be in a job where we can turn up for the afternoon with wet hair.

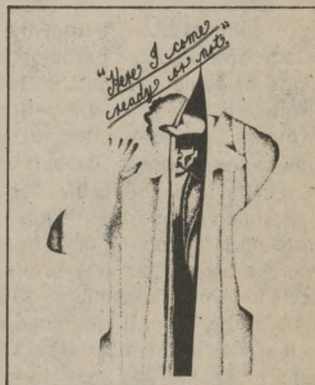
It's a shame the information hasn't been completely directed to women as people, rather than from time to time turning into information for vacuous sex symbols.

**Anne Macfarlane**


The **Stepping Out** series of radio programmes will be broadcast on the National programme between November 3-13 in "As It Happens" at 9.40 am.

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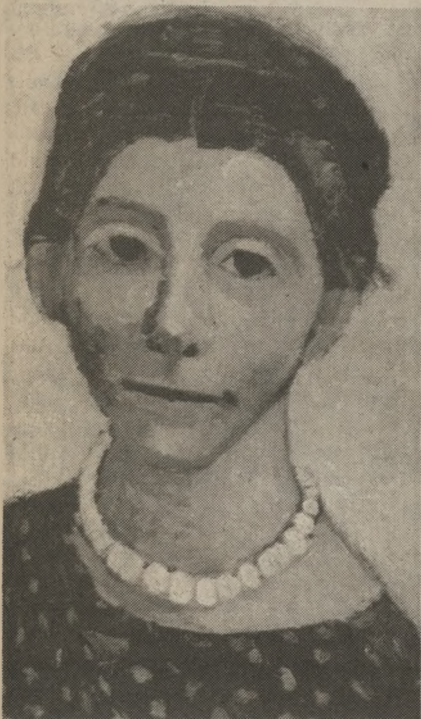
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**Paula Modersohn-Becker,  
Gillian Perry,  
The Women's Press, 1979, \$26.80**

"I know I shall not live very long. But why is that so sad? Is a festival more beautiful because it lasts longer? My sensuous perceptions grow sharper, as if I were supposed to take in everything within the few years that will be offered to me."

Paula Modersohn-Becker died aged thirty-one, soon after the birth of her only child Mathilde. She left behind 400 paintings and more than 1000 drawings and graphic works. Born in Dresden in 1876, she trained as a teacher in Bremen and



**Self Portrait with White Necklace 1906**

went to the Berlin School of Art at twenty-one. In the autumn of 1898 she established herself in Worpswede, an artists' colony. In 1900 she studied art in Paris. On her return to Worpswede she became friendly with Rainer Maria Rilke the poet. She married painter Otto Modersohn in 1901. She returned to work in Paris several times before her death of a heart attack in 1907.

Gillian Perry's biography is arranged under such headings as Images of Women, Children, Peasants, Landscape and Still Life, Portraits and Self Portraits. It's lavishly illustrated in black-and-white and colour, and beautifully printed, with a useful biographical Outline. These paintings are ones you'll want to keep going back to. Simple portraits, a female nude, mother and child studies, adolescent girls, old

poorhouse women, these are her recurrent themes. She liked to emphasise their unusual traits, a big nose, weak chin or something like that. In their detachment her monumental mothers "seem to reflect something of Paula's own ambiguous attitude to motherhood," Perry tells us. And those sad wise eyes stare back at us from the pages. But Paula is the only painter I can think of who manages to look mischievous stark naked (in several self portraits!) Although in 1937 around seventy of her works were seized by the Nazis as "degenerate art," many of her little girls were really what we would call "cute" today. Yet her old peasant studies show strongly what happens to these little girls in their struggle for survival.

"In art one is usually totally alone with oneself," she wrote in Paris in 1906. She was living in a rented apartment, apparently "a solitary existence, varied only by the daily visits to the school or atelier . . . the incursions of artist friends . . . the occasional visit to a place of amusement . . . or the equally occasional dinner at a restaurant," the lot of many women artists.

She found it necessary to spend a lot of her time away from her husband, working. She explained, "It is my experience that marriage does not make one happier. It destroys the illusion that has been the essence of one's previous existence, that there existed something like a soul-mate . . . But isn't it better to exist without such an illusion and look this great lonely truth straight in the eye?"

