

broadsheet

NEW ZEALAND'S FEMINIST MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1981

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Broadsheet goes big for good!
48 pages from now on



Suffering snakes! It's Women's
suffrage day September 19, 1893

Suffering Suffragettes — how
Kate Sheppard won the vote

Oompma, oompma
as cover-people

"Get the women" — the Temperance Union Brass Band

The Yorkshire Ripper — women against the Tour
of getting women

Alliances — Feminist strategy
for the 80's?

Plus Cervical Caps

Registered at the GPO as a magazine

FRONTING UP

BROADSHEET OFFICE

is at: 1st Floor, Gane Building,
43 Anzac Ave, Auckland.
Office hours: 9-4, Mon-Fri.
Phone number: 794-751.
Our box number is:
PO Box 5799, Wellesley St,
Auckland, New Zealand.

DEADLINES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

Deadline for November issue:
September 10

Deadline for December issue:
October 10

Display ads, classified adverts,
small announcements and news
can reach us up to two weeks after
these dates.

ENVELOPING

Stuffing of the October issue of
Broadsheet will be on Sunday 27
September from 10 am at the Broad-
sheet offices. All women and
children welcome. Our bookshop
will be open during this time for
women who want to buy books and
posters but who are unable to visit
during the week.

BUDDING AUTHORS

If you have sent poetry, short
stories, articles or book reviews to
Broadsheet, have had them ac-
cepted, but look in vain for them to
appear in print, never fear. They will
one day, but often the delays are, we
know, very long. We are simply
receiving so much good copy that
the piles of material waiting to be
published grow and grow. This is
especially true of poetry and book
reviews. Not that we want you to
stop sending material. But we find
that with only 40 pages (48 pages
twice a year) it takes a while for
some material to see the light of
day. Please have patience and ac-
cept our apologies at the delays.

PRICE INCREASES AND MORE PAGES

As with this issue the cover price of
Broadsheet will increase to \$1.60
and the sub rate to \$15 per year. The
price of **Broadsheet** has been \$1.20
since October 1980. During the past
year our costs have once again in-
creased dramatically. One of the
main increases has been in the rent
of our offices which has increased
from \$78 per month to \$250 per
month. The unit cost of **Broadsheet**
is now \$1.15, and, even increasing
the cost to \$1.60 per copy, we will
only be receiving 96 cents per copy
from our distributor for magazines
sold through retail outlets. We have
increased the sustaining subscrip-
tion rate to \$25 per year and hope
that the many readers who sup-
ported us in this way in the past year
will continue to do so in the future.
For overseas surface and airmail
rates see sub form on back cover.
We have found it increasingly dif-
ficult over the past year to fit all the
material we have accepted for pub-
lication into the magazine. Some
articles are waiting months to be
published and much fine overseas
material is never published because
of the space limitation.

We have therefore decided to per-
manently increase the size of the
magazine from 40 pages to 48 pages
starting with this issue. We feel that
this will make the magazine a better
one, allowing more reading and
more variety, and more space to
illustrate the articles innovatively.
We hope that the new extra big
Broadsheet will help soften the
price increase.

SPANISH/ PORTUGUESE?

Broadsheet is looking for a Spanish
or Portuguese speaking feminist to
translate the first copy of a feminist
magazine received from Sao Paulo,
Brazil. Called **Mulherio**, the
magazine has some tantalizing
looking photographs — but what
are they about? Anyone who can
help, ring Sandra Coney at **Broad-
sheet**.

OUT-OF-DATE LISTINGS

A number of readers have recently
drawn our attention to the fact that
our group listings on the inside back
cover are out of date (see letter from
Jenny Armitage this issue). Dora
Suttcliffe, the NZIFN contact, had
several letters returned from her last
mail-out marked "Gone No
Address". They were from:
WONAAC, Auckland, Hutt Valley
Feminists, Working Women's
Alliance, Wellington, WONAAC,
Dunedin, and Dunedin Collective for
Woman. We have left these groups
unaltered in the listings this month,
however, we would like to hear from
these groups their new addresses,
or if they have folded. In the event
that we have not heard from these
groups in the next month, we will
assume they have folded and delete
them from the listings.

Please help us keep these listings
current. It is very frustrating and
disappointing for people trying to
contact groups which turn out to be
defunct. We have had reports before
of women moving into new areas
from overseas or another part of
New Zealand and wanting to con-
tact lesbians or feminists in their
area, finding that our listings are in-
accurate.

Reduced to 50c.

The Broadsheet Special

Articles include:

The Economics of the Nuclear
Family
Diary of a Moment with Breast
Cancer
Put Your Money Where Your
Movement Is
Lesbianism and Feminism
The Tyranny of
Structurelessness
and others.

*Ideal for discussion groups
56 pages of essential reading*

Order form on back cover

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THE BROADSHEET COLLECTIVE

Sarah Calvert, Sandra Coney, Sandi Hall, Sally Hollis-McLeod, Miriam Jackson, Anne Macfarlane, Heather McLeish.

THESE WOMEN

Worked on this issue: Peggy Ashton, Robyn Bailey, Penny Chapple, Anne du Temple, Jasmine Hubbers, Jenny Rankine, Lesley Smith, Doreen Suddens, Jess Hawk Oakenstar, Jean Volkerling, Nicole, and the enveloping women.

Cover illustration: The Women's Christian Temperance Brass Band, photographed by W.A. Price, courtesy of Alexander Turnbull Library.

Broadsheet is published by Broadsheet Magazine Ltd, P.O. Box 5799, Auckland; Registered Office: 1st Floor, Gane Building, 43 Anzac Avenue, Auckland 1; printed by Wanganui Newspapers Ltd, 20 Drews Avenue, Wanganui. Published September 1, 1981.

Permission must be sought before articles may be reprinted.

Broadsheet is on file at the Women's Collection, Special Collection Department, Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois 60201, USA.

ISSN 01 10-8603. Registered at the GPO as a magazine.



LETTERS

I take issue . . .

Dear Broadsheet,

As one of the males in the audience at Professor Linda Gordon Howard's evening in Samoa House, I take issue with Anne Macfarlane's observation (July/August "In Brief") that "the men in the audience were uncomfortable" and further that there was male insensitivity to women.

Without wanting to sound condescending, Linda's address was, for me, one of the most enlightening addresses I have heard for a long time and a most rewarding experience. Hers was a brief but educative expose of life as we live it today.

Far from being uncomfortable and insensitive, I think I thoroughly enjoyed her talk and wish there would be a few more like her. But then maybe I am just one black identifying with another black!

Frank Musicha
Auckland

Still Going

Dear Broadsheet,

I would like to correct the impression that any community mental health programme has been stopped for lack of government funding, (Broadsheet, June 1981) as reported in Sandi Mall's interview with me. These programmes continue to function, thanks to those dedicated to this philosophy of community caring and sharing. The work is mainly preventative. Other support groups who do not seek official funding also exist.

Best wishes,
Eirlys Shand
Auckland

Creepy crawlies

Dear Broadsheet,

Should a woman crawl after her oppressor to ask if he would mind calling an ambulance? Isn't it funny that after centuries of male "support" women find themselves as the most powerless section of society? Patriarchy is the original multinational. It has lots of subsidiaries; it prefers victims that are uncomplaining, grateful even.

I am not grateful for the Contraception, Sterilization and Abortion Act where our male politicians demonstrated the principles of enlightened democracy by voting for contraceptive ignorance in under-16s and Kiwi do-it-yourself in abortions.

Many strong, capable women are busy working to stop the Springbok tour or the smelter or nuclear power or something. Perhaps there will be a woman candidate in the Northern Maori electorate this year whom I can vote for . . . as me kneepads is all worn out.

Helen Courtney
Auckland

Go To It

Dear Broadsheet,

In reference to the review by Jacqueline Steincamp in the birthday edition (July/August) about Standard Operating Procedure by Fools Gallery, Canberra. I recommend that all feminists see this play, it hits home. So somebody into theatre, please get the rights or whatever is required, you can't go wrong.

Sincerely,
Helen
Canberra

Dead, but not buried

Dear Broadsheet,

I felt I should let you know that the WONAAC and SOS phone numbers for the Wellington area, given in a Broadsheet a couple of issues ago, are out-of-date. I was trying to find information for a friend anxious to obtain an abortion. As men answered these numbers I don't think it would have helped her already shattered state! However, the Women's Resource Centre and Hecate were extremely helpful, so I would recommend any Wellington woman needing help to use these sources, as they are terrific people - and the phone numbers were right! I guess it is a real problem to keep information up to date as you have to rely on the organisations themselves to keep in touch. I also know that Working Women's Alliance (also listed) now only exists in Wai-nuimata and the address and phone number for them are inaccurate.

Best wishes,
Jenny Armitage
Wellington

P.S. I was very pleased to read Christine Dann's letter in latest Broadsheet. I have subscribed since second issue of Broadsheet, and I can only recollect that one article by a male in all that time, which is a pretty good record!!

Ed note: We rely on women's groups to keep the group listings up-to-date. Please notify us if your group contact address has changed, or if the group has folded. We're also anxious to hear from new groups and women's centres.

My business!

Dear Broadsheet,

I don't hate men, I'm indifferent to all except the one I sleep with and that's my business!

I have three children - all boys. I think it's a cop-out for any branch of the feminist movement to try and negate men altogether. I plan to teach my sons to respect women as much as they respect their own sex.

Know your enemy, and that is not heterosexual feminists. It is the righteous woman who hates and fears feminism and will bring up her daughters to be victims and her sons to be oppressors.

Sue Neal
Auckland

Women's Studies

Dear Broadsheet,

I am not disputing anything included in Sue Bond's letter of April 1981 regarding women attending Women Studies-type programmes at technical institutes and universities. But since she specifically mentioned New Outlook courses at polytechnics (and to my knowledge only the Christchurch Polytechnic offers such a course under that title), I decided to send the following information collated from our 1980 enrolment forms:

- The age range covered from under 25 to over 65, with the most common ages in the 25-35 (29%) and 36-45 (25%) brackets;
- Every residential zone in Christchurch was represented;
- Seven percent had had no formal secondary schooling at all; 20% had between 1-2 years and 26% had completed 3 years. Therefore,

slightly over half of the women attending had no more than three years secondary school and many had considerably less. (Only 10% of the women had over 5 years):

- Sixty percent were married, 40% unmarried.

This is the only information obtained from the official Polytechnic enrolment form. We have women in the New Outlook course complete an information card for our use only, including questions such as how they heard of the course, number of children at home, previous employment, if any, etc. but these have not yet been collated.

In every New Outlook course there are several women who were "referred" to the course by a social worker, counsellor, alcoholic unit director, etc. An average class of 20 would have three or four in this situation. It is not unusual to have in-patients as well as out-patients from mental hospitals attend.

The tutors involved have said that many of the women are solo parents, or are in the process of separating or divorcing. For many, money is a problem and we are grateful that our courses can be offered at such reasonable prices. The cost of child care is the most serious problem. Fortunately, the courses we teach outside the Polytechnic are held in suburban centres (often Women's Centres or Community Centres) where child care is free or heavily subsidised.

Our records also show that the majority of women who attend the New Outlook and other "Focus on Women" courses here have never attended such a course before; for many it is the first experience in any continuing education course.

Yours sincerely,

Marjorie Manthei,
Head of Department
of Arts and
Community Studies,
Christchurch

The War on Choice

Sisters,

Deirdre English's article (Broadsheet July/August issue) on the American anti-abortion movement was very useful as a study of what the pro-choice movement has to contend with. It helped to explain to me why any women opt for anti-choice, and related the gathering momentum of the anti-feminist backlash to factors such as the worsening economic context.

There is a great need for us to analyse the thinking of the backlash, especially the female portion of it. We have no hope of converting them to feminism if we don't know how they've arrived at the attitudes they hold. An analysis of what produced the attitudes held by the anti-feminists should help us to see where our real enemies are, for example, decision-makers in the economic sphere to whom it is advantageous for there to be insufficient jobs, and who hence help to foster the idea that women should go back to their kitchen sinks and nappies.

It is too easy to condemn without understanding, and it seems there is too much condemning going on, by the evidence of Susan St Clair's "Comment" in the same issue. For members of the women's movement to attack non-feminist women is stupid enough, but to attack other feminists for divergence of some beliefs is counter-productive and unforgivable.

We must get across to anti-feminist women that we share the same oppression – the difference between us is the solutions we adopt. As Deirdre English pointed out, the strategy the anti-abortionist has adopted in response to the same issues and fears that face us is defensive, reacting to change "with the desire to return to the supposedly simple solutions of the past . . . an end to complexity, compromise and ambivalence."

Choice, which is what the "pro-abortion" movement is all about, and what, to me, feminism is all about, is far less comfortable than no choice. Choice requires an individual woman to closely analyse her own situation and make a decision which she must then learn to live with. This is much more scary than knuckling down under even the most oppressive rules or moral code. The result of exercising choice may well be more rewarding, but the process you must go through to achieve that result is scary, because it is fraught with risk, and potentially destructive.

Perhaps the thing that most distinguishes we feminists from the women of the backlash is that we have more courage, more willingness to strike out into the unknown. And where do we get that courage? From the support of each other. And that's why the combination of Deirdre English's and Susan St Clair's articles in the same issue struck me so forcefully. If only we in the feminist movement would cultivate the art of "stroking" more, would learn to support our sisters without being judgmental, to work at analysis rather than criticism. I'm sure we'd achieve far more.

In sisterhood,

Judie Allum
Gisborne

NZUSA Questionnaire defended

Dear Broadsheet,

I was amazed and disgusted at Margot Roth's reply (June 1981) to the NZUSA's "Women's Studies Evaluation Questionnaire".

I do not intend to get into a senseless debate with Margot but I should like to point out some of her erroneous statements.

Firstly, I must take exception to her description of the questionnaire as a "hodge podge", "token exercise" and "marked by lack of serious preparation".

The questionnaire was carefully designed and followed the normal planning procedure to elicit an honest appraisal and assessment by the "consumer" of a course(s) in women's studies she had undertaken.

Secondly, Margot's accusation that "NZUSA Officers had never been exposed to the techniques of questionnaire design" is a perfect example of someone sounding off in total ignorance and knowledge of how any NZUSA research programme is carried out. We employ two capable, highly skilled and experienced research staff who design (in consultation with the relevant officer) all research projects.

I would also like to point out to Margot that she seems to have forgotten that I rang her to explain that in fact the "draft" questionnaire was exceedingly "draft" in so far as it was merely setting out the issues to be covered and the likely format. The timetable we were working towards was tight and our hope was that after a reply from Women's Rights Officers and a number of competent researchers we had sent the

questionnaire to for comment: to design the proper instrument for the survey. It had been our original intention to sample women in November 1979, but once it became clear that this was not going to be possible and precisely because we are not quite as uninformed and unthinking as Margot suggests, we decided that we could wait and subsequently sampled in mid-1980.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The idea that women must teach men how to love, that we must not become men haters is at this point in history, like teaching pacifism to the Viet Cong."

Martha Shelley in "Women's Liberation: Blueprint for the Future" ed Sookie Stambler 1970.

Margot seems also to forget that in my telephone call I tried to explain the above relevant points and also to address the points raised in Margot's letter. It is my belief that the final questionnaire took into account most of Margot's objections. It did not reflect them all because other knowledgeable people in the field of women's studies recommended precisely the opposite of what Margot suggested in some items. By the very nature of the exercise we have to exercise our judgement when dedicated people have completely opposing views.

Margot implies that NZUSA has no right to go outside of its own constituents in any research or campaign. This raises two issues. Firstly it assumes that university women students are some kind of special breed, different from other women. We do not accept that: women students are primarily women and NZUSA in its women's actions is justified in looking beyond its own narrow boundaries. Secondly, it would be elitist of NZUSA to assume that non-university-based women's studies courses have nothing to offer universities. If we were to try to get the best deal for students surely it makes sense to look at what others are doing. Margot's vision of student imperialism is a straw argument.

Unfortunately I find it very difficult to reply in a sensible vein to Margot's *Broadsheet* letter when it is so full of false accusations and patronizing absurdities. Suffice to say, I am quite willing to take part in a serious discussion with Margot on the issue as long as professional arrogance and small-minded parochialism is left outside the parameters of such a discussion.

Yours in sisterhood.

Denese Black
WRAC Co-ordinator
Wellington

War or Words

Dear *Broadsheet*,

I feel I must put pen to paper in support of the women working in New Zealand libraries and point out the inaccuracies of "War of the Words" that appeared in *Broadsheet*, May issue. True, I am of the male species but I think the majority of the twenty-eight women on the staff of this library will agree with me.

"A librarian is also, in 80% of cases, a woman doing highly skilled, exacting, tedious but sometimes rewarding work, for little pay or thanks" — sentimental nonsense! Equal pay has always existed in librarianship. The full-time female staff at this library earn between \$7,282-\$18,150 per annum for a 37½ hour week, with part-time staff paid on a pro-rata basis. Such pay rates can hardly be described as "little pay".

"The largest public libraries in New Zealand are run by men" — of the twenty-eight public libraries serving populations of 20,000 and above, fifteen have a woman as chief librarian.

"Women in libraries tend to be quiet and submissive" — a statement I regard as an insult to the achievements of women in librarianship who have developed the library systems that we have today. Possibly why we have a female National Librarian — there because the position was earned.

"Three year Certificate course" — whoops, twenty months actually, at least that's what the five women from this library who are studying for the Certificate think.

"In practice few Certificate holders achieve even middle management status" — perhaps I am an exception to the rule, then so must all the other Certificate holders who are either chief librarians or deputy chief librarians in New Zealand.

I think I had better close at this point otherwise this letter may turn into an article. They say travel broadens the mind. I suggest Julia Millen travels around New Zealand and finds out for herself just how important a contribution women are making in librarianship.

K.J. Harrington,
City Librarian,
Invercargill Public
Library

Followed by sixteen names.

Julia Millen replies:

Equal pay cannot be considered in isolation from grading, classification and opportunities for promotion, all of which determine the career patterns of librarians.

Fifteen out of 28 is 54%. Women in libraries comprise 75-80% of the work force. The largest public libraries, i.e. Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Manukau, Lower Hutt, are headed by men.

Mary Ronnie is the only female National Librarian in the western world. She has resigned from her position and it is extremely unlikely that her successor will be a woman.

Mr Harrington is exceptional in this sense only. Men comprise barely 5% of library certificate holders.

Finally I wish to point out that Mr Harrington's letter serves to illustrate (especially by the order of signatures) many of the points made in my article.

Julia Millen

An Open Letter to the Social Studies

Staff,
Waitakere College,
Henderson.

Dear Friends,

I am sorry to learn from G. K. Nobbs' letter in *Broadsheet* (July) that your Social Studies Department budget has been slashed and you have, therefore, decided to economise by stopping your subscription to *Broadsheet*, New Zealand's only feminist magazine.

I am disappointed to read that you have done this because you have found little of value in the magazine for use in social studies courses. After living nearly sixty years in New Zealand I can believe that not all of you may feel comfortable about using some of *Broadsheet's* articles as material for fourth form social studies discussions.

But you will be aware that the recently published *Oxford History of New Zealand* cites the new feminist movement (along with the Maori cultural resurgence) as having the utmost importance for New Zealand's future. Many people feel that, with some notable exceptions, our secondary schools are not really facing up to either of these issues. Your decision will only help to confirm this impression.

Just looking at the July issue of *Broadsheet* I see, for instance, a very liberally argued discussion as to whether material written by men can have value in a feminist paper; an article on future prospects for the Government-appointed Committee on Women; a report on the achievements and views of Linda Howard, a black woman who as an American law professor has recently visited Auckland; comment on the prospects of New Zealand women in trade unions, employment in general and in recreation; a special supplement on the Working Women's Charter; a discussion of the difficulties and achievements of disabled women; and examples of women's achievements in theatre, poetry and prose writing.

Each of these items, I would have thought, provides essential resource material for teachers who have taken on the awesome responsibility of helping our high school students understand their "social environment in time and space . . . and be introduced to the current problems of their country and time."

I have always appreciated the introduction to a wider world of knowledge which my son and daughter enjoyed through their secondary schooling in Henderson. Remembering this, and in the hope that you and your students will have the opportunity and courage to keep your minds open to the issues being discussed in the magazine, I am sending a cheque to *Broadsheet* to cover a year's subscription for two copies for your department: say, one for staff and one for students.

Let's hope that by next year a new Government and a new Minister of Education will have restored your budget so that you can afford to renew your subscription.

Meantime, may you have strength for your tough job in these stressful times.

Yours sincerely,
Neil Smith
Auckland

Ed note: Neil Smith's generous offer was not appreciated by Waitakere College. In a conversation with the headmaster Mr Smith was told that any more copies of *Broadsheet* entering the College would be burned, and that he, the headmaster, considered the magazine was disgusting.

COURSES

BASIC WOMEN'S STUDIES

Papakowhai area, Wellington. Ph. 6, 6 sessions, from Saturday 19 September, 10.00am-12.00pm. Ph. 757-229.

RECREATION CLASSES FOR WOMEN

Including dance exercises, YWCA, Wellington. From 21 September. Ph. 850-505.

ASSERTIVENESS FOR WOMEN

Papakowhai area, Wellington. Ph. Jan Paterson 889-097 or Claire Hazeldine 759-686.

ASSERTIVENESS FOR WOMEN

Courses run by these women in the Wellington area: Jenny Phillips 887-240, after 8.00pm, Miramar; Pauline O'Sullivan 767-810, western suburbs; Stephanie Cox 899-019 (day — leave message), Island Bay; Mary Inglis 845-543 (ring between 6.30am-8.00am), city area; Mary Lahore 725-553 (evgs); Hecate is also a contact point, ph. 721-804.

HOW TO USE THE MEDIA

Names taken in September for workshops from 6 October. Write Media Women, PO Box 275, Wellington. Ph. Jo Cameron 793-375 or Carol de Colville 666-969, ext. 740 (day), 757-136 (evgs).

BASIC WOMEN'S STUDIES

Auckland WEA, 21 Princes Street. Tutor Candis Craven, Tuesday 22 September for 8 weeks, \$10, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Devonport Community House. Tutor Candis Craven, Tuesday 22 September, 9.30am-11.00am. Ph. Sue Cummings 450-489.

ASSERTION TRAINING FOR WOMEN

West Auckland WEA, Titirangi Community House. Tutor Colleen Ivory, \$8, Tuesday 15 September, 7.30pm-9.30pm for 8 weeks. Ph. Joy TGN-5479.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Onehunga, Auckland, WEA room old block Onehunga Primary School. Tutors Margot Roth and Lane West-Newman, \$6, Monday 14 September, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Sandringham/Balmoral area, Auckland. Tutor Kathleen Ryan, \$6, starts 15 September, time open to negotiation. Ph. 868-399.

BASIC VIDEO FILMING AND PLAYBACK SKILLS

Audio Visual Centre, Auckland Technical Institute. Tutor Carole Stewart, \$10, for 8 sessions, pre-enrolment essential as only 15 accepted. Tuesday 15 September, 6.00pm-8.00pm. Ph. 372-030.

THE LAW AND THE FAMILY

Wellington WEA. Tutors Bill Atkin, Vivienne Ulrich, \$8, 6 sessions, from Monday 7 September, 5.30pm-7.00pm.

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Wellington WEA. Tutors Barbara Babbett, Myra Harpham, Elizabeth Tennett, \$5, 4 sessions, from Tuesday 8 September, 5.30pm-7.00pm.

What's New?

GROUPS

THE HEALTH ALTERNATIVES FOR WOMEN

Self help health centre, are now running regular workshops and courses. Also offered is massage, as well as, support groups for pregnancy, anorexia and menopause. Registered medical advisers available. Ph. 796-970, or write PO Box 884, Christchurch.

HECATE WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

6 Boulcott Street, Wellington. Areas covered: self help health, body awareness. Depo Provera, post-abortion soon. Drop-in times, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10.00am-5.00pm. Ph. 721-804.

PUBLICATIONS

REQUIRED — MORE WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

WEL list of women candidates. Available from WEL, PO Box 11-285, Wellington and local WEL offices.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

Discussion paper prepared by WEL Wellington, PO Box 11-285.

THE WOMEN'S PLACE

Women's bookshop being set up, 289 Cuba Street, Wellington. Monday-Thursday 11.00am-6.00pm, Friday 11.00am-9.00pm.

HOW TO WORK WITH THE MEDIA

A manual for lesbian and gay rights groups. Send \$5, to National Gay Rights Resources Centre, PO Box 350, Wellington.

WICCA

Wise woman Irish feminist magazine. 1 Pound 50p (Stg) for 4 issues, postal orders or cheques to WICCA magazine, Liz Holmes 'EHSA' Tivoli Road, Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin, Ireland.

SUFFRAGE DAY SERIES ON THE CONCERT PROGRAMME 1YC

Refer to *The Listener* for times. "An overdose of sentimentality" by Margaret Tennant, Thursday 17 September and Friday 18 September; "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" by Dr Raewyn Dalziel, Saturday 19 September; "New Expectations of Women" by Phillida Bunkle, Sunday 20 September; "What Sort of Plot?" by Dr Laurie Barber, Monday 21 September; "Sex Objects?" — a BBC discussion, Tuesday 22 September. Sometime in the week commencing Saturday 26 September "Women and Planning in the Third World", a UNESCO programme, and "Amelia Jane — a colonial essential" (2 talks) by Dr Raewyn Dalziel.

EVENTS

YWCA WOMEN'S DAY

Freemans Bay Community Centre, Auckland. Find out what women's groups in Auckland are doing. Creche, lunch for small cost, entertainment, Saturday 17 October, 10.00am-2.00pm. Ph. 778-763.

LESBIAN WEEK

Auckland, K.G. Club. 29 August-6 September, 'Pot Luck' concert Saturday 5 September. Ph. 886-413.

NELSON WOMEN'S DAY

Nelson Polytechnic. Local speakers, time for talking and social. Possible speaker: Judith Aitken. Contact Community House, Trafalgar Square, Nelson. 26 September.

WOMEN'S CREATIVITY

Festival at Victoria University, Wellington, mid-September. Workshops, films, exhibitions, poetry readings, theatre. Ph. Caren 850-654.

YOU AND THE MEDIA — INSIDE STORY

Mediawomen seminar, Auckland Girls' Grammar, Auckland. \$5, Saturday 19 September, 9.00am-4.30pm.

WOMEN AND RELIGION

Seminar, WSA Auckland, venue to be announced Sunday October 11.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Seminar, West Auckland WEA and Waitakere Feminists. Titirangi Community House, \$3, beneficiaries \$1, Saturday 3 October, 9.30am-4.00pm.

CO-OPERATIVES WEEKEND

Auckland. For people interested in co-ops. Write to Community Enterprise Loan Trust, 8 Ngapuhi Road, Auckland, 5. 31 October-1 November.

SUFFRAGE DAY

Party, WEL Wellington. Dress as favourite suffragette or politician. Mixed, 19 September. Ph. 739-321.

NZ WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION

Conference, Victoria University. Contact: Beverley Morris 758-677 or Heather Roberts 737-321. 4-6 September.

SELF-DEFENCE FOR WOMEN

Seminar with Sue Lytollis. YWCA Willis Street, Wellington, pre-enrol with Elise. YWCA \$16, Tuesday 1 September and Thursday 3 September, 6.30pm-10.00pm.

WOMEN, MUSIC AND ART

Women's Studies seminar, Victoria University, Wellington. Tutors Julia Millen, Janet Paul. \$5, registration 9.00am, Saturday 26 September, 9.30am-12.30pm.

CULTURE

GRACE JOEL

NZ portrait painter (1865-1924), Auckland City Art Gallery, 30 August, for 1 month.

CLAUDIA POND EYLEY

New works, RKS ART, Auckland, 12 October, for two weeks.

ELIZABETH LEYLAND

Photographs, Real Pictures Gallery, Auckland, 21 September to 9 October.

PAT FRANCE

Painter, new works, Denis Cohen Gallery, Auckland, 12 November-23 November.

MARGE BARLEY, LOIS PERRY

Paintings, Outreach, 2 November-13 November.

WOMEN'S GALLERY

26 Harris St Wellington. September: stock show, works on sale. Tuesday-Saturday 12.00pm-4.00pm. Ph. 723-257.

DARIEN TAKLE

'Wings Over Water — a portrait of Frances Mary Hodgkins', Theatre Corporate, from September 23. (See the Feminist Eye.)

MEETINGS

AUCKLAND FEMINIST TEACHERS

Meeting Arney Road Teachers Centre, Saturday 26 September, 9.30am-12.30pm.

FEMINIST LIBRARIANS

Wellington, National Library tea-room, Monday 7 September, 5.30pm. Ph. Caroline Brooks 722-101.

WORKING WOMEN'S COUNCIL

Wellington, at Crossways, 22 September, 7.30pm. Ph. Irene Brorens 851-242.

NOW CC PRESENTS BRUCE BEETHAM

Possible venue Building Centre Conference Hall, Auckland. Friday 11 September, 12.00pm-2.00pm. Ph. 559-685.

NOW CC PRESENTS BILL ROWLING

Ellen Melville Hall, Auckland. Tuesday 20 October, 12.00pm-2.00pm. Ph. 559-685 or 503-174.

WISE

(Women in Schools and Education), at Crossways, Brougham Street, Wellington, Saturday 26 September, 10.00am. Ph. Glenda 672-311.

WOMEN IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Open meeting, Crossways, Brougham Street, Wellington, Monday 7 September, 3.30pm. Ph. Kate Clark 882-468.

WOMEN IN THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Wine and cheese evening, films on American feminists and childcare, all welcome. Crossways, Brougham Street, Wellington, Friday 11 September, 7.00pm. Ph. Kate Clark 882-468.

MEDIA WOMEN

Meeting, Women's Resources Centre, 6 Boulcott Street, Wellington, Saturday 12 September, 10.30am. Ph. Stephanie Gainey 721-777, ext. 758, or 845-323.

Comment!

"IF THE DOCTORS WON'T STOP US THEN THE JUDGES WILL?"

Implications of the "Abortion Injunction" Case by Ruth Charters.

In issue No. 91 (July/August) **Broadsheet** mentioned the recent case where Mr J.S. O'Neill a lawyer and President of the Dunedin branch of SPUC obtained an interim injunction in an effort to stop a woman from terminating her unwanted pregnancy. That effort failed because the termination was carried out in Dunedin just an hour before the injunction was ordered in Christchurch. Mr O'Neill is now saying that the case may still proceed. What sort of issues will it be dealing with — and what does this new tactic mean for women at risk of an unwanted pregnancy?

Mr O'Neill has tried this trick at least twice before, but in each case the woman was able to get her termination first. Officially it is not SPUC making the applications but sometimes their story gets a bit confused.

On a recent "Close-up" TV programme Mr O'Neill said his only involvement in these cases was as a lawyer and that his SPUC associations had nothing to do with it. But his client, when interviewed, made it clear that he had tried to get help from several quarters and that it had been SPUC which referred him to Mr O'Neill.

In trying to stop women and doctors from arranging abortions under the CS&A Act, SPUC had relied on using the names of men who claim to be the sperm providers in the pregnancies concerned.

In this type of case the person making the application has to show some particular legal rights which are threatened and which need the protection of an injunction. An organisation or independent member of the public would have trouble getting past the first hurdle.

Coverage of the recent case has not shown that the man was claiming any such legal rights for himself. In the TV interview mentioned earlier, he said he had only wanted time to talk with the woman, to make sure she had considered everything in making a decision. If he found out she had made up her own mind he would have supported her. (Although, if that is so, one wonders why she felt she had to hide from him.) His lawyer, on the other hand, said the issue was whether sufficient attention had been paid to "the rights of the unborn child" and that was what he was concerned about. It is reasonable to ask Mr O'Neill just who he thought (and thinks) his client was — the man, the foetus or SPUC. The woman went ahead with the abortion which shows (fairly conclusively, one might think) that she had in fact made up her mind. So the man's stated concerns have been answered. But Mr O'Neill is suggesting that "the case" may still proceed, this time, presumably against the doctors, based on the legality of the certificate. Who is his client now? Who will benefit from continuing the case? Neither the man, the foetus, the woman nor the doctors. That leaves Mr O'Neill, and, by extension, SPUC.

There are troubling indications that, elsewhere in New Zealand, Mr O'Neill's machinations have given other sperm providers ideas. Women at risk of pregnancy are growing distrustful of their partners.

There is fear and suspicion that a lover may become an angry adversary; that if he disagrees with her decision he will try to enforce his views on her even if it might result in her arrest for contempt if she disobeys a court's orders.

THE PROCEDURE:

The Court procedure in this sort of case is called an "Application for Review."

Many statutes create duties, or administrative offices, or give various people the power and authority to make certain decisions. Usually the statute will give guidelines for how those decisions should be arrived at. If someone does not carry out those duties properly, or makes an improper decision, or threatens to do so, then those actions can be challenged in the High Court. The complainant files an "Application for Review" asking the court to consider whether the statute in question has been properly administered, and asking for appropriate orders to be made.

The same procedure has recently been used by different groups challenging the issue of visas to the Springboks, and the use of the National Development Act "fast-track" approval system in the Aramoana smelter project. It provides an important way of examining possible abuses of authority. Since the certifying consultants are appointed through a statute, and their actions and decisions must be based on the criteria set out in the CS&A Act, their decisions may well be properly the subject of one of these applications.

A court will grant a final injunction only in support of a legal right. What rights could a sperm-provider, lover or husband, claim under New Zealand's current abortion laws? On the face of it, none at all. The meaning of the CS&A Act will not be clear until it has been interpreted by the courts. But the only relevant section in the CS & A Act seems to be section 33 (7):

"(7) Every certifying consultant may, in considering any case, **with the consent of the patient**, consult with any other person (whether or not a registered medical practitioner) as he thinks fit in order to assist him in his consideration of the case, but he shall not disclose the patient's identity without her consent."

Without the woman's consent the certifying consultant may not confer with anyone else about the case. In theory, at least, that is an ethical rule which would govern members of the medical profession even if it were not spelt out in the statute. A doctor may not betray the confidentiality of the relationship with a patient.

It seems then, that the procedures for getting a certificate issued need not involve discussions with anyone who claims to be the sperm provider.

In 1973 in Liverpool Mr Paton tried to get injunctions against the Trustees of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service and his wife, to prevent Mrs Paton having an abortion.

The first question for the court was whether the plaintiff (Mr Paton) had any rights which should be protected. The judge was convinced that "the foetus cannot, in English law, . . . have any right of its own (in civil law) at least until it is born and has a separate existence from the mother". He went on to say "In this country the illegitimate father can have no rights whatsoever except those given to him by statute." (For instance, the right to apply for access to his child.) So Mr Paton had to rely on the fact that he was a husband. The judge noted that "matrimonial courts have never attempted the enforcement of matrimonial obligations by injunction. No court would ever grant an injunction to stop sterilization or vasectomy. Personal family relationships in marriage cannot be enforced by order of a court. This husband cannot by law by injunction stop his wife having what is now accepted to be a lawful abortion within the terms of the Abortion Act 1967." The 1967 Act gives no right to a father to be consulted in respect of the termination of a pregnancy.

If, despite those indications, a New Zealand Court decided that, in principle "fathers" did have the rights of consultation or even veto, in the New Zealand context, a husband might be presumed to be the relevant person where a woman is married. But a man claiming an interest in the pregnancy of someone he is not married to, may face considerable difficulties.

He may claim that he is the father (which would itself be a fascinating reversal of the hundreds of maintenance cases each year in which men swear black and blue that "it wasn't me", so they can avoid the economic consequences), but how can he prove it, in the face of sworn denials from the pregnant woman.

So, as long as certifying consultants and operating surgeons each consider the woman to be a patient (rather than a mere cipher in an administrative procedure), they cannot reveal anything she may have told them in consultation, including who she may suspect the father to be, without her consent.

If a woman has doubts about the sincerity of her partners she must of course be careful not to discuss the possible paternity with friends or relatives, as these people would not have the same immunity as doctors and could possibly be subpoenaed to court to give evidence in corroboration of the man's claim. If he could produce independent evidence of the woman's own statements, his case would be stronger. The woman would then have to back up her denials with evidence either that he was sterile or impotent at the time, or that there were other named people who were all equally possible candidates, so that sufficient doubt was raised to undermine his claim. The base for lawful abortions in England include provisions that "two registered medical practitioners are of the opinion, formed in good faith — (a) that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman." In deciding "account must be taken of the pregnant woman's actual or reasonably foreseeable environment."

This is fairly similar to our own provision which says an abortion is unlawful unless . . . "the continuance of the pregnancy would result in serious danger (not being danger normally attendant upon childbirth) to the life or to the physical or mental health of the woman or girl . . ."

At the start Mr Paton suggested the termination of his wife's pregnancy would be a criminal offence despite the fact that the two doctors had given a certificate, and that he should be entitled to an injunction which would prevent the criminal law being broken. He later dropped that argument, but it could possibly provide another line of attack in a New Zealand case — this time against the certifying consultants rather than the woman herself.

The judge in Paton's case made some fairly pertinent comments about that argument too. They were expressions of his personal views, and would not be binding on a New Zealand court, but they are nonetheless relevant. "The enforcement of the criminal law is a matter for the authorities and for the Attorney-General . . . any process for the enforcement of the criminal law in a civil suit must be used with great caution, if at all."

He stated his personal view that "it would be quite impossible for the courts to supervise the operation" of abortion law. "The great social responsibility is firmly placed by the law on the shoulders of the medical profession." Where a certificate is clear "it (would) be a bold and brave judge who would seek to interfere with the discretion of doctors . . . he would really be a foolish judge . . . unless possibly there is clear bad faith and an obvious attempt to perpetrate a criminal offence. Even then, of course, the question is whether that is a matter which should be left to . . . the Attorney-General."

In New Zealand the question of whether an abortion would be criminal or not, will revolve around the interpretation of phrases such as "serious danger (not being danger normally attendant upon childbirth)".

If Mr O'Neill's present case, or any future attempt, does get to the stage of a full court hearing these are the major issues which will need to be decided on for the first time in relation to New Zealand's abortion law. But, as we have already seen, by simply filing the court papers without advising the woman or the doctors, Mr O'Neill and his clients may be able to force the court into a position where it has to order an interim injunction for several days. An interim injunction is not an indication of how the court will finally decide the issues — it is simply a holding measure to give the other parties a chance to learn of the applications and prepare their cases for argument. The idea is to maintain the status quo until such time as the legal issues can be dealt with.