Fruits and flowers also cropped up in many paintings. "If I've painted three good pictures, then I shall leave gladly with flowers in my hand and my hair."

From this book, I'd say she did, definitely.

**Vanya Lowry**



**Silent Mother 1903**

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# meet the broadsheet artists

## CONFIDENTIAL REPORT ON:

NAME: Vanya Lowry. BORN? 15 August 1943, a typical Leo. EYES? Maltexo brown. HAIR? Dark, longish. BUILD? Largish. SEX? Maybe, just don't rush me. FAVOURITE ROCK'N'ROLL STAR: Rod Stewart. FAVOURITE BREAKFAST: Cream with muesli and grated apple. FAVOURITE COMPOSER: Brahms. FAVOURITE POET: Lorca; e.e. cummings; Dylan Thomas (first equal). FAVOURITE FEMALE SINGER: Joan Armatrading. FAVOURITE CARTOONIST: Bromhead. FAVOURITE FLOWER: Poppy. FAVOURITE DISASTER: Hiroshima. FAVOURITE RADIO PROGRAMME: My Word. FAVOURITE MAGAZINE FOR WHICH I DO FREE DRAWINGS AND GET A COMPLIMENTARY COPY: Broadsheet; Noumenon (first equal). FAVOURITE FOLK HERO: Bob Dylan. FAVOURITE ICE CREAM: Chocolate ripple. FAVOURITE KIDS' BOOK ARTIST & WRITER: Maurice Sendak. FAVOURITE SAYING: "Yikes!" FAVOURITE COLOUR: Purple. FAVOURITE WRITERS: Janet

Frame, Patrick White, Virginia Woolf, Russell Hoban, Robin Hyde, Paul Theroux, Katherine Mansfield, and some of those clever Science Fiction writers like Ursula Le Guin and Stanislaw Lem. FAVOURITE POLITICAL PARTY: Bohemian Independent. FAVOURITE DRINK: Bitter Lemon. FAVOURITE QUOTE: "All writers are vain, selfish, and lazy," (George Orwell). FAVOURITE MATERIAL POSSESSIONS: My Wade Summer House; my Herne Bay Apartment; and my Coloured Pencils. FAVOURITE BOOK: Owls Do Cry (Janet Frame). FAVOURITE HOBBIES: Drawing blindfolded. Eating peanut-butter sandwiches. Typing rejected stories. Curling up with a good book. Going to the movies. Listening to my stereo, and reading to Amber my daughter (who is just about five). FAVOURITE ARTISTS: Modigliani, Milton Glaser, Marc Chagall, Alan Aldridge, Bruegel the Elder, E. H. Shepard, Vincent Van Gogh, Aubrey Beardsley, Heath Robinson, who have I missed out? FAVOURITE SONG: Sad-Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands (Bob Dylan); Drift Away (written by Mentor Williams and sung by Rod Stewart); After The Goldrush (Neil Young),

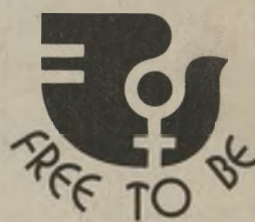
(first equal). FAVOURITE NOUN: Emancipation (release from power of *pater familias*; setting free from legal, social, political, intellectual, or moral restraint). FAVOURITE FILM STAR: Glenda Jackson; Alan Bates (first equal). FAVOURITE AMBITION: To be Rich & Famous, and star in my own Movie of my own Book, and get my photo in The Woman's Weekly. FAVOURITE MOVIE: The Last Waltz (The Band); The Red Balloon; Jules & Jim (first equal). FAVOURITE GAME: Scrabble. FAVOURITE OCCUPATION: Writing and illustrating advertisements for myself when I should be doing something useful such as earn money. FAVOURITE DREAM NUMBER: Five Thousand (dollars in my bank account). PRESENT OCCUPATION: TEP (Temporary Employment Programme) worker. PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS: Bindery girl; Student; Waitress; Art Editor (School Publications Branch); Wife; Bullet Inspector in Ammunitions Factory; Hospital Wardsmaid; Strawberry Picker; Editorial Artist (Auckland Star); Art Teacher; Ban-the-Bomb Marcher; Raspberry Picker; Postie; Chocolate Factory Slave; Mother; Survivor.