Of course the only thing that does remain the same in the meantime is that the woman stays pregnant. But the term of that pregnancy gets longer, her stress about the pregnancy becomes greater, and is complicated by the psychological blow of having her erstwhile lover seem to turn against her without warning. And suddenly she has legal costs and probably a harrowing court appearance to deal with. The certainty of a certified abortion has become an uncertainty. And the consultants and operating surgeon who were helping her are no longer allowed to do so.

One of the tests in deciding whether to grant an interim injunction is "where does the balance of convenience lie?" Which one will have suffered the least inconvenience if the final answer goes their way in the end.

It seems that, almost inevitably, it is the man who will be allowed to run the risk. □

BEHIND THE NEWS

WOMEN AGAINST THE TOUR

As New Zealand reels under the impact of the Springbok Rugby Tour controversy, it is timely to look at the role of women in the struggles. SANDRA CONEY talked to one white and three black activists.

"Remember Soweto, remember Biko, remember Waitangi, remember Gisborne, remember Hamilton . . ."

The chant, lifted by hundreds of voices, echoes in the stony, shop-lined chasm that is Auckland's Upper Symonds Street. The march is one of Auckland's bi-weekly Day of Shame demonstrations against the Springbok Rugby Tour of New Zealand.

Leading the chant on this bleak and lowering Saturday, is a woman with a megaphone — Maori feminist Rebecca Evans.

Later the skies do open but Rebecca stands stoically in the rain under the watchful eye of the boys in blue to lead a teach-in on domestic racism outside Mt Eden Prison.

Regular marchers have got used to seeing Maori women in a literally up-front role in the anti-tour campaign. New Zealanders watching the latest incredible episode of the Tour Troubles unfolding on their tellies can't have missed the fact that marshalling the marches, facing the batons, and directing the invasions of jet planes, motorways and rugby pitches are women. For women, and especially Maori women, form the backbone of the anti-tour movement.

"If you look around at any of our meetings," says Halt All Racist Tours organiser, Kitch Cuthbert,

Photo by Gisborne Herald



Kitch Cuthbert (centre) with two other women after arrest at Gisborne.

"you'd mostly see women. We bring to the anti-racist struggle our own history and lifetime of oppression. We can identify with the people we're fighting for. When HART members chose the people to organise action for the Hamilton match, they elected three men and four women, two of them Maori women."

Donna Awatere isn't surprised that Maori women are keeping a high profile: "I said in 1976 that if there's the revolution in New Zealand, it will be led by Maori women. Five years later we're beginning to see the seeds of that."

Rebecca Evans explains why it's been Maori women rather than Maori men who grasped the mettle: "Maori men have more to lose over the tour because of the sexist connection with rugby. For Maori men, rugby has been a bargaining ground."

Donna Awatere sees the present level of activism and commitment by Maori women as a vindication of over ten years of consciousness-raising and organising among Maori women: "Where white women gave up on CR, the third world movement attacked it with gusto. Maori

women's strength now proves that strategy. Maori women have worked out that their oppression is a three-sided prism of patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy. We're the most affected by each and we are more committed to smashing the prism. When you realise what you're up against you realise that just a small level of commitment isn't enough. Just a peaceful march won't smash the prism. Maori women bring to the anti-racist struggle a killer attitude that comes from being more determined."

There's also a network of committed Maori women and groups throughout New Zealand, built up through several years of black women's meetings and hui, that can be plugged into wherever the tour itinerary takes the protestors. Says Awatere: "We all know each other; we're all involved in the same struggle so we have incredible links with each other. That means when we go to a place like Gisborne, we immediately have a home. And we can trust our people to have done the pre-work like reconnaissance."

Awatere has a theory about the women who have been most active

against the tour. "You notice about the Maori women who are involved that most have come to terms with difficult relationships with male mates. The majority are not with men; they're all women who have risen above the desperate drive for heterosexual union and the subsequent compromises that women make between romantic illusion and their political principles. They have time to give and are uncompromisingly committed."

"This is particularly noticeable with the dyke women," she says, referring to the many lesbians who have marched under Dykes Against The Tour banners (see box) and taken part in other actions. "Both blacks and dykes can see what has to be done very clearly with only a brief explanation — they go straight to the heart of the matter."

Kitch Cuthbert points to the women's movement as a proving ground for many of the women now pivotally involved. "The women's movement as a growth movement has helped the strength and power of women. The women in HART see themselves as feminists and ... that's true right round the country." Cuthbert's been involved in HART since 1969, met her husband in the organisation, and has become more and more committed. She's noticed women increasingly putting themselves forward. "In the past women held back from asserting themselves — now it's quite the reverse. If you look at arrests across the country far more women are putting themselves in situations where they could be arrested. Many men put their lives and careers before personal commitment. Women are not holding back. At Hamilton when we came to the fence the women did not hesitate, they charged through. We thought that women might be threatened by those jeering rugby types, but they didn't flinch. Women were saying to their husbands: 'You take the kids to the back of the march, I'm going on.'"

The largest number of arrests, and the most serious charges, says Rebecca Evans, have been directed against Maori women. All the women I spoke to had been arrested; Rebecca, who faces charges from depositing dangerous litter to wilful damage (to the tune of \$2000) of the Hamilton fence, sees the explanation for this as a combination



Outside the Springbok's motel in Gisborne.

of sexism, racism, and a recognition by the police of the militant role played by Maori women. "Maori women are providing examples of risk-taking to the movement. The most successful events, the ones that have boosted morale, have been the most militant events that Maori women have participated in." Mereana Pitman who is up on charges of depositing dangerous litter after an incident where three Maori women and one white man crashed a hired landrover through the fence surrounding the Gisborne field and scattered glass on the pitch, confirmed this. "A lot of people have said to me when they heard about the glass incident that it was that that finally got them off their backsides."

Sadly, there's another dark, gut-wrenching aspect to women's involvement in the campaign. Donna Awatere calls the tour "an issue of white male violence", and this violence has taken very tangible and bloody form at some of the clashes. Kitch Cuthbert talks about the sexual component in the verbal aggression directed at the women. She describes a scene at Gisborne when she and other women continually tried to scale a muddy bank only to be dumped back by police waiting at the top. Rugby spectators screamed: "Get those fucking bitches, get those sluts! Block them, blueies!"

"When the first ambulance arrived at the hospital after Hamilton," says Mereana Pitman, "The people

Protest outside Poho-o-Rewiti marae



who got out were black women and lesbians." When I spoke to her, Rebecca Evans was nursing a snapped tendon in her arm, which she got while being arrested and taken off the field at Hamilton. But Rebecca may have been safer in a cell than the 300 who had stood in the middle of the field forcing the cancellation of the game and who then had to run the gauntlet of angry, kicking and gouging spectators to get off the field.

"The casualties," Kitch Cuthbert confirms, "were two-thirds women. The violence is directed at women and old people because we are seen as more vulnerable. They were punching women in the breasts, going for the soft, vulnerable places."

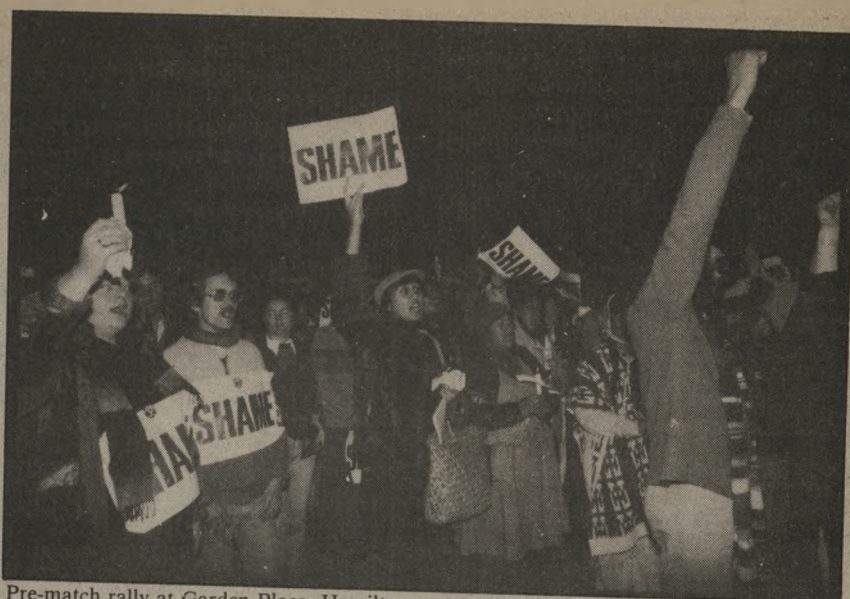
"Going out of the field," says Mereana Pitman, "was terrifying. Groups of young white males were

coming at us from the terraces and some were pissed out of their brains. I could smell the whiskey on the guy who hit my arm. One guy had Sue and was pounding and pounding her in the eye. Michelle got a broken nose and three broken teeth after being hit by a bottle."

But none of the women is surprised that the reaction to the protests is so bitter or so virulent. They have a coldly realistic appraisal of what's at stake.

"It's really a war situation," says Kitch Cuthbert, "no different from what people fought for in World War Two. We won't back down, it's right to the end." Kitch is armed only with stout wet weather gear and heavy army boots. To her it all comes down to "20 million blacks". That was her answer to the jeering rugby spectators who finally asked why she kept coming back after the police had dumped her face down over and over again in the icy Gisborne mud. "20 million blacks," she says, "give you the right to break down fences. What's my life beside 20 million lives."

There are other things at stake here too. Donna Awatere sees Commonwealth opposition to the tour as



Pre-match rally at Garden Place, Hamilton.

Photo: Michael Jeans

DYKES AGAINST THE TOUR

In both Wellington and Auckland, lesbians have marched protesting the tour under a lesbian banner. Their reasons for being part of the marches are all loosely tied to their awareness of oppression. The marches give lesbians the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to equalise all races, an aspect of lesbian thinking not often apparent in a society that thinks of lesbians as only sexual beings. Black feminists here have very active lesbians in their movement, and lesbian solidarity across the races has been demonstrable on all the marches.

Concern for the increasing erosion of human rights, which the tour epitomises, is another common reason that many lesbians march. As lesbians are not granted visibility (status) and therefore consideration under the

Human Rights Act, their activism in this area springs from a strong sense of injustice. Since lesbians who were once married are mothers, their lack of status under the Human Rights Act leaves them vulnerable to a type of sexual intimidation: it is not unknown for estranged husbands and their lawyers to pressure lesbian mothers in custody and maintenance battles by threatening to use lesbian sexuality as a reason for obtaining the most advantageous terms for the husband.

Some lesbians march to express openly their dislike of the patriarchal twin powers of capitalism and the nuclear family. The fact that those words now sound like rhetorical jargon is an indication of how long feminists of either sexuality have recognised the source of their oppression.

But the most commonly voiced reason was that of revolution: lesbians, along with literally millions of other people, can see the vital need to bring the present social machinery to a halt, to remodel it and to change its reasons for existing. "It's got to stop," said one. "Reagan OK's the neutron bomb and Talboys shows how much of a partnership the ANZAC pact is — 'we have little choice but to go along' — that's what Talboys said. The neutron bomb is very appealing to the money boys — all it does is kill people. Buildings and property aren't harmed. Decimate a few million of the world's poor and you solve a lot of problems. How could I not march? I'm female, black, lesbian and a feminist. What other reasons do I need?" □

Sandi Hall

"a revolt of the black nations who were in the past the targets of white supremacist capitalist expansion. They are serving notice on the white majority countries of the Commonwealth to look at the ways they maintain racist policies that oppress black people."

Awatere has an additional, more personal, reason for opposing the tour. Her now-dead father, as leader of the Maori battalion sat and sweated for four days in a ship outside Capetown at the end of World War 2, while white New Zealanders enjoyed leave in the city. "My father said the South Africans treated the Maori battalion like dogs, and I've never forgotten that."

Rebecca Evans says the tour has "swept up our lives", but it's enabled her to "consolidate a lot of things I've thought of for a long time." She describes the Hamilton game action as one of the "most exhilarating political experiences I've had." "It was a unique political experience. We were right there confronting all the forces opposing us — the police, and through them the government, and the right-wing section of the public.

"It was a suicidal situation, surrounded by 30,000 red-necks. The protestors linked arms in the middle, and I walked round with a loud hailer keeping up morale. At one point I looked round at the crowd and I closed my eyes for a moment and thought 'What the fuck have we done'."

What they had done was push that ugly spectre, racism, into centre field, declaring "he wears a rugby shirt". Whether New Zealanders will, myopically, be only able to see him in the Boer green and yellow, and not the Kiwi silver fern remains to be seen. Awatere, anyway, is optimistic. "It's a good thing people are marching about racism in South Africa, because it's a beginning point for them to look at racism in New Zealand. We have apartheid here too, but without the name. Only one group gets the benefits of this country's economy, at the expense of the other. People are making connections. I hope there'll be more awareness of how white people benefit from New Zealand racism by acquiescing in its benefits." Rebecca Evans asks: "Will this mass energy fade off or be

redirected to domestic racism?"

She hopes so. She dreams that come February 1982 that dedicated band of Waitangi demonstrators will be joined by the thousands of New Zealanders who are currently on the march against racism. □

HOW WELL IS WEL?

The annual conference of the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) was held in Motueka during June. JUDIE ALLUM of Gisborne and ADRIENNE DALE of Nelson both attended, but came away with very different impressions.

I have recently returned from a weekend in Motueka, where I, with four other Gisborne women, attended the annual conference of WEL (NZ).

I want to share with other **Broadsheet** readers the positive feelings about the women's movement in 1981 which I brought back from that conference.

This was the fifth WEL Conference since we began in 1975, and the organisation seems to me to be stronger now than it ever has been. Fourteen branches were represented there, from Kerikeri to Invercargill, and there are other branches who couldn't make it.

The feedback from branches indicates a diversity of action within a unity of purpose which is really invigorating. WEL branches have always guarded their autonomy within the basic philosophy of the national organisation, and this

allows each branch to use its particular strengths as it thinks best. Hence this year we have Kapiti branch focusing on rape and domestic violence, Gisborne branch working on unemployment, Wellington studying electoral reform, and Wairarapa focusing on women and health, all in conjunction with general activity aimed at getting more women into decision-making positions.

Broadsheet readers will be interested to know that one of our major strategies in this election year is about to be launched. Our organisation is acting as a collection and distribution agency for donations to the campaign funds of women standing for Parliament. We will collect and pass on funds for any woman candidate, regardless of party, but we are issuing information on each candidate's views on three major issues — abortion, the Working Women's Charter, and childcare — to assist contributors to select who their donations should go to.

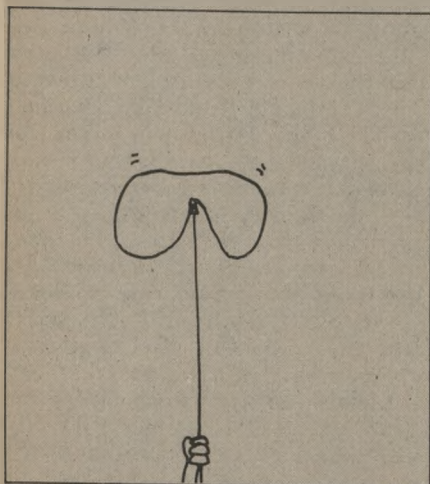
We believe this is a concrete way for women to help improve women's representation in Parliament. As a local body candidate last year, I can honestly say that I would not have been successful if my feminist friends had not raised funds for me. Money doesn't only mean more leaflets or whatever to a candidate — it is also a much-needed boost to morale.

It is easy to get depressed about our slow progress towards a feminist revolution, whatever that will entail. When I rise at a Council meeting to defend the right of mothers to put pushchairs and prams on city buses in the rush hour, and fail to win my case, I could get depressed and believe we're making little progress. But then I tell myself that we just must work harder to get more women, more feminist women, in where the decisions are being made. And that's why WEL is so important.

I don't believe WEL's kind of activity is the whole answer — far from it. I am delighted at the range of activism which is going on among women, and the slowly growing awareness in the community that a woman's place is anywhere she wants to be. We now have a women's art gallery, and women's health collectives, and rape crisis centres, and women's refuges, and women's work co-operatives doing

everything from gib boarding to patchwork quilt making, and women's studies courses — none of which we had before 1975 or thereabouts.

Of course there's a backlash going on — that's a sign that we're making enough impact to make the opposition scared — good! And if some women would rather join Aglow groups instead of WEL groups, well, we never thought we'd have changed society completely by now, did we? □



What a flat balloon was the National Conference of the Women's Electoral Lobby:

- a lengthy list of apologies;
- not a hopeful politician in sight;
- an information sheet about 26 women candidates had no policy affecting women from 13 of them;
- of the 5 women MPs a statement of attitudes from only one;
- a brief mention of Mrs Ruki, Mrs Ross of Ocean Beach and Anne Barry appeared to be the limit of explanation or concern for them;
- apparent satisfaction that WEL is numerically small and will remain so;
- a chart proposing to measure the extent of women's work had no place for work such as farming;
- a handful of unimpressive remits met with the small interest that they deserved;
- discussion of abortion was relegated to late in the afternoon, and treated as a non-issue.

What changes has WEL effected since the last election? Was that sheet the best that political feminists could provide to inform women about election candidates? Should a national organisation show such

signs of being incompetently organised? Is WEL satisfied to be insignificant? Are there really so few issues of importance? Has the repeal of the CS & A Act really lost its urgency? Why is WEL not showing itself to be as strong a lobbying force as SPUC and its allies? Why is WEL not scooping up new members by being outspoken and challenging?

It is small wonder that guest speaker Judith Aitken left the audience stunned: brilliant, articulate, penetrating, rousing — and that weekend was WEL's shameful reply. □

Judith Aitken's speech is printed in the theory section of this issue.

CAVEAT TEACHER

DOREEN SUDDENS was among the fifty people who attended the first Campaign Against Violence in Education (CAVE) seminar held in Auckland recently.

CAVE is a collective of primary and secondary school teachers, both male and female, with a strong showing of Feminist Teachers. There are also a few non-teachers on the collective and rank and file membership of CAVE is open to everybody. The group aims to work towards the elimination of all corporal punishment in schools, for it believes the use of physical punishment reinforces violence in our society. It is also concerned about verbal and mental violence.

Waiting for the show to get on the road, I spoke to a pupil from a high school which had abolished corporal punishment. She was full of

praise for the situation. The school had created an atmosphere in which there was now more caring, sharing and discussion between teachers and pupils. She felt the lack of enforced discipline from outside created more self discipline. Later, in my first workshop, a teacher from a non-corporal punishment school, said he had noticed there was now less violence in the playground. A Feminist Teacher said she, and other teachers, feel bad when they send pupils to be disciplined and the disciplinary method is violent.

Guest speakers, feminist psychologist Dr Jane Ritchie and her husband Dr James Ritchie, presented their speech in tandem. The Ritchies have found corporal punishment to be an emotional issue in society. They feel corporal punishment leads to violence in society, and that television is held up as a scapegoat for the violence, and so people do not look further. Jane and James have a book to be released soon, which should go down well with CAVE people and their ilk, called **Spare the Rod**.

After lunch workshops were held including How to Handle Aggression, State Schools with Viable Alternatives, and Change through the Teacher Unions. I went to the Sexist Values and Violence in Education workshop run by the Ritchies. The participants in the Sexist Values workshop showed how little men are interested in this subject; there were 17 women and only 5 men. Here, at random, are some of the ideas which came out of the Sexist Values workshop: "Violence is a feminist issue for it enforces sexist attitudes through corporal punishment"; "there is a sexism and violence link"; "women are taught to rely on men's strength, providing protection, until attacked"; "men are taught to hide feelings so they can deny them in others"; "female experience is denied in school text books".

At a plenary session motions were passed requesting the Human Rights Commission to investigate corporal punishment as a violation of human rights; for CAVE to request the executive of the New Zealand Education Institute and the Post Primary Teachers Association to get their membership to abolish corporal punishment; and for political parties to make statements on their policy on corporal punishment. □

Abortion saves lives

US government officials reportedly altered the agenda for Senate Judiciary Subcommittee hearings in May, keeping out a scheduled report on the benefits of legalised abortion. The statement, prepared by a National Centre for Disease Control official, showed that legalised abortions have significantly reduced abortion-related diseases and deaths, teenage marriages, and out-of-wedlock births.

The statement was never given at the Subcommittee hearings, however. Instead, the CDC official's supervisors — including abortion foe, Health and Human Services Secretary, Richard Schweiker — reportedly changed the speakers lineup. The result was that another CDC official stepped in and gave a report that did not mention most of the favourable effects of legal abortion.

The data from the original report showed, in part, that abortion-related deaths fell from 235 in 1965, when the operation was illegal throughout the US, to two fatalities in 1967, after legalisation.

The Subcommittee that never did hear the original report recently cast an anti-abortion vote, declaring that life begins at conception. **Her Say**



The revelation of tennis star Billie Jean King's lesbian relationship and court case against her by her former lover is apparently making some corporations uneasy.

The president of Power Grip, a company that makes a resin substance, has said he feels "A little peculiar," about the case against King, and that he hopes "The whole thing will die down."

Avon, which sponsors two women's tennis tournaments endorsed by King may also be wobbling over its affiliation with the tennis pro. A spokesperson said the company "would not be involved in anything that would hurt our image."

In the meantime, E.R. Squibb and Sons, has dropped King from its new vitamin ads. A spokesperson maintains that a new ad agency was chosen shortly after the first of the year, and that the change is not related to news of King's lesbian relationship.

On the other hand, both Nike and U.S. Sports Equipment, companies whose products King also endorses, have reaffirmed their support of the tennis champion.

The promotions director for Nike added that the company was "impressed by her candor, forthrightness and courage to respond as she has." **Her Say**



Un discriminates against women

The Ad Hoc Group on Equal Rights for Women at the United Nations Secretariat distributed a questionnaire on discrimination against women among UN staff and came up with some depressing answers. According to the group's publication, **Equal Time** (editor ex-NZer Sue Markham; ex-NZer Susan Kedgley on Board of Directors) 152 out of 172 UN employees who answered the questionnaire said there was discrimination and almost all the 144 women who responded said they had personally suffered from it. The most frequently cited area in which they felt discriminated against was in promotion followed by transfers, work assignments, recruitment and sexual harassment. Other complaints cited inferior office type and location, coffee fetching, offensive language from men, not being consulted on decisions affecting their work, sexual innuendo, being treated like a maid and intimidation. "The most depressing aspect," says **Equal Time** "was the fact that so few women who had personally suffered from discrimination felt they could do anything about it. To the question: What did you do about it? the most common answer was: nothing! Many women said that standing up for their rights only made things worse... some said they didn't know what to do... some pointed out that patronizing and condescending attitudes are difficult to prove, let alone change..."

Equal Time reports that the Secretariat Panel on Discrimination set up to investigate complaints of discrimination on the basis of sex, race, colour, language, religion, personality, politics, age, natural or social origin has revealed that 25% of complaints it investigates are from women and about sex discrimination. A recent report from the Panel states that it "found discrimination against women was endemic and not always apparent as such. Often no remedial action is possible within existing staff rules and administrative procedures, and imaginative new processes will have to be sought."

The Ad Hoc group is in favour of a proposal mooted last year; that a full-time ombudswoman be appointed with the authority to recommend actions on the status and employment of women within the UN. The group is waiting to hear back from the Secretary General on this proposal.

Lead in Petrol

The effects of lead poisoning have long been known. Lead is a neuro-toxin producing disturbances of behaviour and intelligence. It lowers the oxygen-carrying capacity of red-blood cells, causes liver and kidney damage, mental retardation in children and abnormalities of fertility and pregnancy.

Tetraethyl lead, a highly toxic organic form of lead, has been added to petrol since the 1920s to prevent engine knocking. Car exhausts convert most into an inorganic form and this is absorbed from the air or dust. A 1977 study in Christchurch concluded that lead levels in roadside and playground dust is as high or higher than similar dust in cities such as Manchester or Birmingham. City dwellers nowadays are absorbing lead thirty times as fast as their grandparents. Research by Auckland and Christchurch Universities indicates a large number of New Zealand children have blood-levels higher than 30ug/100ml, the standard "level of concern" (but three times as high as remote Papuan New Guinea children).

The Health Department does not consider there is any urgency in the removal of lead in view of our relatively low population (although we do have a high number of vehicles), and spread out "well-ventilated" cities. It is hard to prove the dangers — people don't usually die from low-level exposure.

Children are particularly susceptible to low-level lead effects as lead crosses their blood-brain barrier more readily. The subtle "sub-clinical effects" depend on careful behavioural observations. A study of 1200 children, "Lead Burden of Sydney Schoolchildren" found "an alarming situation of epidemic proportions which should receive urgent and detailed attention at the highest government level... Whenever anti-social or delinquent children were encountered they had raised blood-lead levels." Air lead levels was the only factor showing an association with the blood measurements.

The recently-formed Committee for Lead Free Petrol is working towards the total elimination of leaded petrol. Further information can be obtained from the Committee, P.O. Box 8558, Symonds Street, Auckland.

Femicide

The Chinese custom of drowning baby girls at birth is apparently still going on. Authorities outside China had believed that the practice had faded away after the communists gained power in 1949. However, an official family planning document by the Chinese government says otherwise.

The document says that the continuation of the custom shows that many Chinese — apparently mainly in rural areas — still value male children more than female offspring, because of the lingering idea that boys will be more useful workers.

The paper, published in the latest issue of **Population Studies Journal**, gave no estimate of how many female children are killed each year by their parents. **Her Say**

'Please Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood'

Will round two of the Ripper saga be as upsetting to British women as round one? On June 12, Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe lodged an appeal against his conviction for murder. He is, he claims, only guilty of 'manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility'. The British media's sensational and salacious coverage of the original trial provoked angry protests from feminists, relatives of the Ripper's victims, and even the Queen.

Despite the chivalrous, PR quality of the romance of Prince Charles and Lady Di, Britain is fast following the American way in crimes of violence against women.

Eileen Fairweather assesses the Sutcliffe saga, and the making of a new anti-hero.

An historic outing, with all the fascination of the public hangings of old — that, presumably, is how those women who queued all night to get a glimpse of Peter Sutcliffe viewed the recent Ripper trial. Not all women in Britain however, were quite so dispassionate about the man who had savaged twenty of their sex, killing thirteen of them.

When the trial ended on May 22, many expressed relief that Sutcliffe had been found guilty of murder, not manslaughter. At least that verdict seemed to express some moral condemnation of his crimes. For throughout the trial, the defence psychiatrists — and often even the prosecution — bent over backwards to find excuses for the man. As for the media, they turned Jack the lad into a positive anti-hero.

For editors, the trial provided a welcome diversion from the grim news of the past two months: blacks rioting, Irish republicans bombing, and even electing an IRA hunger-striker as their MP. Coffins coming out of Long Kesh, and marches across England in protest at 2½ million unemployed.

In a United Kingdom which was far from united, the press could produce just two triumphs

for old-fashioned values: the marriage of Himself and Lady Di, and the capture and trial of the Yorkshire Ripper. One a romance we could all coo about, the other a ghoulishly exciting cautionary tale. If being a titled virgin can win you a prince, and virtue is its own reward, the opposite is also true. Bad girls get what they deserve.

Where Sutcliffe literally hammered those whom he considered "the scum of the earth", the press and judiciary now hammered them verbally. Like the police during their five year investigation, they made a constant distinction between the Ripper's "innocent" and prostitute victims.

The crocodile tears dredged up daily for relatives did not extend to the 23 children whose prostitute mothers died. The daily protests outside the court by prostitute and feminist organisations were trivialised, or vilified; when they were shot at, the press even managed to attribute the attack to the protestors themselves. Really, these masochistic women...

Even the Guardian, one of Britain's more serious papers, sometimes reported the case with a nudge and a wink. One court report dwelt on how Marcella Claxton, one of the seven women who survived, laughed when Sutcliffe described his preference for large-breasted women. It failed to mention that Claxton is subnormal, and has the mental age of a child of seven. For the sake of jolly, commuter-train reading, how much more preferable to make it seem that prostitutes regard a fractured skull as a matter of jovial indifference.

"But we're only doing our job!" said one journalist whom I challenged over the press coverage of the trial. In

this instance, that tired old excuse for moral abdication could be quoted with, well at least a little justice. For the prejudices aired in each day's papers often came from the learned men running the whole show. The prosecutor, Attorney General Sir Michael Havers, considered Sutcliffe's homicidal hatred of prostitutes "not altogether surprising, given he had been fleeced and humiliated", i.e. once done out of ten quid by one.

For the sake of a tenner, thirteen women were lost.

Or six, if you share the Ripper's view that prostitutes "cannot justify themselves in society" anyway. The Attorney General himself kicked off the trial by differentiating between his victims: "some were prostitutes, but perhaps the saddest part of this case is that some were not. The last six attacks were on totally respectable women." What a farce, for three groups of men — prosecution, defence and psychiatrists — to then battle over whether the Ripper's attitude was "bad", i.e. one they could not condone, or "mad", i.e. so rare as to be abnormal.

For some, death is an infinitely enriching experience.

The papers fell over themselves to buy up, for enormous sums, exclusive access to the inarticulate grunts of people who had once known Sutcliffe, shared a schoolyard, bed or pint with him.

Trevor Birdsall, the **Sunday People's** catch, had once even shared Sutcliffe's tours of red-light districts. One such outing, as Birdsall knew, resulted in Sutcliffe attacking a prostitute with a rock. But it took over a decade for Birdsall to become sufficiently suspicious of his mate to break blood-brother

bonds, and go to the police. For such gallantry, Birdsall has had the audacity to even apply for the £50,000 Ripper reward.

But the paper which put up £20,000 of the reward is arguing that Birdsall's suspicions did not lead to Sutcliffe's arrest. Which is true enough. Given that nine police interviews with Sutcliffe, his name appearing over 30 times on their car computer checks, his previous arrests for attacking a prostitute, and carrying an offensive weapon, did not arouse the suspicions of the intrepid boys in blue, why should a mere anonymous note, then a visit, from the murderer's best friend. Doubtless the **News Of The World** — known colloqually in Britain as "News Of The Screws" — will be able to hang on to the reward money, and use it to improve the literary quality of its stock in trade, the rape reports which it routinely turns into pornographic cameos.

Meanwhile, police chief Ronald Gregory

is being investigated over his stewardship of the £4 million hunt, and a detective sergeant who asked a reporter for a modest £1000, for his reminiscences, has been fined £750. Two books on the Ripper's exploits have already been published, a film is in the pipeline, wax-works and a record made, and we shall probably never know how much money has changed hands, and will continue to do so, in the creation of Ripper memorabilia.

What we do know is that

the mother of 16 year old Jayne McDonald, the Ripper's first "decent" victim, cannot afford to give her surviving child pocket money or school bus-fares. Her husband, the family breadwinner, became paralysed



ed through shock and eventually died, after identifying his daughter's mutilated body. No-one, it seems has offered thousands to the twice-bereft Mrs McDonald, for **her** thoughts on the Ripper. The mentally sub-normal Marcella Claxton, who lost the baby she was carrying as a result of the Ripper's attack, has had her application for compensation turned down by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. Like the Ripper himself, this state agency considered Marcella, as a prostitute, fair game.

The mother of Jacqueline Hill, the Ripper's last victim, has bravely campaigned against the media's exploitation of grief and brutality. In an unusual alliance of women, even the Queen added her voice to the protests made by feminists, and Doreen Hill, at "cheque-book journalism".

Whether the Daily Mail offered the Ripper's father £¼ million, as alleged by the investigative magazine **Private Eye**, or "only £5000", the views of Sutcliffe senior got ample publicity in any case. Immediately after the trial, he gave vent to the predictable excuse that, if only his beloved son had married another girl, "this tragedy would never have happened".

Excuses for Sutcliffe, whether paternal, psychiatric or overtly patriarchal, dominated the affair. Minor domestic details suddenly loomed large as causal factors in the creation of a mass killer. Wife Sonia, the defence psychiatrists solemnly intoned, kept the heating down low, and sometimes even turned off the TV when hubby was watching...

Inevitably, Sutcliffe's dead mother also earned a star billing. Although everyone, Sutcliffe included, described her as a warm and loving mother, friend and neighbour, the psychiatrists still found cause to point their fingers. After bringing up six children, in poverty and ill health, and while married to a man whom even the shrinks described as "cold and domineering", she had an affair. And so, Dr Milne said, "the happy marriage was destroyed, and the father became unfaithful", and Sutcliffe unstable. Between nagging wives, imperfect mothers, and fallen women, the psychiatrists and press were positively spoilt for choice, as to which women were most to blame for violence against women.

But above all, it was the focus on the 'virtue' of Sutcliffe's victims which drew attention away from the source of their victimisation; a man, acting with a brutality which innumerable men before him have shown to women. Britain's refuges for battered women are full to overflowing; its eleven rape crisis centres insufficient to help all those who have been raped; and gynocide so routine that most murders of women now rate only a few lines in the papers.

But Sutcliffe was the guy who went over the top, and could, therefore, be turned into some kind of woman-hating rarity. The Attorney General did not even want a trial by jury at all, originally arguing that the Crown should automatically accept Sutcliffe's plea of manslaughter, on the grounds of diminished responsibility. It was only at the judge's insistence that he was tried for murder.

In the end, the jury found him guilty of the latter charge, if only out of a very British distrust of trick-cyclists. But the man clearly had to be put away for life, either way. If the trial did serve any useful function, it was in bringing to light the almost incredible level of police bungling of the case. What did not in the least emerge, however, was any criticism as to the society which helped **create** Sutcliffe.

Far from "deviating from the norm,"

Sutcliffe simply, if horribly, exaggerated upon it. To hear the shrinks and judiciary agonise over Sutcliffe's motives for genital mutilation and exposure — "I wanted to show them for what they really were" — one would imagine that they had never noticed the pornography, with cover photos of women with legs splayed, which is legally sold on most high-street news-stands. Or that at least six films currently on general release in Britain — never mind the sleazy joints of Soho — revolve around post-coital murder.

When I switched on the radio to get a break from writing this article, it was to hear, "I slapped your face/and twisted your wrist/tore off your clothes... now if that ain't love, what is?" When hurting women is even considered romantic, it's little wonder that both defence and psychiatrists got into such a tizz over whether Sutcliffe's actions, with a seven-inch screwdriver, were 'sexual' or 'sick'. The violence which some men masturbate over, and others have turned into a multi-million industry, Sutcliffe perfected. In the eyes of the boys, perhaps his worst crime was, like President Nixon's, that he got himself caught.

Such a jaundiced and cynical view, some might say. I myself tut-tutted when the first trial graffiti went up: Not mad or bad

but MALE, that feminist verdict read. So stark, I thought, so uncompromising, unable to square the Ripper's sadism, or responsibility for it, with the men I care about. How cautious we women are about wounding even through our anger. What allowances we, and this entire society, make for the 'stronger' sex, and the fragility of their egos.

While even the prosecution commiserated

over various "insults" to Sutcliffe's "virility" — such as when Wilma McCann, the mother of four who was his first victim, failed to make their £10 encounter on wasteland sufficiently "romantic" — Ripper survivor Olive Smelt was attempting to rebuild her life. Since this 46 year old cleaner was attacked, she has only twice been out after dark. Her marriage nearly broke up, because she grew to fear "all men". In order to overcome this, Olive Smelt forced herself to work in an all-male environment, helping in a hostel for the homeless.

That woman's courage, and forgiveness, floors me. Revenge is not beyond women's scope. Physically, there is little to stop the thousands of women who have been brutalised by men from taking their revenge on weaker men, or boy children. How rarely, if ever, that happens.

But our tolerance is taken for granted; even expected. Last November, in Leeds, the teenage Maw sisters were sentenced to seven years for killing their father, during his near nightly ritual of battering them and their mother. Three days before, in the same town, Douglas Cole was sentenced to two years probation for murdering his wife. She 'nagged'. That same night, and again in Leeds, the Ripper claimed his final victim. When the long scheduled



Women Against Violence Against Women conference took place in Leeds next day, it ended with nearly 1000 women rioting through the town, attacking sex shops and cinemas, the police, and brandishing burning torches at men, telling them to "get it home while you've still got it on you."

For once, women's anger made TV and headline news. Yet even some feminists have hummed and hawed over whether such protests are justified, or tactically wise. Undeterred, the anonymous 'Angry Women' have continued to sabotage pornography outlets in 15 towns, in some cases by fire-bombing.

My own way of coping with the anger induced by the Ripper trial was, at the time, to mostly suppress it. But on the weekend after his conviction, it was impossible to ignore the tide of garbage poured out by the papers, radio and TV. Even the serious Sundays urged us to 'understand' Sutcliffe, the **Observer** giving ample room to psychologist Anthony Storr to explain why male violence is, if regrettable, blah blah blah, biologically inevitable.

What finally broke my control was the innocent ringing of an ornamental bell. It reminded me of the Masses of my youth, a Catholic upbringing which Sutcliffe shared, of the moment when the priest raised the Host, and altar-boys rang their bells in honour of Christ's sacrifice. Once, I innocently asked a priest why I could not serve on the altar, could only clean it or be married there, and then once the symbolic Body of Christ had been removed. This being before the cosmetic liberalisations of Vatican Two, the priest did not mince words. "Because women are impure!" he snapped, "the daughters of Eve!"

As an eight year old, I did not understand the contempt for my sex implicit in a religion whose God even had to be born of a Virgin. But Peter Sutcliffe presumably did. On the altars from which I was barred, he served until the age of 17.

Whether madman or badman, Catholic or otherwise, Sutcliffe is the logical result of a world in which the culpable lewdness of women is even theologically sanctified. Although prostitutes take the worst punishment, no woman escapes the label of Eve. As Sutcliffe said of the non-prostitute women he killed, "by that point I wasn't bothered. I just wanted to kill any woman." His "divine mission" had been forgotten.

In the aftermath of the trial, Britain's Press Council has to deal with a barrage of complaints from, amongst others, the National Union of Journalists, the unions Equality Working Party, and many individual feminist-minded reporters. But the Council is as toothless as the investigations into the police will probably be. Both enquiries into the police conduct of the case will be held in private, and one conducted by the police themselves.

As for Peter Sutcliffe, he is reported to have 'returned to the faith'. Perhaps, even now, some calm and objective priest is speeding him on his way to normality; reassuring him that God is infinitely forgiving, and that only Virgin Mothers preside in His heaven. For those of us who can never be immaculately conceived, and some who will never forgive, the battle to make life on earth fit for ordinary women continues.