# Classified Ads

<p><b>The Hite Report</b></p> <p>Available from Broadsheet \$4.95 (paperback edition) Send to Broadsheet, PO Box 5799, Auckland.</p>	<p><b>AUCKLAND WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE</b></p> <p>63 Ponsonby Rd. Ponsonby. More women required for roster please. Ph. 764-506</p>	<p><b>Feminist Roster Women</b> wanted to work at Halfway House - Refuge for battered women.</p> <p>Phone Auckland: Fiona Johnston 761-976 Lynne Holdem 761-962</p>
<p><b>National Child-Care Conference</b></p> <p>Massey University November 14-16</p> <p>Contact N.Z. Association of Child Care, P.O. Box 3402, Wellington.</p>	<p><b>AIKIDO FOR Q</b> ♀</p> <p>A non-violent martial art teaching harmony of the mind and body. Classes on Saturdays 1-2.30 p.m. at Northcote YMCA Auckland Contact Caryn at 451-750</p>	<p><b>Wellington W.E.A.</b></p> <p><b>Summer School Napier</b></p> <p><b>Dec 27 — Jan 5</b></p> <p>Talking about Communities, Socialism, Local History and being involved in drama and stagecraft.</p> <p>For a programme write to Box 10030 Wellington</p>
<p><b>Feminist Theatre</b></p> <p>Little Theatre University of Auckland</p> <p>Thursday 20th, Friday 21st November, 1-2 pm; Friday 21st November 6-7 pm. Women only.</p>	<p><b>ATTENTION YOUNG FEMINISTS!</b></p> <p>A group of young North Shore women are starting up weekly CR/support/discussion meetings. Phone Sue Matthew 483-099 or Ana Macfarlane 410-9424</p>	
<p><b>WHANGAPARAOA WOMEN</b></p> <p>WISHING TO FORM SUPPORT AND CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING GROUP</p> <p>RING ELINA H/C 66-264 OLDER WOMEN MOST WELCOME</p>	<p><b>FEMINISTS INTERESTED IN YOUR FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY</b></p> <p>A weekend gathering is being held at The Lodge, Meadow Park Motor Camp, Christchurch, Feb 27 to March 1, 1981. Programme will be informal but will partly be a follow-up to the July seminar in Auckland with Letty Russell.</p> <p>Likely topics: * Doing Feminist Theology * The Spirituality of the Women's Movement * Making our own Myths</p> <p>Please register by sending \$5 to Margaret Lovell-Smith, 24 Wyon St. Christchurch 6 by Nov 25. Cost of weekend approx. \$20.</p>	<p><b>CLEAN UP POLITICS — ELECT A WOMAN</b></p> <p><b>FREE TO BE</b></p> <p><b>SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL</b></p> <p><b>LIBERTE EGALITE SORORITE</b></p> <p><b>UPPITY WOMEN UNITE</b></p>
<p><b>Accommodation Wanted</b></p> <p>I will be attending the Central Institute of Technology Hutt Valley in 1981. I am a feminist with a 7 year old daughter and would like to share with a like minded woman.</p> <p>Please write to Barbara c/o 562 Fraser St. Tauranga.</p>	<p><b>T-Shirts</b> in red, gold, blue, white &amp; navy ..... \$7.50 <b>Carrier Bags</b> in strong canvas or denim ..... \$7.50</p> <p><b>Order from Kim Baker, P.O. Box 539 Gisborne.</b></p>	

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Feminists for the Environment, C/- Kathleen Ryan, Ph 868-399, Juliet Batten, Ph 696-123.

Feminist Lawyers (Nationwide), C/- Linda Daly-Peoples, Ph. 794-104.

Feminist Teachers, P.O. Box 47-095, Auckland  
International Feminist Network (ISIS) 663B Te Atatu rd, Auckland 8, ph HSN 46-629.

Halfway House, PO Box 47-157, Ponsonby. Ph. 767-635.

Jigsaw, PO Box 9228, Newmarket. Ph. 543-460.

Media Women, C/- Vanya Hogg, 64 Clarence St, Ak. 2.

NOW, P.O. Box 2946, Auckland.

NOW, Eastern Suburbs, C/- Pat Dury, 14 Kesteven Ave, Glendowie, 5.

SOS, PO Box 47-090, Auckland. Ph. 766-386.

WEL, 33 Ferryhill Rd, Auckland 3.

Women's Community Video, c/o 30 Bellwood Ave, Ak. 3.