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NEW ARRIVALS

If you've been watching Vera Brittain's moving *Testament of Youth* Television series, you may be interested in reading the three books on which the programmes are based: **Testament of Youth** (\$7.95); **Testament of Experience** (\$7.95); and **Testament of Friendship** (\$10.95) about her friendship with Winifred Holtby. New books by New Zealand authors: a reissue of Sylvia Ashton-Warner's novel **Spinster** by Virago (\$7.95) tells the story of Anna, a genius teacher and passionate woman; in **Woman's Work: a Source Book for Women in work** (\$6.95) Karen O'Brien interviews 18 New Zealand women working in male-dominated fields — pharmacist, trade union secretary, tool-maker, town planner etc — an ideal book for schools wanting to present wider options to girls; Betty Holt's **Women in Council** (\$6.00) is an important book which documents the history of the National Council of Women from 1896, showing the change in profile of the Council over that time; **Women in Management** (\$8.95) by Dr Helen Place is the result of the author's research on this little-studied area of New Zealand women's lives. **Women and Honour: Notes on Lying** by Adrienne Rich is only \$1.35. **From Hand to Mouth** (\$10.95) by Marianne Herzog describes the author's and other women's experiences as piece workers. One of the best anthologies of feminist writing **Voices from Women's Liberation** by Leslie Tanner at the amazingly cheap price of \$2.75.

NOVELS

Recent novels from publishers big and small: From *Spinsters Inc* in the US **Bones and Kim** (\$5.95) by Lynn Strongin focusses on female relationships in a work which Michelle Cliff calls "vivid and sensual"; **Give Me Your Good Ear** (\$4.95) by Maureen Brady explores the mother/daughter relationship. From Virago, a novel by Alexandra Kollantai **A Great Love** (\$8.95) describes a woman's search for equality and passion in a relationship with a man she loves; and Zoe Fairburn's **Benefits** (\$10.50) provides a powerful look into the future at a Britain where feminism has become a threat to the social order. The third book in Doris Lessing's *Canopus in Argos* series is available; called **The Sirian Experiments** (\$20.95) it continues the space-aged saga begun with **Shikasta**. From the Feminist Press in the US, Rebecca Harding Davis' moving tale of the exploitation of the working class people in nineteenth century America, **Life in the Iron Mills** (\$6.50) — also includes an inspiring biographical interpretation by Tillie Olsen. Onlywomen Press in UK has published Eve Croft's **Brainchild** (\$8.50), the story of a rebellious working class woman called Ginny. We have three titles from Australian writer Barbara Hanrahan in stock: **The Albatross Muff** (\$5.75) from The Women's Press and **The Peach Groves** (\$6.20) and **The Frangipani Gardens** (\$9.95) from the University of Queensland Press. All Hanrahan's books are mysterious, a bit sinister and very original — the last two are set in Australia; **The Peach Groves** partly in New Zealand.

WOMEN OF COLOUR

A series of essential books from the UK press, Zed Press: **We Will Smash This Prison: Indian Women in Struggle** (\$11.35) by Gail Omvedt, a first-hand account of the feminist movement in India; **Frogs in a Well: Indian Women in Purdah** (\$11.35) by Patricia Jeffery looks at women living in strict purdah at one of India's most sacred Muslim shrines; **Slaves of Slaves: The Challenge of Latin American Women** (\$12.75), written by a Latin American and Caribbean collective contains factual information and analysis from that continent. From

Virago Amrit Wilson's **Finding a Voice: Asian Women in Britain** (\$8.95) looks at what it means to be a woman immigrant in Britain. Michelle Cliff's **Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise** (\$4.50) is, according to Audre Lourde, "a black woman's journey toward self-definition with writing that is brilliant, intense, and unavoidable in its honesty." Finally, The Feminist Press has put out **I Love Myself When I Am Laughing . . . and Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive** (\$7.50) and anthology of the work of Zora Neale Hurston edited by Alice Walker. Hurston is called spiritual foremother to the present generation of black women writers. She was a controversial and original woman, stood up for black culture before it was popular to do so, and in the 30s collected folk tales of black people in the US and Caribbean. Not-to-be-missed.

LESBIAN BOOKS

Four novels about love by Sarah Aldridge from Naiad Press: **The Latecomer** (\$5.95), **All True Lovers** (\$8.50), **Tottie: A Tale of the Sixties** (\$6.95) and **Cytherea's Breath** (\$7.85). From Onlywomen Press **Hard Words and Why Lesbians Have to Say Them** (\$1.55). **The Lesbian Community** (\$8.25) by Deborah Woolf is a well-documented and vivid account of the history and structure of the San Francisco lesbian community. Gillian Hanscombe and Jackie Forster's **Rocking the Cradle: Lesbian Mothers: a Challenge in Family Living** (\$22.75) has just been released.

SEPTEMBER SPECIALS!!

A hardback edition of Susie Orbach's **Fat is a Feminist Issue** is only \$3 at the moment. **The White Chrysanthemum: Changing Images of Australian Motherhood** is a full-colour large format hardback of writing, poetry and paintings of motherhood, Australian-style. Practical help in a busy woman's life — Shirley Conran's **Superwoman 2** — the hardback edition for \$5.95. **Breasts** is back in stock; this time the price is \$6.95, under half the normal retail price. **Cristina: Portrait of a Princess** (\$4.95) by Beth Brombert is a quality hardback book about Cristina Belgiojoso, an Italian aristocratic woman of the nineteenth century, who was an ardent feminist, committed to revolutionary politics. She was a brilliant journalist and in touch with most of the major European figures of post-Napoleonic Europe. Her private life was unconventional and independent.

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WOMENS SUFFRAGE KATE SHEPPARD

September 19 marks the anniversary of women's suffrage in New Zealand. The vote was finally won in 1893 after a staunch campaign led by Kate Sheppard. Broad-sheet asked PHILLIDA BUNKLE to write a biography of Sheppard for this September issue. This was no easy task as Phillida describes.

History is for people who can't stand reality. Rearranging the past in lieu of controlling the present, I hit the stacks at the beginning of July in an ideal frame of mind to come up with a profile of Kate Sheppard, New Zealand's great franchise leader, in time for Suffrage Day on September the 19th. I used every research technique I know in the major Wellington research libraries and drew a blank; the personal record of the long, incredibly active, life of New Zealand's leading feminist had left no trace. Inured as I am to the uncertain rewards of historical research I was shocked. The secondary material, such as it was, drew on, and frequently misinterpreted a brief article by Jessie MacKay in **Women Today**, New Zealand's feminist magazine of the 1930s. This is the only personal account we have written by someone who knew Kate Sheppard.

The United States has suffrage leader Susan B. Antony on a coin and a stamp. The site of the first Women's Rights Convention has become a State historical monument. British leader Phillipa Fawcett's home houses the leading collection of Women's Movement sources and documents. The residents of Clyde Road, Riccarton, are however no doubt destined to remain oblivious that it was the home of New Zealand's most prominent foremother. Our libraries burst with material on Stout, Atkinson and Hall, yet Sheppard was at least as prominent as these contemporaries. New Zealand values the record of women's lives so little that there are virtually no library resources devoted to our achievements. As Kate Sheppard said, *"The plain fact is, that men have given women a world of dolls to live in, and then have declared that frivolity is her true sphere."*

The myth that women have never done anything is reinforced by the failure to record their lives. Rosemary Seymour's important innovative collection at Waikato has found no institutional sponsor to sustain it. The Committee on Women has what could be an important resource which is not even catalogued. The Turnbull Library's Women's Collection, launched with much fanfare in International Women's year, is a collection in name only. It has no resources and no librarian. When it was established they carefully avoided consulting with any feminists. When I asked a senior archivist why their acquisition policy was not more positive he replied, "we're not interested in ephemera". That women's lives are ephemeral, lived beyond the official structures of power, is of course precisely the problem. The reason there is no collection in this country is that no one in power thinks that women's lives are worth recording. Each generation of women passes to oblivion leaving us unable to learn the lessons they have so painfully learnt. Without that accumulated experience we are all impoverished. As the women's movement faces a sort of collective mid-life crisis we need to know how Kate Sheppard was able to persist through a whole lifetime of isolation. How did she maintain the contrary view without becoming contrary?

At least we can learn the importance of the record. What is needed now is a major feminist oral history project to record the fading present and retrieve the past before another generation or two of memories fade.

The meagre personal record of Kate Sheppard that does exist shows that she was born Kate Malcolm on the Hebridean Island of Islay in 1848, (that same year as the First Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls). After the death of her father she lived in the household of her uncle, a minister, and became a lifelong devout member of the Congregational Church. She came to Christchurch with her mother and sisters in 1869. Two years later she married a store owner and City Councillor, Walter Sheppard, while another sister married store owner Mr Beath.

Kate Sheppard appeared to fit perfectly the feminine stereotype: gifted, beautiful, and privileged. Then, as now, it is often such women who become feminist leaders, partly because it takes a degree of personal assurance to withstand the personal abuse thrown at feminist activists. Sheppard was no stranger to such abuse; today activists would recognise the process through which the campaign for the vote passed:

"At first contemporaries brushed it aside as an ill-timed joke, then treated it with gentle and good-humoured banter, it passed through an ordeal of biting sarcasm and ridicule, and finally, as increasing numbers of men woke to a sense of the justice of the movement, encountered fiery opposition, gross misrepresentation, and despicable treachery.

Ridicule and insult have been freely heaped upon the women who dared to ask to be counted as citizens. They have been accused of indelicacy, immodesty, of wanting to neglect their homes and unsex themselves, and, O Tempora! O Mores it has even been said of them that they were strong minded".

It is not surprising that privileged and gifted women become feminist activists, because they feel the contradiction with the feminine stereotype most urgently. The contrast between their capacities and demands of passivity is especially clear. Kate Sheppard enjoyed all the real privileges of a secure middle-class family life, but the mould was too small for so rich a personality. With only one child and ample household help she was expected to fill her life with Society and Charity. She initially conceived of political activity as an extension of these roles. An English pamphlet she circulated widely called **The Place of Political Work Among the Duties of Women** argued that the prime duties of women were Home and Religion. Political action was however necessary to make charity effective. The vote was urged as a necessary protection of the home, but it was an endeavour that would take Sheppard's ideas increasingly far from the accepted feminine stereotype.

While the personal record is minimal, the development of Kate Sheppard's ideas can be traced through her published material, for she not only sustained the suffrage initiative but was responsible for most women's publishing ventures before the First World War; from 1891-1895 as 'Penelope', editor of the women's page of **The Prohibitionist**; from 1885 as editor of **The White Ribbon**, founded as "... the only real women's paper in the colony. It is owned by women, edited by women, managed by women, and if successful, the profits will go to women's work"; and from 1896 to 1921, as initiator, President and Vice-President of the National Council of Women.

Sheppard's core belief was a powerful religious faith. She worked with evangelical groups but was on the liberal rather than fundamentalist wing. Eventually she moved, like the Women's Christian Temperance Union's world leader, Frances Willard, to a Christian Socialist position. Her religious orientation meant that Sheppard was primarily interested in political action to change moral values. In an article called "**Why Women Should Vote**", which she published the year before enfranchisement, she wrote:

"Sisters, we are human beings first, creatures of sex secondly. We have our share of work to do for the people and our country. Let us get the vote, and help to make our country honest, kind, moral, and unselfish. Let the men try to make it rich and great if they like. We will try and make it something better even than 'rich and great' as we would make our sons good and noble."

She was interested in women as moral agents but was opposed to the "hopelessly sentimental illogical twaddle" of women's moral superiority. "... we are tired of the monopoly of Christian graces, and long that our brethren should have their share. We are tired of having a 'sphere' doled out to us...". Sheppard did not speculate about the origin of sex differences, but had rather an unbounded faith in women's potential, faithfully reporting every tiny positive step. She saw the women's movement of the 1890s as struggling to make the petty gains that would eventually liberate the potential of younger women. In an article called "**The Loosening of the Shackles**", which she published in 1882, Sheppard approvingly quoted Mary Livermore as saying:

"Behind those women struggling for admission to college, supplying to them arguments, we have stood. We have borne the obloquy, the contempt, the ridicule of the Press, and have let these younger women go free."

Sheppard was particularly sensitive to the effects of sex role stereotyping in distorting the potential of girls.

"Our girls commence life in the nursery under the same conditions as our boys, but even before the period of maidenhood begins, they are surrounded by, and hampered with, a set of artificial bonds and trammels, that have a very deleterious effect on their physique. They are taught that it is unmannerly to race, romp, and climb, too often their elastic bodies are cramped into the hard, ungraceful corset, to the lasting injury of their vital organs, and heavy skirts are hung about their waists, dragging on a part of the frame where any strain has a most calamitous effect. While their brothers are racing, playing cricket, and generally laying up a reserve of energy for their life's work, our girls are being taught to walk demurely, and to feel that all violent exercise is unwomanly. Can we wonder that so few women rejoice in the possession of perfect health?"

Sheppard's conception of the women's health movement was very similar to today's and the issues are depressingly familiar. She believed the physical freedom to play and grow would develop a positive self image in women that would go far to liberate their psyches.

"... when I see a ruddy, romping school-girl in her first long dress, afraid of the stone walls in the fields, or standing aloof from the game of ball, or sadly turning away from the ladder which her brother is climbing to the cherry trees, or begging for him to assist her over the gunwale of a boat ... when I consider these things, I feel that I have ceased to deal with blunders in dress, and have entered the catalogue of crimes."

The dreaded gymslip and compulsory PE were feminist reforms she championed. With her sisters she was not only one of the first and most enthusiastic lady cyclists in Christchurch, but advocated the wearing of the "divided skirt" for this democratising form of transport. This was however a reform she did not act upon. The difficulty with dress reform was, she was honest enough to admit, that it was not sufficiently attractive. If women were to "unhook the cursed clasp" of fashion then the alternative clothes must be appealing. As the Women's Movement jogs towards its midlife crisis in the trendier bands of track suits, we can perhaps take comfort from Kate Sheppard's advice. The "cardinal doctrine" of dress reform is that clothes "can be beautiful only as they suit women's face and figure and give her possession of her own body". Con-

ventionally beautifully, even conformist, herself, she had great faith that the struggle for a personal style was worth it. For

"there are other rights for women than those the ballot confers — rights which they do not need to ask of men — the right to use their own muscles, the right to vigorous, blooming health, the right to mental thought, and these are in their own hands, or rather waists."

But Sheppard was not all whole foods and cycling. Of the New Zealand feminists she had the clearest understanding of the material basis of women's oppression. Her prime targets were women's economic dependence in marriage and the unequal employment opportunities that made marriage an economic necessity. She supported every increase in employment opportunities, welcoming the growth in the 1890s of clerical jobs for women because for the first time they provided white collar employment for women. Sheppard was acutely aware of how hard most women work. She recognised that is is the "second shift" that's the killer. In 1893 she quoted an English suffragist saying:

"A woman is certainly not stronger than man, yet she will work for money as many hours as he will, and then return to find another day's work before her, which she must either do or abandon in despair. Whichever course she may adopt, she can scarcely escape bodily and mental deterioration."

Sheppard was aware that the work women do serves men. She attributed a great deal of the resistance to the legal recognition of women as "people" to male self interest. In **Suffrage Notes** 1892, she said "The desire for repression is a most natural one for men who consider women as a 'thing'. The moment a thing ceases to be subservient it ceases to be useful."

It was Kate Sheppard's persistent attack on women's economic dependence in marriage that most shocked nineteenth century New Zealand. Considering the extraordinary anxiety that is aroused today by a woman who earns more than her partner, the desire to forget this champion of women's financial independence is perhaps explicable. Sheppard wanted legislation guaranteeing the housewife a right to a share of the family income. She pressed the idea publically through the Canterbury Women's Institute and especially the National Council of Women.

Kate Sheppard initiated the National Council of Women to mobilise women's vote after enfranchisement. The council consisted mainly of the suffrage activists from the WCTU, but it moved well to the left of the Union. Betty Holt records in **Women in Council**, that the initial NCW convention in 1896 discussed "the economic independence of women, marriage and

"Especially do we, the mothers of the present, need to impress upon our children's minds how the women of the past wrestled and fought, suffered and wept, prayed and believed, agonised and won for them the freedom they enjoy today."

Kate Wilson Sheppard.

divorce, the nationalisation of the land, the setting up of a state bank, old age pensions, the individual under socialism, the concept of the new women, the political disabilities of women and various suggestions aimed at the improvement of New Zealand's parliamentary system."

The second NCW convention in 1897, was in favour of nationalisation of the means of production, communal living and the collective ownership of land. But nevertheless they never questioned that reproduction would remain the central reality for women. What Sheppard wanted was to protect and elevate the real status of the maternal role, and women's position within the family. Here we have the real dilemma of developing a feminist politic which accepts reproduction as the material base of women's lives. How is the status of the Mother in the Home to be upgraded without reinforcing the rigid role limitations that keep women where they are? NCW foundered on the problem of developing a programme of political action

A STRIKE

Once upon an evening dreary,
As I ponder sad and weary
O'er the basket with the mending from the
wash the day before;
As I thought of countless stitches,
To be placed on little breeches,
Rose my heart rebellious in me, as it oft
had done before,
At the fate which did condemn me when
my daily task was o'er
to the basket evermore.

John will not a sign or motion,
Read, nor thought of the commotion
Which within me rankled sore.
"He", thought I, when day is ended,
Has no stockings to be mended
Has no babies to be tended,
He can sit and read and snore;
He can sit and read and rest him;
Must I work thus evermore?"
And my heart, rebellious answered,
"nevermore; no nevermore."

For though I am a woman,
Every nerve within is human,
Asking, throbbing, overworked, mind and
body sick and sore,
I will *strike*, when day is ended.
Though the stockings are not mended,
Though my cause can't be defended/Safe
behind the closet door,
Goes the basket with the mending, and I'll
taunted be no more.
In the daylight shall be crowded all the
work that I will do;
When the evening lamps are lighted, I will
read the Papers too.

Poem from *The Prohibitionist* March 12, 1892.
Author unknown.

based on a politic of reproduction. Overall the effect of the campaign was to strengthen the monolithic New Zealand Motherhood ideal.

In 1903 Kate Sheppard went overseas and NCW folded. Just as we do today, they had an inadequate strategy for change. Confronted by women's lack of power, with no chance of becoming a mass movement, their only strategy was a campaign to influence public opinion, armed with only the two-edged sword of the power of motherhood.

In 1918, at seventy-years-old, frustrated by the failure of feminist politics, and horrified by the First World War, Kate Sheppard made a last effort to arouse her countrywomen, by reviving the NCW, only retiring as its president in 1921.

"There could," said Jessie Mackay, "hardly be set a time when Mrs Sheppard grew old. She was indeed one who defied time to wither the youthfulness of a spirit responding to all things bright and good." Here at least is an achievement unlikely to be replicated by today's feminists. □



Three introductory courses in women's studies are being offered which examine issues relating to women in NZ society.

1. Women's Studies

Tutor: Candice Craven

Starting date: Tues 22nd September

7.30 — 9.30 pm

Place: WEA rooms 21 Princes St, Auckland 1

Fee: \$10 for 8 sessions

2. Women's Studies

Tutor: Kathleen Ryan

Starting date: September 15th

Place: Sandringham/Balmoral. Ring WEA for venue and time.

Fee: \$6.00 for 6 sessions

3. Women's Studies

Tutors: Margot Roth and Lane West-Newman

Starting Date: Monday 14th September

7.30 — 9.30 pm

Place: WEA rooms, old block, Onehunga Primary School, 83 Selwyn St, Onehunga.

Fee: \$6.00 for 6 sessions.

Women's Video

Basic Video Filming and Playback Skills

Tutor: Carole Stewart

Starting Date: Tues 15th September

6.00 — 8.00 pm

Place: Audio visual Centre, Auckland Technical Institute (Pre enrolment essential — only 15 will be accepted)

Fee: \$10.00 for 8 sessions

These courses are open to all women.

Please phone Auckland WEA 372-030 or 732-030 for further information and enrolment.



Joy Clement

Rare images of experience

I was born in Caversham, Dunedin in 1912 before the First World War. I was the youngest of a family of five. In 1920 I went to live in the Waikato where I remained for the next thirty-five years. I was a pupil at Hamilton High School between 1926-1927; after I left I taught myself to make and market women's clothing.

In 1941 I married an Australian, a Flight Sergeant attached to the RNZAF. We had one son.

In 1956 I sold my business interests and along with my eldest sister went to a seaside bach built by my husband, overlooking the Tamaki estuary at Pakuranga. He died after a brief illness in 1974.

It was then I involved myself with a Women's Studies Class sponsored by the Workers' Education Association.

While I was convening a course in Creative Writing at Pakuranga in 1980 I threw in my lot with the group and to my astonishment found myself among a great many different people learning another craft.

Simone de Beauvoir says in her book "Old Age" that the friendship of the young is very valuable to the old, quite apart from any family tie; it gives them the feeling that these times in which they are living are still their time. It carries them along the infinite of the future and is the best defence against the gloom that threatens old age.



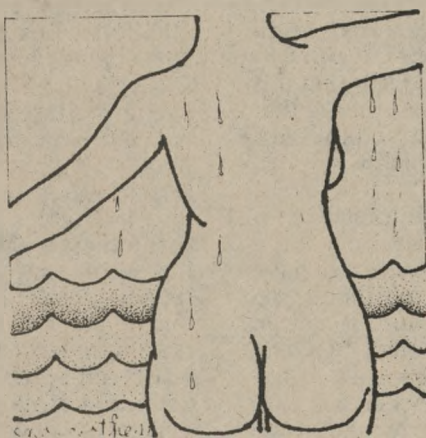
CREATIVE SELF-EXPLORATION

I had been awake for a couple of hours after midnight so decided to get up and survey the fridge before settling down to sleep. Spying a fresh young lemon on the bench I took it back to bed. I feel I am not prepared to tell you about this; it is too intimate, too simple, and for anybody else but me, maybe too funny. Anyway the long and short of it was that while I enjoy the feel and warmth of the lemon in the bed it was a bit startling to wake in a wet bed and to be saturated with lemon juice. So I will need to be more choosy and make sure the lemon is mature and flexible, just large enough to hold in my hand to feel the growing warmth and experience the pungent smell with toughened texture of the skin, strong enough to hold everything together should I roll over during my sleep. Confiding in a woman at Summer School who said she'd let me play on her typewriter if I'd let her read about the lemon I was really turned on and next time I walked past the marital aid shop I stopped and without embarrassment went in and looked around. Can't think why I'd never been curious enough before but there is one thing I would like to see. It's the whole shop activated. Perhaps we could call it consciousness raising. Anyway who needs all the consumer jazz when we can keep it simple with a lemon. What's more it was midsummer and the grapes are green on the vine.

WET SANDS

It's a long time since I swam in the sea. I recall how much pleasure it has given me all my life, the excitement of taking off my clothes, the misery of pulling on a tight bathing suit. I have never owned a bikini. One weekend I went to Piha with more than a hundred women. A few of them took me to the ocean beach where they swam nude. I waded into the water with my hat and dress on and let the water envelop me. Only the hat kept dry. There was no holding me back when the young women called out to me next morning. This time I shed my beach coat and went naked too.

It was my first nude swim in the open sea. Before there had been only lakes or rivers where I had not liked the boulders. This summer I shall go again without any clothes. I will roll in the wet sand and ride the breakers without a board; but best of all, with some company, I will lie on my back to look to the sky and experience the sheer joy of weightlessness when my body is lifted on the water and I float and float forever.



Illustrations by Robyn Conway

THEATRE FOR THE 98%

Before I knew what was happening I'd told him out loud and in front of everybody I was sick of him and to shut his mouth because I couldn't stand his voice or his face and to stop the car and I'd walk home. We were in a theatre class at summer school and here was this tall attractive fellow who'd come forward to drive my make-believe car. My instructions from the facilitator were to be sad. I'd no idea what my partner's were and didn't find out until I asked him the following morning, when he told me that his instructions were to be pleasant.

The way I saw him he wanted the lime-light every time. Not backward in coming forward you might say but I reckon he's got hangups same as me. He'd pushed himself into every group finally dressing himself in a fair dinkum calico petticoat inserted with cane hoops to form a crinoline. It was shorter in the front with a super sweep to the floor at the back where a bunch of lace and frills would take the eye of the beholder as the wearer swept out of the room. But this big stupid had the crinoline on back to front. The rest of the outfit was in period - jacket, shawl, and large hat. His hands were covered with lacy gloves and his face sported a silly clown's nose. I went across the room when the group was scrambling out of their costumes and picking up the calico petticoat I saw why he'd worn it back to front. There were large red blobs in front of the skirt reminding me of menstruation stains. I commented to that effect. I'd got him! Finding me hard to take, he caught his breath and recoiled with his eyes.

COALITION POLITICS

More and more feminists are talking about working for social change for women through coalitions and non-feminist groups.

What are the issues involved? And what are women's experiences of working in this way?

On these pages SANDRA CONEY discusses coalition politics and on the following eight pages four women who have worked in coalitions share their experiences with Broadsheet readers.

Increasingly feminists are proclaiming that the coalition strategy is the feminist strategy for the eighties. After a decade of organising as an autonomous separatist movement around a range of specifically feminist demands, we are currently witnessing both a widening of the definition of a feminist issue and a change in tactics in favour of working either within or alongside non-feminist groups — for example, the labour movement, the anti-nuclear movement, the left, the gay liberation movement. These are major changes with profound implications for the women's movement, but they are occurring for the most part with no, or very little, discussion or evaluation of their effectiveness, or their effect on the movement as we have known it.

The catchcry for the newly defined feminism is "every issue is a feminist issue". Most New Zealand feminists probably first heard this slogan when Charlotte Bunch spoke at the 1979 United Women's Convention in Hamilton. I think women have so readily warmed to this concept because it evokes a feeling of importance, a feeling that feminism is significant beyond women's lives. Many of us have unwittingly internalised society's view of feminism; that it is "narrow" and "parochial" and "self-absorbed"; that a "woman's issue" is a "minority" issue and thus less noble and less weighty than an issue which is deemed to be of more universal significance.

There is another element that comes into play here. Women have been socialised to see ourselves not at the centre but at the periphery of the universe, so we have always been susceptible to criticisms of selfishness; we easily feel guilty when we are accused of putting our own needs above others. To sacrifice one's Self has always been part of being a woman. Thus a call for feminists to concern themselves with a wider range of issues than previously, fell on fertile ground. So we

have seen a proliferation of women's groups organising round issues like the environment, against nuclear power, militarism, and imperialism.

We are asked to see as feminist issues demanding feminist support the plight of women in Armagh prison, the struggle of the peoples of El Salvador and Bolivia, the call for a nuclear-free Pacific, stopping the Aramoana smelter, and the threat of nuclear war.

Feminism is a world view and must provide a perspective on all issues, and radical feminism must also include opposition to racism, capitalism and any other form of oppression. In this sense the "every issue is a feminist issue" theme is important because it reinforces these underpinnings of a feminist politic; it challenges us to discover how seemingly disparate elements in our lives interlock with our feminist analysis. It also exhorts us to look beyond the daily flesh and blood battle we are waging — in rape crisis centres, refuges, health centres and our own lives — at areas which do not touch us so intimately but which nevertheless profoundly circumscribe our lives. Charlotte Bunch referred to feminists in the US challenging increases in the military budget under the Carter administration, increases which would lead to cuts in welfare services which are extensively used by women. An example in New Zealand would be Muldoon's restructuring policies which have led to factory closures in a number of woman-intensive industries.

But there is a danger that this slogan can be misused, turned on its head, to claim any activities that feminists undertake as feminist. We have already seen this process distort one of the key insights of the early radical movement, "the personal is political", to justify interpreting changes in our personal lives as political acts. We must be clear we are not making the same error again.

The "every issue is a feminist issue" line has widespread implications for the feminist movement. Before we unthinkingly embrace it there are some questions which urgently need to be addressed but which currently are receiving scant attention. Questions like: Is an issue a feminist issue if it affects both men and women in substantially the same way (nuclear power, peace etc)? What will happen to issues which specifically affect women (eg rape, abortion, violence against wives) if we divert our attention and energy into new areas?

The strategy for the "new feminism" is the coalition or alliance strategy. This means feminists either working through existing organisations for feminist demands or forming feminist or lesbian groups within a wider movement. The latter is called in the US an affinity group; the idea behind it being that feminists can to some degree maintain their identity and integrity while still working for the ideals of the larger group.

A recent example of this strategy in New Zealand has been the involvement of lesbians in anti-tour actions; lesbians have marched under "Dykes Against the Tour" banners in several centres and have undertaken their own actions as a discrete group within the anti-tour movement. This has enabled them to achieve lesbian visibility and maintain a degree of autonomy while at the same time being supported by the wider movement.

Why are so many feminists attracted to the coalition strategy? One reason emerged during my discussions with Maori feminist Donna Awatere about feminist involvement in the anti-tour campaign. She sees racism, capitalism and sexism as three sides of a prism oppressing women, and especially Maori women. Thus, to her, attacking on any one of these fronts is an integral part of fighting for a feminist revolution. She stressed, however, that feminists must not make the mistake of the male Left, trusting that the other sides of the prism will collapse if one is smashed. All must be attacked simultaneously.

Another reason lies in the women's movement itself. Because the women's movement has largely focussed on what I'll call "personal politics", women who wanted "hard" politics, who wanted to confront institutionalised male power have felt frustrated and impatient. In search of this some feminists have turned to other movements with more politically direct aims and tighter organisation.

The external impetus for the coalition strategy has been the worsening economic situation worldwide and the concurrent rise of the New Right. What's new about the New Right is that it has made the women's movement and feminist issues its targets. In recognition of our own flagging energy and the power of the opposition, feminists have argued that we can gain strength by allying ourselves with other groups who share some of our vision. These non-feminist groups have shrewdly been quick to appreciate that the commitment and clarity of politics possessed by feminist women are valuable assets in any struggle and have welcomed women to their ranks.

But there are problems. In some of the following articles feminists describe the difficulties of working within traditional organisational structures. Adrienne Rich has discussed the difficulty for feminists in taking part in strategies which do not come from the feminist movement. She points out that "strategies which come

from the left or out of the non-violent movement . . . might be totally inappropriate for women."

In the US some feminists have been horrified to discover that the sexism and misogyny which forced them to flee the left in the late sixties have survived intact into 1981. While radical and lesbian feminists generally feel a commitment to looking at racism, heterosexism and classism in their own behaviour, and politics male members of the left do not share such a concern.

Perhaps the crunch issue is the question of support for basic feminist demands. In the US some alliances have strained at the seams over abortion. Coalitions which have sought feminist involvement have refused to support the right to abortion; for instance, some have argued that the anti-nuclear struggle, being pro-life, must also be against abortion. In an article in *off our backs* (April 1981) Tacie Dejanikus sums up the problem: "As women we have a long tradition, based on both survival and respect for others, of compromise. This can often mean selling ourselves down the river. In this time of increased coalition building, we need to gather together and decide what are our basic requirements for women's freedom at this time. Do we work with groups that hold anti-lesbian, anti-abortion views?" She concludes: "That issue (abortion) is so basic to women's liberation and so threatened that not to acknowledge its central importance is too great a risk for feminists to take . . . Each progressive movement needs to incorporate an anti-sexism, anti-racist, and anti-empire analysis."

Calls for coalition building are given an added urgency by widely held fears of an imminent apocalypse. Just as the suffragists were persuaded to put aside their own struggle for the greater goal of winning the war, some modern feminists are proving susceptible to the argument that the nuclear threat must have higher priority than feminist goals; that feminism will be irrelevant if someone presses the button.

To Adrienne Rich our response to this argument comes down to how serious we are about feminism: "Are we moving in this direction because secretly, somewhere in the bottom of our souls, we think that our politics need not be taken as seriously as some others? . . . we have to be very clear about how crucial our politics are. And I believe that they are ultimately crucial. Ultimately and here and now. I don't like the flavour of the notion that women must save the planet. I want women to be saving women . . . I don't want to be moved by threats of death. I want to be moved by what I can taste and smell of life."

Will coalition politics save women? There is room for argument from several positions. The important thing is that the argument takes place . . . and soon. Otherwise we may find that we have merely bolstered up other struggles while fatally weakening our own. □

For further reading on this subject: "Abortion and Coalition Politics: Whose survival?" by Tacis Dejanikus in *oob* April 1981.

"On Second Thought, We Were Right" by Vickie Leonard in *oob* November 1980.

"Dialogues with Writers" — interview with Adrienne Rich by Eve Zaremba in *Broadside* June 1981.

'Although there are degrees of separatism, the women's movement as a whole has organised as a woman-only movement.'



Photos by Janet Bayly

RACHEL BLOOMFIELD

on working through the peace and
anti-nuclear movement

In looking at the question of alliances between feminist groups and mixed social change groups, I can best speak from my own experience as a feminist working in the New Zealand anti-nuclear movement.

There have always been links between peace activists and the women's liberation movement. In 1915 leading American feminists and peace advocates founded the Women's Peace Party and joined with European women at an international convention of neutral nations. One thousand women from over twelve countries met, and formed the organization which at the next Women's Peace Congress held in 1916, became the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Its goal has remained to unite women in all countries who are opposed to every kind of war, exploitation and oppression.

In 1938 Virginia Woolfe wrote: "What connection is there between the sartorial splendours of the educated man and the photograph of ruined houses and dead bodies? Obviously the connection between dress and war is not far to seek; your finest clothes are those you wear as soldiers." (1)

Today, as in those earlier times, militarism continues to deeply affect our lives. At the time of the nine-month Bangladesh war of independence, between 200,000 and 400,000 women from Bangladesh were systematically raped (mainly), by the invading Pakistani soldiers. Nuclear pollution and the threat of nuclear holocaust makes child-bearing an increasingly hazardous venture. Lorinne Tevi, a Fijian woman activist in the anti-nuclear struggle visited New Zealand recently. She spoke of seeing babies in the Marshall Islands who "looked

like octopus" — victims of US nuclear testing in the north Pacific. A new threat to women in a number of countries, America and Switzerland for example, is the possibility of the military draft being introduced for women. A savage manipulation of our demands for liberation.

American anarcho-feminists have succinctly summed of the situation: "The world obviously cannot survive many more decades of rule by gangs of armed males calling themselves governments; the situation is ridiculous and even suicidal. Whatever its varying forms of justifications the armed state is what is threatening our lives at present . . ." (2)

In reaction to the urgency of the situation, the anti-nuclear movement is growing rapidly worldwide. In England recently half a million people marched through London

protesting the possible purchase of Trident submarines. In Japan and throughout the Pacific, thousands of people have opposed, and succeeded in delaying, Japanese plans to dump drums of radioactive waste in the Pacific as from this year. In America many people are voicing their opposition to nuclear power and weaponry. Late last year about 1800 women "mourned, raged, chanted, sang, joined hands and circled the defence headquarters five sides in the first women's action at the Pentagon since 1971." (3)

At this time I believe that the worldwide anti-nuclear movement is one of the strongest forces for social change. I feel it is essential that we are part of this "energy for change". That we ensure women's voices and priorities are heeded, and the connections made between militarism and the oppression of all women.

In considering how women concerned about militarism can become involved, I feel it is useful to draw on the experiences of feminists from overseas. While I was in England in 1978 I had experience of working both in mixed and all-women's anti-nuclear groups. I joined a massive symbolic occupation of Torness, Scotland, as part of a Leeds feminist anti-nuclear group. Many of us there were sickened by the blatant sexism expressed over the days of the occupation. We caucused and decided that we wanted to consolidate our strength nationally by having a feminists anti-nuclear conference, and by forming women's anti-nuclear groups around the country.

In Britain, after the revival of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) many feminists who have not been in mixed campaigns for a long time, joined CND. They felt frustrated at the lack of awareness about sexism which still existed. At a CND conference, women taking part in a women-only workshop, decided to write a broadsheet on "Sexism in CND" for the national CND paper *Sanity*. They also came together to form Women Opposed to Nuclear Technology, which now has local groups in Liverpool, Edinburgh, Nottingham and other centres. They write: "The article we wrote for *Sanity* was important for the group because it clarified collectively our ideas . . .

we believe nuclear disarmament is a feminist issue because nuclear weapons are not just an aberration, an insane offshoot of our society, but are in fact the ultimate technological conclusion of a patriarchal society which is not only based on attributing different feelings and types of behaviour to men and women, but persistently undervalues the work, feelings and behaviour associated with women." (4)

If we follow world trends, in the not-too-distant future New Zealanders will feel the urgency of the global nuclear threat. As feminists we will have to decide whether or not it is priority to become involved in this struggle.

For those who decide to do so, a possible way forward is for some women to work in the mixed movement, and for others to form women's anti-nuclear groups. This strategy could involve an alliance between the mixed campaign and the women's anti-nuclear campaign, with the groups coming together over specific actions. For this to work effectively, both groupings would need to be clear on "common ground". An aspect of this alliance could be a deliberate strategy of offering support to feminists in the mixed campaign to push and challenge the movement to a deeper analysis and understanding of the connections between militarism and oppression. Black activists have already made this connection, and increasingly since the Pacific-wide anti-nuclear conference in Hawaii in 1980, are involved in the anti-nuclear struggle. Their challenges at the August, 1980 National Peace Workshop have resulted in a number of peace activists becoming more involved in fighting racism. I feel that a similar process needs to happen in the anti-nuclear struggle with regard to challenging sexism, and pushing people to see the connections between militarism and "women hating".

I feel that this radicalising of the anti-nuclear movement must be happening from the inside as well, or we will probably all feel frustrated and alienated.

I think it's also important to look at the role of women working in mixed groups. Traditionally,

women in the peace movement in New Zealand and overseas have taken the bulk of the unacknowledged "slog" work — typing, sending off magazines, the main day-to-day maintenance tasks (does it — media contact, spokesperson for the campaign, organisers, leaders, experts on the effects of radiation. Campaigns and meetings have also been (and in many cases still are) organised using patriarchal styles of organisation: voting, hierarchical structures, total orientation to the task at hand without regard for people's feelings, sexist language and behaviour.