Women's Health Centre, 63 Ponsonby Rd, Ph 764-506.

WONAAC, PO Box 68-388. Ph. 764-027.

Working Women's Council, PO Box 68-480. Ph. 763-098.

## BAY OF ISLANDS

WEL, C/- P. M. Falkett, Guys Rd, Kaikohe.

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Christchurch Rape Crisis Group, Doreen Green, Ph. 858-088 (home), 62-116 (work).

NOW, PO Box 2720, Ph. 881-030.

SOS, Box 884, Ph. 796-970.

University Womens Group, Student Union Building, Private Bag, Christchurch.

WEL, PO Box 67, Christchurch.

Women's Refuge Centre, PO Box 7299, Ph. 69-187.

Women's Union, PO Box 2258, Christchurch.

WONAAC, 154 Colombo St, Ph. 35-254.

Working Women's Council, C/- Kirsty Campbell, PO Box 13206 Armagh, Ph. 68-262.

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Community Childcare Centre and Family Day Care Programme, 97 Forth St, Dunedin.

HERA (support group for gay women), PO Box 11-009, Musselburgh, Dunedin.

Dunedin Collective for Women, PO Box 446, Ph. C/- Daybreak Bookshop, Ph. 775-899.

Dunedin Women's Refuge, P.O. Box 8044, Ph 771-229

SOS PO Box 446. Ph 775-502 or 36-284 after hours

WONAAC, PO Box 446, Ph 775-502

Working Women's Alliance, 52 Montague St, Dunedin.

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## GISBORNE

Lesbian Women's Group, PO Box 1398, Ph. 4285.  
NOW, 3 Dickson St, Gisborne.

SOS, 37 Wairere Rd, Box 1398. Ph. 4285.

WEL, 122 Fox St, Gisborne.

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## GORE

Working Women's Council, C/- Sue Crawford, 1 Viking Place, Gore, Ph. 5370.

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Cambridge Feminist Group, C/- Wendy Ennis, 33 Shakespeare Rd, Cambridge.

Cambridge Feminists, 42 Queen St, Ph. 4350, 5998.

Hamilton Feminists, PO Box 751, Ph. 83-381.

Hamilton Feminist Teachers, C/- Shirley Smith, 92 McFarlane St, Hamilton. Ph. 67-491.

Hamilton Women's Centre, PO Box 7025, Claudelands, Hamilton.

NZ Women's Health Network Newsletter, C/- Sarah Calvert, 155 Galloway St, Hamilton.

SOS, 155 Galloway St. Ph. 82-789.

WEL, PO Box 9581, Hamilton North.

Women's Studies Assn, PO Box 13-023 Waikato University.

Working Women's Council, C/- Barbara Ware, P.O. Box 80 Hamilton.

## HUNTLY

Huntly Women's Group, C/o Judy Wilson, River Rd, Huntly.

## INVERCARGILL

SOS, Ph 88-145. PO Box 676 Invercargill

WEL, PO Box 676, Invercargill.

## LOWER HUTT

Hutt Valley Feminists, 3 Taka Grove, Normandale, Lower Hutt.

Media Women, 4 Godley St, Lower Hutt.

## MARLBOROUGH/BLENHEIM

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Women's Refuge, C/- NOW, PO Box 607 Blenheim, Ph. 84-099.

WONAAC, 1A Stuart St, Blenheim.

## MASTERTON

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## NAPIER/HASTINGS

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Women's Electoral Lobby, PO Box 90, Taradale.

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Onekaka Feminist Front, C/- Val Shapel, Onekaka, RD2 Takaka.

SOS, 5 Victoria Heights Ph 83-025.

WEL, PO Box 145, Motueka.

WEL, C/- Patsi McGrath, Todds Valley, Nelson RD1.  
Women's Emergency Centre, Ph. 88-605.

Working Women's Alliance, 15 Mt Pleasant Ave, Ph. 88-061.

Working Women's Council, c/- Verna Sutherland, 18 Dorset St, Richmond, Nelson, Ph: Rd 6434.

WIN, Newsletter of the Women's Movement in Nelson, C/- Community Education, Community House, Trafalgar Square, Nelson.

## NEW PLYMOUTH

ALRANZ, PO Box 72, New Plymouth, Ph. 79-304.