I feel that organising style is a crunch issue. If we choose to work in mixed groups, I feel we are more likely to be able to take the initiative and responsibility on our terms in a campaign where consensus methods are used, leadership shared, and people are seen as being of equal importance to the task at hand. In a hierarchically-run campaign there is also a danger that women will be put in "token" positions in a male-dominated campaign, and only accepted for the job if we fit into a male style of organisation. I don't see organising style as the total solution to ending sexism in mixed campaigns. Clearly, power plays and sexist behaviour will still exist to some extent regardless of the style of organising. I simply see a non-hierarchical style as allowing more room for challenge and change.

Within the peace movement both styles of organising are used. There have been some successes at changing to a non-hierarchical style. I have recently had experience in forming a mixed campaign which runs along consensus lines. Those of us working within mixed groups (indeed all groups!) need to give each other support to step into scary roles, to do public speaking, work with the media, organise direct actions, and helping shape strategy. At the same time we need to be sure not to accept more than an equal share of "slog" work.

To sum up, I feel that we do need to look at forming closer links with the anti-nuclear movement and other movements for peace and social justice. We need to think creatively about the best ways to do this, both in terms of overall strategy and how we feel individually.

There are obvious pitfalls. And there's a world of difference between having our energy used within a traditional movement structure for doing unacknowledged shit-work, and making a deliberate choice, as radical feminists, to be involved either in the mixed movement, or in feminist anti-nuclear groups allied to the wider movement. □

Note: Writing this article has been a process of working through my ideas on this subject. I do not feel that any of my ideas are fixed or final. I'd be interested to know how other women feel on this subject and to hear your criticisms and disagreements with my ideas, either through *Broadsheet* or direct to me.

Footnotes:

1. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*, Penguin, p 19.
2. "Who We Are: the Anarcho-feminist Manifesto" in *Reinventing Anarchy*, p 251.

3. *Off our backs*, January, 1981.
4. "Our Energy Against Their Power" in *Peace News*, 17 April, 1981.

Further Reading:

Ain't Nowhere We Can Run: a handbook for Women on the Nuclear Mentality, Susan Koen and Nina Swaim, available from Daybreak Bookshop, Box 5424, Dunedin.



JUDITH EMMS and RAE GILMOUR

talked to Jenny Rankine about working in the
gay liberation movement

The herstory of lesbian participation in white western gay liberation movements is a chequered one. Lesbians have affiliated, resigned, joined en masse, left en masse, had continuing struggles for the implementation of a feminist perspective, and in between collaborated fruitfully with gay men on resources and campaigns.

Judith Emms and Rae Gilmour were active in the New Zealand gay liberation movement from 1976 until 1980. They helped reorganise a gay liberation group in Wellington, helped set up the National Gay Rights Coalition in 1976, and founded a gay liberation group in Hamilton in 1978. But in 1980 Judith, and the Auckland lesbian

group of which she was a member, resigned from the NGRC, and Rae resigned as the Coalition's secretary/treasurer.

They left because the Coalition avoided a serious examination of lesbian/feminist politics. This manifested itself over three different issues: funding of lesbian projects; a lesbian right of veto over NGRC policy; and proposed law changes on male homosexuality.

In the beginning . . .

"I got involved in the gay rights movement," Judith Emms said, "because I felt my oppression as a lesbian far more than my oppression

as a woman. In March 1976 I went along to be another face in the room when they were trying to get the gay movement together in Wellington. I rocketed straight to the top because I was vocal. I'm an organisation person and therefore I worked better with men than with women because most women's groups then were unstructured and that drove me up the wall."

"I was looking for somewhere to meet gays in a non-threatening environment where I could be anonymous," said Rae Gilmour, "and a meeting seemed the best place. That meeting was the beginning of Gay Liberation (Victoria University) Wellington, and I didn't stay anonymous for long."

"I presented a paper about how we should organise," said Judith, "and Rae volunteered to be treasurer. It was a cell-type organisation, with each cell dealing with an area of primary interest — for example, education, speaking engagements, social organisation, political activism. There was a policy of positive discrimination to maintain lesbian visibility; most gay groups had that as a policy. If there was one speaker it had to be a woman; if two, there had to be one of each. So women who did get involved found themselves overworked, running round like a flea in a fit trying to maintain lesbian visibility. That was one of the things I disliked about the gay movement.

"The National Gay Rights Coalition arose out of a conference the Wellington Gay Liberation group organised. The Coalition was for greater co-ordination and sharing of resources between gay groups. We were the only women at the setting-up meeting and from there on in, just about."

"We were installed as co-ordinator and secretary/treasurer of the NGRC because we were women, although nobody will admit it," said Rae. "The organisation had to have lesbian visibility otherwise lesbians round the country wouldn't touch it. The men wanted it to appear non-sexist so lesbian and feminist groups would affiliate to it, but they didn't anyway.

"The executive was us and regional representatives from Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington, who then were all men. We met once every six weeks to two months, they went away and Judith and I did the work."

The Coalition also had two general meetings a year at Easter and Labour weekends, and regional representatives organised regional meetings usually once every two to three months.

"After three months we had to resign from our positions on Gay Liberation Wellington," said Judith, "because we couldn't cope with the workload. Divided loyalties meant that the Wellington group ended up as a work group for the NGRC and never did anything of its own.

"Apart from brief interludes, Rae and I were the only women working in the gay rights movement at the political upper levels. Organisation-

ally, it was brilliant. As a lesbian it was extremely lonely and isolating. Other women threw shit at us because we worked with men, putting so much energy and time into a men's movement which served men's aims.

"We were doing what I still think is a worthwhile job and not getting that much back from it in terms of friends and development as human beings. I not only didn't grow, but went backwards. My gay consciousness may have been raised, but my women's consciousness was obliterated. If you're mixing in feminist circles, you become feminist. If you're mixing with gay men, that's the mentality you develop. That's what I feel bad about — that I didn't develop a feminist perspective. There was no support, no positive feedback from feminists. It was all negative. The women would just tell you the conferences you'd organised were shit and that was it. One time some women asked for some paste-up help on the abortion issue. We sent some men around after a meeting and they wouldn't give them any posters because they were men. If men have the political consciousness to put themselves up for arrest over a feminist issue, you don't tell them they're fucked."

"I was also telling the women they were fucked for not working in the men's movement," said Rae. "There were so many things going on like the Crimes Act changes and the Human Rights Commission Act that affected lesbians. It annoyed me that we were working on those issues for other women and getting shit for it. You were made to feel worthless by the people you wanted most support from."

"Then in July 1979," Judith said, "one of the regional coordinators organised a lesbian weekend for women working or prepared to work in the gay rights area. All these ideas, perspectives I'd just heard about — it was just brilliant. I could feel myself blossom. There was agreement that working with men was difficult, but coordination with them was important. As a result of that conference, five lesbian groups formed and affiliated with the NGRC. We felt we might have lesbian support."

The Feminist Lesbian Action Group (FLAG) was one of the groups which formed in Auckland," said Judith. "It was an

education group to write discussion-promoting papers on political theory topics for distribution throughout the NGRC. A discussion paper on the issue of lesbians working in the gay movement and our stance on the Crimes Act was circulated to all the member groups after the July weekend. It was also published in **Pink Triangle**, the NGRC newspaper, later in the year."

The paper tried to bridge the gap between the gay movement's perspective of equality and the feminist movement's perspective of power relationships. It also proposed a lesbian caucus within the NGRC, which would meet at the Coalition's two national meetings each year, and present its proposals for implementation to executive members.

Lesbian projects

"Finally," said Judith, "we seemed to have achieved what we wanted — to get women involved to move the movement forward. But it became obvious over the next few months that the majority of men in the gay movement oppose a feminist perspective because they can't see its relevance. A minority, usually leaders, want a feminist perspective because it's fundamental, but the majority don't know where to begin to address it.

"At the 1979 October Labour Weekend planning conference (which decides the direction, budgeting and projects for the next year), this minority engineered the agenda and timing to ensure that all the lesbians' projects went ahead. Money was handed over without question because they were women's projects. That's tokenism, patronising."

"It was the first NGRC conference with more than three or four women," said Rae. "The men had to keep them there, so their attitude was 'We'll give you anything.' They weren't treating the women's projects seriously by examining them closely; they were using them to maintain a lesbian presence in the Coalition — buying women off.

"Before the 1979 October conference, the paper from the lesbian weekend was posted out to all the affiliated groups. At the meeting it was obvious that none of them had looked seriously at it. The men said

'We don't understand it. Explain it.' They wanted to be spoon-fed. The women at the conference said the men had to form their own groups to understand it."

Lesbian veto vetoed

"The issue of whether lesbians should have power of veto over NGRC decisions arose about the same time," said Judith. "HERA, a Christchurch lesbian group, initiated the veto idea because it was suspected that the NGRC would accept the first Freer Bill." This Bill proposed changes to the Crimes Act, which then and now outlaws homosexual acts between adult males. Freer proposed an age of consent for such "acts" of 20, which is four years older than the heterosexual age of consent. This implied that young homosexuals needed protecting from themselves, and therefore that homosexuality is both abnormal and inferior to heterosexuality. HERA and other lesbian groups wanted complete legal equality with heterosexuals or no change at all.

"The veto idea," said Judith, "was that a consensus decision of a caucus of all the lesbians could veto any action of the NGRC. At the October conference, Ian Scott, an Auckland gay rights activist, said that it was a matter of trust, that we 'voluntarily share this power and give you a right of veto.' Voting was 16 for and 14 against, with 23 abstentions, so it passed. Some groups objected to it after the conference and a postal ratification of it was lost. A lot still abstained because they couldn't understand what was at issue."

"At the Easter 1980 conference," said Rae, "the lesbian right to veto was raised and lost. There was still no discussion. Women refused to speak because the issue was men's power, and it was for them to recognise that they held it and decide what to do with it, not for us to go begging for it. The three Auckland lesbian groups, HERA and the Wellington Lesbian Centre all left the Coalition within two months of that Easter conference." Rae, who was secretary/treasurer again in 1980, resigned in June, 1980.

Why they left . . .

"The reason we left," she said, "was that a few women can't speak

for all the lesbians in the country. We can't fight gay men year after year without getting swamped by them."

"For years people had been telling me to get out for reasons of feminist principle," said Judith, "but what drove me out was simple principles of honesty. As a member of FLAG, I helped write its letter of withdrawal, which cited the NGRC's evasion of real issues like heterosexism and sexism, the abdication of responsibility for key issues to the executive, and its dishonesty in discussion and voting, for example on the lesbian veto issue."

The Coalition also avoided discussion on the second Freer Bill in Easter 1980. In this Bill, the homosexual age of consent was only two years above that for heterosexuals. It was also probable that the Bill might be amended to restrict "sexual acts" between adult lesbians for the first time.

"I proposed a motion that we treat it with the contempt it deserved and ignore it," said Judith. "The motion passed. The executive wasn't going to raise the issue because the majority of the membership was pro the Bill. No one on the executive tried to persuade their members, no one resigned because they were representing views they disagreed with, the executive didn't follow through the wishes of their membership, but instead two weeks later came out in strong opposition to the Bill. You don't allow a motion to pass and then take a contrary course of action."

A Feminist Gay Liberation movement

"Without a feminist perspective," said Judith, "the gay rights movement is all about the Crimes Act. The majority don't relate the Act at all to the issue of sexual politics. Lesbians see anti-homosexual laws as the result of a power structure. A lot of the men think an age of consent of 20 is a step forward. The radical men think equality is a step forward. Very few men go as far as feminist politics and talk of a social revolution."

The problem of an umbrella organisation for homosexuals which had very few active lesbian members

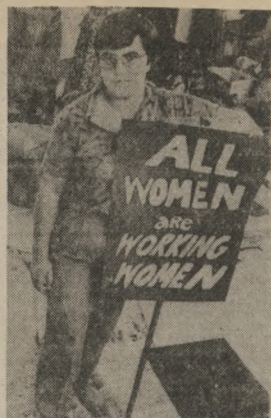
or groups was one the NGRC shared with its equivalent body in the United States, the National Gay Task Force. "The Task Force tried to get women to come along," said Judith. "The women said they'd join only if there was a five to four balance of power in the executive in their favour. The women joined as a group, so they had their own support systems, brought with them into the movement."

"It's not enough for a few sole women to allow the gay movement to maintain the facade of being non-sexist and not just a men's movement," Rae said. "In gay umbrella organisations lesbians have to have the balance of power in either membership voting strength or the executive. It's a dilemma. The Coalition wanted to make submissions on lesbian custody, but that would have been men speaking for lesbians. They put money and resources at the disposal of women and found only one woman in the country who took them up on it and wrote a submission. Unless women are involved in large numbers, not peripherally, it's just a lot of gay men chasing their own tails."

"One of the problems now is that there's no representation — we're back to the original situation where most people think homosexuals are only men, and lesbians are unrepresented in a major gay organisation."

"The gay movement can very, very clearly attack sexism and heterosexism," said Judith. "Men voluntarily abdicating their power and allying with women is a threat to the patriarchy because it questions the value of that power. It's sad that women can't hack the pace and keep trying to beat that into the heads of gay men. I couldn't keep it up."

"I can't see a large future presence of lesbians in the NGRC, unless there is an issue affecting lesbians and gay men equally, for instance an equality Bill with an age of consent of 20 years for both lesbians and gay men. But the stance taken by each would be very different and the alliance would last only as long as the Bill. The only way a feminist perspective would be promoted would be for the gay rights movement to be run by women with some men. But what would happen is the men would say you were rocking the boat, and drop out." □



SANDI BEATIE

on working through the trade union movement

I remember my first Trade Union meeting well: held at night with not many of the grassroots in evidence and with not much of a balance between the sexes despite the fact that the union's membership was predominantly female. Heated debate ensued between those who wanted the union to provide a childcare facility and those who felt union funds should be used on more "worthwhile" projects. In a sense that meeting brought me face to face with my own apathy. It also led me to question why meetings weren't held at a more convenient time so that a larger proportion of the membership could attend. Was female participation important to the union and was the union committed to having the needs of women workers recognised and met? My active involvement within that particular union commenced at a time when others were also concerned about these issues. We did not achieve a child care centre but we did win support for daytime meetings, increased trade union education and some commitment toward encouraging more female participation.

Women make up a large proportion of union membership but are grossly under-represented at all levels on the decision-making bodies. Reasons for this are varied, but one of the major ones, I believe, has to do with attitudes; the attitudes of unions to women, of society generally to women, and women's own attitudes to themselves as workers and as union members. "Everywoman's place is in the home" remains a strongly propagated myth within our society and many women are still effec-

tively doing two jobs, one at work and one at home. Another major factor affecting women's participation in unions is the structures the movement has adopted. It is essentially organised along hierarchical lines. It is not only women who have problems in learning how to use those structures, however the guidelines have been laid down by men, for men.

At meetings women will often use their opportunity to speak by posing a question — "what if" or "perhaps we should try" — instead of making authoritative statements — "what we need" or "it must be done this way". I find it very difficult to be explicit about why the structures prevent women from taking part other than to say it is because they are patriarchal. However, I feel (and other women I have discussed this aspect with share my feeling), that women do not like and cannot function properly in a formal meeting structure where two minutes to speak per person operates. I believe that women prefer a forum with free debate and decisions reached by consensus.

In recent years, groups like the NZ Working Women's Council have done much to foster a groundswell of interest in working women's issues. This group, while organised independently of the Trade Union Movement, works with the movement on the basis of common policies. The Council sprang up out of the recognised need for women to become actively involved within their own unions and on other decision making bodies.

The major organising focus for the Council has been the 16-clause Working Women's Charter. Although the Charter has been dismissed by some feminists as reformist, and is called a communist plot by the moral minority, the breadth of its influence on the union movement, women and society can't be ignored. It is now established as FOL policy and must be one of the more widely discussed documents both within and outside the union movement. It appears that there has been a gradual increase in activism among women on the job who have begun to assert themselves at meetings, and to state what they want, along with male workers who by and large felt, during the Charter campaign, sufficiently motivated to support its aims.

The Charter is important because it brought the basic feminist issues to the attention of women who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to talk and think about their own position as women. Groups like the Council are a necessary part of the women's and union movements. They can and have played a significant role in bringing feminist issues to the forefront and provide backup support for women who are battling for these issues on their jobs and in their everyday lives.

The development of the Working Women's Council also coincided with an increase in the numbers of women working for Trade Unions as union secretaries, education officers and organisers. This increase cannot be directly attributed to the Council or to the pro-

motion of the Working Women's Charter. However, union officials who are feminist are important allies when endeavouring to advance the cause of women. These women face the same difficulties as do other women entering a field dominated by men, that is, the put-downs, sexism and sexual harassment. Their work day obviously cannot be spent solely on the issues directly affecting women workers, but they do in my view bring a different and new perspective to the job overall, which in turn, if the trend develops further, should benefit women workers in the long-term.

Organising for changes for women through the union movement is fraught with the same problems feminists have always faced. It means confrontation with, among other things, years of conditioning, the fear among women

that if they organise and demand too much they could lose their jobs. Then there is the jeering, the sexism and barely disguised hatred. The latter comes particularly from the "a woman's place is in the home, 24-hours-a-day" brigade and presumably arises from their fear of loss of male power. They also know that we are not merely seeking to change some inconvenient rules to make life easier for working women; we want a whole new perspective which will give women the potential and the opportunity to start changing our world.

Organising for women in the union movement does not mean merely setting out a list of aims as was done with the Charter, important as this is; it also means that we must examine the policies and aspirations already held and those to be adopted to ensure that they reflect

a genuine commitment to and recognition of women as workers, particularly those relating to new technology, unemployment and the economy, or the minimum living wage concept. The removal of sexist language from articles, union courses and awards is also important. However it is not good enough if they are done in isolation, or as a means of appeasing a few vocal members.

In this article I have not looked at the herstory of women's participation in the union movement since that is an article on its own. I have endeavoured to deal with the here and now. My thoughts on the issue are still forming; currently I believe that feminists do have a significant role to play in the union movement, just as unions need to continue to be responsive to the demands of the women's movement. □



Photo by Janet Bayly

ATARETA POANANGA

talked to Christine Dann about her
experiences in Manu Motuhake

Atareta Poananga developed her interest in politics as a teenager, growing up in the politically turbulent atmosphere of the Middle East. In addition to coups, wars and other dramas of national politics, there were the politics of the home and family to study. Seeing how women are treated in that part of the world made feminism immediately

relevant to her.

She began studying at Auckland University in 1970 and was briefly part of the women's liberation group there, but was turned off by the "personality politics" surrounding Sue Kedgeley. She became involved with the anti-Vietnam war mobilisations and anti-apartheid actions.

She worked part-time and studied part-time for seven years, until she completed a masters degree in political studies. Then she began working for the Foreign Affairs Department — one of the four Maoris employed by the diplomatic service. As 0.6% of the total diplomatic staff that number of Maoris hardly even merits the name of

"tokenism".

So while working for Foreign Affairs she concentrates on pushing the Maori point-of-view rather than feminist issues, which are not so pressing in that job situation. However, she believes that overall Maori women are more oppressed as women than as Maoris, and promoting feminism within the Maori world is therefore important to her. As she put it to me, "Feminism slips when you get into other sorts of politics, then reasserts itself as you realise how important it is."

When Mat Rata left the Labour Party and founded the Mana Motuhake movement, Atareta saw this as a new chance for Maori politics to develop independently, away from the paternalism of pakeha politics. Here was a new start — and an ideal opportunity for Maori women to get involved on an equal basis in a new movement. A group of women could be formed which would guarantee women, and feminist concerns a rightful place.