SOS, 9 Te Mara Place. Ph. 84-937.

WEL, 42 Pendarves St, New Plymouth. Ph. 88-549.  
Women's Action Group, PO Box 4030, Ph. 80-168, 83-354.

Women's Centre, 66 Brougham St, New Plymouth, Ph. 79-532.

## PALMERSTON NORTH

ALRANZ, PO Box 639, P.N.

P.N. Women's Liberation, 38 Kimberley Grove, P.N.  
SOS, 93 Monrad St, P.N. Ph. 75-460.

P.N. Women's Centre, 53 George St, PO Box 1608, P.N.

WEL (Manawatu), PO Box 200, P.N.

WEL (Kapiti), PO Box 66, Waikanae.

WEL (Levin), 68a Queen St, Levin, Ph. 89-713.

## PORIRUA

WEL, C/- Raroa Place, Pukerua Bay.

## ROTORUA

SOS, Box 4036. Ph. 88-763.

WEL, PO Box 2011, Rotorua.

Women's Resource and Education Collective.  
Alyn Thompson, 1/23 Grey St, Rotorua. Ph. 85-407 or KHA 597.

## TAUPO

SOS, 8 Taupo View Rd.

## TAURANGA

SOS, 20 Oban Rd, Box 368. Ph. 89-698.

WEL, 103 Grange Rd, Tauranga, Ph. 63-280.

Tauranga Women's Centre, PO Box 368, Tauranga; 42 Grey St, (in Govt. Life Bldg). Ph. 83-530.

## TE AWAMUTU

Te Awamutu Feminists, 111 Hazelmere Cres, Ph. 4320, C/o Res. 23 Tokanui Hospital, Private Bag, TA. Ph. 7894.

## TOKOROA

ALRANZ, PO Box 380, Tokoroa.

WEL, PO Box 699, Tokoroa.

## UPPER HUTT

NOW, 18 Cruikshank Rd, Upper Hutt.

Upper Hutt Feminists, 9 Thackeray St, Ph. 84-614.

## WANGANUI

WONAAC, 56 Parsons St, Wanganui. Ph. 42-291, 44-939.

## WHAKATANE

SOS, Box 3049, Ohope Beach. Ph. 757 or 348 Ohope.  
Whakatane Women's Collective, PO Box 3049, Ohope.

Whakatane Women's Health Group, 281 Pohutukawa Ave, Ohope, Ph. Whakatane 7850, Ohope 550.

## WHANGAREI

Gay Women's Group, PO Box 5083, Whangarei.  
NOW and WEL, PO Box 4294, Kamo, Whangarei.

## WELLINGTON

Abortion Rights Committee, PO Box 12-076, WN Nth.

ALRANZ, PO Box 19-052, Wellington, Ph. 758-450.  
Circle Magazine, PO Box 427, Wellington.

Hecate Women's Health Collective, 6 Boulcott St (rm 14), PO Box 11-675, Wellington, Ph. 721-804.

Herstory Press, PO Box 3871, Wellington, Ph. 847-583.

Kidsarus 2, PO Box 9600, Wellington.

NZ Working Women's Council, PO Box 27-215, WN.

Rape Crisis Centre, P.O. Box 2059, GPO Wellington, Ph 898-288

Society for Research on Women in NZ Inc., PO Box 13-078 Johnsonville.

SOS, Box 28-099. Ph. 856-670.

WEL, PO Box 11-285, Wellington, Ph. 739-321.

Wellington Feminist Collective, PO Box 3871, WN.  
Wellington Lesbians, PO Box 427, WN, Ph. 851-540.

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Wellington Women's Resource Centre, c/o 300cott St (rm 13, 22), Ph. 721-970.

WISE (Women in Schools in Education), PO Box 11-724, Wellington.

WONAAC, PO Box 2689, Ph. 877-703, 848-541.

Working Women's Alliance, PO Box 9012, Wellington.

Working Women's Alliance, North City Branch, 6 Halswell St, Thorndon, Wellington 1.

Working Womens Alliance, South-East Wellington Branch, 62 Waripori St, Berhampore, Wellington 2.

Working Women's Council, C/- Sharon Rogers, 7 Koromiko Rd, Highbury, Ph. 847-424.

Working Women's Council (National Office), PO Box 27-215, Upper Willis St, Wellington.

Values Women's Network, Ph. 797-811.

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