From the beginning Maori women played a big role in organising Mana Motuhake. They believed their contribution would be recognised when a constitution for the movement was finally framed. Women not only did the "dogs-body" work (organising meetings etc) but also wrote policy drafts and helped campaign during the Northern Maori by-election. But when the constitution conference was held after that by-election women's concerns were not respected.

A women's lobby pushed for a non-hierarchical, consensus-based decision making structure. The women also wanted proportional representation of women throughout the decision making structure (rather than a special women's council which could easily be ignored) and an executive Secretariat with a majority of female and young members (to reflect the structure of the Maori population, and to avoid being taken over by already well-established Maori men).

All this was too much for those afore-said men. The women's lobby was defeated — and publicly dismissed by Rangi Walker in his *Listener* column as being "middle class", "well-educated", etc (the classic put-down feminists are used to but minus the "white"!). In actual fact the women's group was more broadly based than Walker wished to believe. It had concentrated on working with women — changing Maori men en masse was too big a brief for it. But it had hoped that the supposedly more enlightened male leaders would display more liberal attitudes.

Some hope. The women resisted the attempt to rubbish the sexism displayed by Walker and Mana Motuhake publicly, in line with their policy of not attacking other radicals in public. Instead they communicated with Walker privately, and gave themselves a name — Mana Wahine — and a new goal.

Mana Wahine's goal is to raise the mana (prestige) of Maori women within Mana Motuhake and outside it. At the moment changing things from within is taking all their time and energy. They are still pushing for proportional representation for women in the movement.

All these events raise a major problem for Atareta (and other feminists who are also active in mixed political groups). Should one still work with men despite their sexism?

Some women say the Maori struggle is too important to be divided on gender lines. Atareta's position is not to work with the men who are denying women rights within the movement. So she is concentrating on working with women on women's issues. The women actually have some strong suits to play. It is easily demonstrated that Maori women suffer the most in New Zealand society, with health and employment problems even worse than those of Maori men. So they have the most to gain from a Maori movement which represents *all* their interests. They also form a majority of voters in Maori electorates — an important point for a Maori movement using an electoral strategy. Insofar as they do much of the hard slog political work of fundraising, office work, organising meetings, and so on, they could also pull the plug on Mana Motuhake if it proves resistant to their claims. The option to working inside a mixed group is of course forming a separate group and collaborating on matters of mutual (racial) interest only if the women set the terms. But since women are already at the forefront of Maori politics, Atareta feels their place in the mainstream needs to be recognised. Maori women do not need to form separate groups to prove themselves — what they have done and are doing needs to be *recognised*.

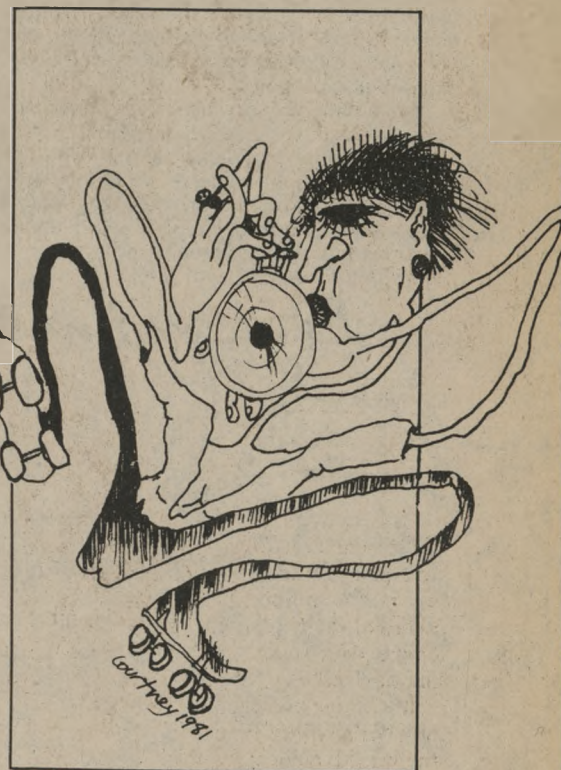
Recognised not only by the Maori men but also by the male pakehas of the media world, who seek out well-educated Maori men to pronounce on Maori matters. Yet some of these men, Atareta believes, are interested only in forming a "brown male club" as a counterweight to the "white male club" which runs New Zealand society as a whole. That's hardly a feminist option — it is not Atareta's choice.

So Mana Wahine's strategy is directed at getting women noticed. Getting women onto candidate selection panels and supported as candidates. Helping women feel confident about speaking up, and recognising the value of the women who are the natural leaders of Maori society. Getting the men to support women's interests as well as their own.

Atareta sees the different candidate selection processes used by Mana Motuhake in Eastern Maori as an example of progress in the new movement and making things better for women. In contrast to the Labour Party Eastern Maori selection (where the Arawa tribe flatly refused to have a woman candidate and the hot favourite — a woman — was therefore dropped in favour of a male Arawa), there was more sympathy towards women at the Mana Motuhake selection.

There was also a lot of blatant male chauvinism displayed which left Atareta boiling with anger. She is not a starry-eyed optimist who believes that the Maori women's millenium is now upon us. But a start has been made — with Mana Wahine and with a number of other Maori women's "ginger" groups which she is pleased are happening.

Atareta's experience would seem to suggest that working in a mixed group is possible — and important — but no-one ever said it was easy! □



Healthy Women

TO CAP IT ALL

SUE NEAL reports on a contraceptive technique used by our mothers, and now making a comeback.

We are being ripped off. There is a good method of birth control which should be readily available for all New Zealand women; however, many doctors and Family Planning Association staffers appear to be quite ignorant of it. It is the cap — the cervical cap, the vault cap and the vimule cap. These are barrier devices which fit snugly over the end of the cervix, **not** to be confused with the diaphragm which covers the cervix and the vaginal wall.

The cap was pioneered by Marie Stopes; it revolutionised the whole childbearing role of women in the early 1920s. Many of our mothers and grandmothers used it most effectively to space their families. So what has happened to it?

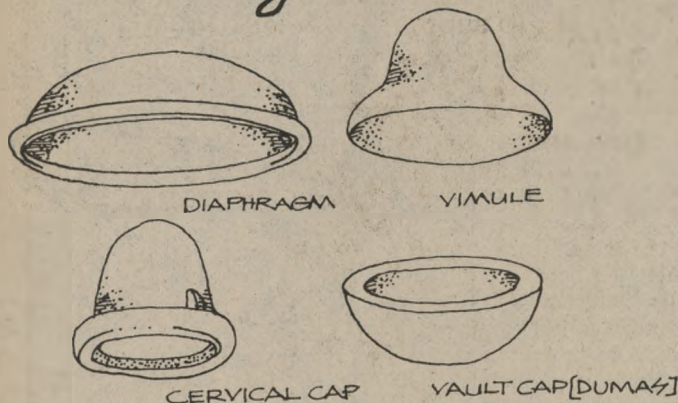
The cervical cap was quietly taken out of production when the more profitable lines of the Pill and IUD were introduced. The cap is not a high profit item. Although the cap should be used with spermicide, it needs only a small amount — much less than is necessary with the diaphragm. The cap is also more durable than the diaphragm and needs to be replaced less often.

What is it?

The cervical cap is a thimble-shaped object about 2 inches in diameter and 1½ inches deep. It fits tightly over the end of the cervix and is held in place by a suction seal created by the rim of the cap hugging the walls of the cervix. The seal is air-tight which makes it hard for sperm to get in. In order to make it more effective, the cap is filled one to two-thirds full of spermicide, so the cervix is completely surrounded by spermicide as well.

The most common cap is the rubber cervical cap. You can also get a plastic cap which is slightly larger with a thinner, rigid wall. The vimule cap and the vault cap are also larger. They cover the entire cervix up to the roof of the vagina. The vault cap has a thick rim and a thin centre. The vimule cap has a flanged rim. The rubber cap is used most often — the others are used only when a woman cannot tolerate the standard rubber cervical cap.

Diagrams



You may be wondering how the cap differs from the diaphragm. A diaphragm is held in place by the pressure of its rim against the vaginal wall. Sperm can swim up around the rim, so the diaphragm itself does not block sperm. It works by holding the spermicide in place. The sperm cannot get to the cervix because they first come into contact with the spermicide which kills them. The diaphragm is more easily dislodged during vigorous intercourse and it needs to be put in not more than two hours before intercourse takes place in order that the spermicide will be active.

Advantages of the cap?

- When used properly it is most effective at preventing conception.
- It has no side-effects and will not interfere with normal bodily functioning or natural hormonal levels.
- You can put it in when you get ready for bed, so it does not interfere with spontaneity in the act of love.
- It can be left in for a few days without discomfort — though it is probably better to take it out in the morning.
- Since it uses a small amount of spermicide, it is inexpensive.
- Using it can be a good lesson in body education — you get to know (and like) your own vagina and cervix.

Disadvantages of the cap?

- It is not readily available — your best bet is a Family Planning Association clinic. One London manufacturer still makes them, but the American pharmaceutical companies have stopped making them altogether. You *can* get one if you insist on your birth control adviser contacting FPA Auckland for one.
- Studies mention that a few women notice a malodour — however, this can be avoided by removing the cap more frequently or by adding a drop of chlorophyll to the inside of the cap before insertion.
- Some women do not like reaching into their vaginas to insert and remove the cap.
- It is possible, but unlikely, that continued contact of the rubber on the cervix might cause the cervix to erode or become irritated.

A disadvantage of any type of barrier contraception is that many doctors do not like or trust it. You may need to be firm — better still, go to FPA, they are more skilled than most doctors and should respect your wishes. A lot of professionals tell me that New Zealand women do not accept barrier contraception because they do not like touching their genital area. That is over to you. No woman should do anything which is repugnant to her, but I hope that many more women will learn to respect their genitals once we have managed to clear away some of the guilt which society has imposed on women with regard to their body odours and secretions.

I do not altogether accept the argument that women won't touch themselves. After all, we are amongst the highest users of tampons in the world. Fitting a cap would not entail any more bother than inserting a tampon once a woman learns how to do it!

How to use it.

The cervical cap must be fitted by a doctor or nurse who will determine what size you will need. If you lose a lot of weight, or gain it, or have a baby, you may need another fitting and a new cap.

Once you have the right size cap, you will need to learn how to insert and remove it. Before insertion, the cap will need to be one to two-thirds filled with spermicide. It should also be smeared around the inside ring. Before you try to insert the cap, become familiar with your own anatomy. Slide your finger up your vagina. Notice that it tilts backward as it moves upward. Now feel for your cervix near the top of the vagina. Your cervix changes position during the course of your cycle. It is important to feel your cervix every time before inserting the cap. This way, you know exactly where the cap should be in order to cover your cervix. Slide the cap up as far as it will go. Nudge the cap up onto your cervix with the forefinger. The cap should then pop right onto your cervix. If you tug gently on the cap, you should be able to feel the suction grip that the cap has made with your cervix. Then feel the cervix underneath the cap to make sure that it is correctly placed.

Some women find that removing the cap is harder than inserting it. You hook your finger under the rim between the cap and the cervix — this will break the suction.

This is a simple description, taken from an excellent article written by Judith Brillman of the Boston Women's Health Book Collective.

Who can use it?

Most women can wear a cervical cap, even women who cannot use a diaphragm for anatomical or functional reasons. You can still wear a cap if you have weak pelvic muscles, an unusually angled uterus, a short anterior vaginal wall or a bulging of the bladder or rectal wall into the vagina.

Who should not use a cap?

Women with cervical erosion or laceration. Sometimes, a woman's cervix is very long, or very short, or irregular in shape. She might need a special kind of cap like the plastic, vault or vimule. Occasionally a woman will find it hard to insert the cap properly. This could be because her fingers are too short, her vagina too long or she has not been taught properly.

Most women should be able to learn to use the cap with expert guidance from a health worker. It is a good idea to ring your local FPA clinic and make thorough enquiries about whether they stock the cap and have staff trained to fit it. Make sure that they understand that you are talking about a cervical, vault or vimule cap as opposed to the diaphragm which many professionals confusingly term "the cap". The two are quite different. If you live close to Auckland, you are well advised to make an appointment with the Alice Bush clinic in Karangahape Road. I know they stock the cap there because I have seen them and ascertained that the staff are trained to fit them. Any doctor who would like to learn to fit the cap could contact the FPA for training in how to do so.

Micro-chip contraception

British researchers have developed what they are calling a micro-chip "sexometer", which they claim can tell women which days they are fertile and which infertile.

Dr Heinz Woolf, of the British Research Council, who developed the device, reports the "sexometer" uses a woman's body temperature to determine the "safe" or "unsafe" days during her cycle.

According to Woolf all a woman needs to do is place a small electronic sensor in her mouth each morning. The sensor then transmits her body temperature to the tiny micro-chip computer. When the safe period in her cycle is reached, the computer activates a green "go-ahead" light. A red "stop" light can also be installed to indicate the optimum time before conception has been reached.

The device, which the doctor says has been proved 100 per cent reliable in 500 women already tested, will go on trial in family planning clinics in Britain this year. **Her Say**

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

Women can continue to try and influence the decision makers or they can become the decision makers.

Not many women are presently able to be candidates for Parliament. In line with WEL's aim "to promote the participation of women in political and public life" the Women's Electoral Lobby has produced a pamphlet with basic facts about the women standing for the 1981 Election and their attitudes on subjects of particular concern to women.

This pamphlet contains a donation sheet on which readers may indicate their support for the women standing, and WEL will distribute the contributions as requested.

You may not feel like supporting all the women who are standing, but I would ask you to support those you would like to see as M.P.s in every possible way. If you would like copies of the "Women in Parliament" pamphlet write to me:
Danna Glendining (National Coordinator)
Women's Electoral Lobby,
R.D.2, Martinborough, Wairarapa.

For copies of Judith Brillman's article send \$1 for photocopying and postage to Sue Neal, 12 Hayward Road, Papaetoe, Auckland.

T H E O R Y

Judith Aitken

POLITICAL PRIORITIES FOR THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE 1980s

Speech to the National WEL Conference - Motueka, 20th June 1981

Recently I received the minutes of a meeting organised by the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, where some 16 people, including the national co-ordinator for WEL, discussed proposals for a project on women in leadership. The minutes stated that Dame Miriam Dell had opened the meeting by explaining how the mid-decade Conference on Women had clarified issues for mid-decade action. The Conference had revealed how little overall progress had been made in the movement of women into decision-making areas. Dame Miriam also commented (and I quote) that "it was now generally recognised that the greatest barrier to women's progress was attitudes — both the attitude of the general public, and the attitudes of women themselves."

With respect to Dame Miriam, whom I admire as a long-time worker for women's interests, I nonetheless felt a sense of frustration and anger as I read these words. It has become such a familiar scenario:

□ National delegates attend an international conference; prior to their departure they express their reservations as to the likely value of the conference; on their return they express the view that little has happened since the last international meeting;

□ The conference re-affirms some unpleasant fact, such as the continuing disease and premature death of various populations affected by malnutrition or economic and political exploitation, or the fact that little progress has been made in promoting women, and their interests, in high-level fields of decision-making;

□ The conference restates its initial objectives (the end of famine, the elimination of disease, the breaking down of sex and other barriers to individual progress), and, usually, decides that further (expensive) research and analysis is needed if change is to occur.

□ Quite often, it is agreed that the attitudes of offenders (super-powers, dissident rebels, crop-growers, food-marketers, oil-producers etc.) are at fault. If attitudes could be changed, the world would be a better place.

In the case of the Copenhagen Conference, apparently it was the view that the attitudes of women themselves, and the anonymous general public were the principal causes of concern about the status and well-being of women.

As an aside, I should perhaps comment that I think one useful strategy could be for women to desist from conference going, but to demand instead that the millions and millions of dollars spent annually by the international community in this way could be redirected to those who are the subject of the conference. Perhaps, with such capital resources directly in their own collective and individual hands, women entitled to use the funds, with no strings attached, would determine spending priorities entirely at their own discretion and on the basis of their own assessment of what best served their interests. Even if they spent it all on things like rotary hoes and plastic buckets for collecting water, it could scarcely be any less valuable than the present outcomes of international conferences.

But I digress.

It is my view that the argument about the primary importance of attitudes is both a snare and a delusion. Attitudes do not spring from the forehead of the newborn — males, females, or the general public.

Attitudes are the product of systems — social, economic and political systems. Historically-based systems, where power is distributed in specific ways that almost without exception exclude women from effective power-sharing, are the principal problem we face. Social and economic systems

produce particular kinds of political systems of government and decision-making; together, these systems reinforce, nourish and maintain attitudes which are demonstrably unhealthy for the weak, whatever their sex or colour. Social, political and economic systems devised and constructed to fulfil particular historical purposes of the powerful, not only sustain the power of complex clusters of elites, they also generate new prejudices and sustain old ones against women, and against the purposes that feminist women believe are important.

It would be simplistic in the extreme to imagine that the major cause of continuing war and military oppression throughout the world was the attitude of the victims towards war. What sustains armies, soldiers, manufacturers of armaments, and those who act as military entrepreneurs; what keeps on killing, maiming and frightening populations of citizens everywhere, is not just what *soldiers think*; it is the international economic and political elites whose power depends almost entirely on their successful maintenance of *military systems* for force and coercion of anyone who opposes their will. To employ Dame Miriam's argument, we would have to suggest that what keeps war going is the attitude of the victims of war — the children, the women, the men who are daily, as I speak, being dismembered, crippled and killed by the bullets and machines of those who own armies and airforces, or act as warriors in some ideological cause or another.

At best, this argument is illogical; at worst it is dangerous, because it so successfully serves the interests of the powerful.

The great pacifier of recent years has been the propaganda that it's all a question of attitude; change the attitude and you will have social justice, sexual equality, economic and political freedom, cultural and intellectual harmony. This argument is a myth, subtly dressed up in the psychological jargon of the day conveniently obscure, deliberately intangible, extremely hard to oppose.

We should not for one moment be fooled into believing that our major enemy is the intangible Attitude — particularly the non-specific attitude of the general public, or of women themselves.

Our greatest enemies, in the 1980s, as for many years, are those who control the economic and political systems which shape and condition and manipulate our personal attitudes, and those of everyone we know.

Our greatest enemies are those who control actual commodities like money and other forms of economic exchange, allocating these where they do little, if any, direct good for women, and in fact often have unintended, or deliberate, consequences that are extremely damaging to women. Our enemies are large and powerful organisations run, on the whole, by male elites, for male elites, and according to the wishes, desires, prejudices and preferences of those elites. Our enemies are economic systems, socialist, capitalist and variations upon both, which rely absolutely upon dependent classes of persons for their power, and to provide status and authority for the elites who control them. Our enemies are huge machines designed and controlled by men for killing human beings (admittedly regardless of sex), but capable of leaving all non-human installations standing undamaged. Our enemies are great public and private bureaucracies which women have barely penetrated, where public and private officials make administrative decisions on the basis of their own specific political and economic beliefs, and in line with ideologies which are the antitheses of what feminists are concerned with.

Our enemies are, therefore, other people — and it is this unpalatable fact that makes us refer to attitudes, blaming even ourselves for the circumstances of our international powerlessness.

The major obstruction to women's progress towards equality of opportunity and equality of experience and treatment is the fact that those who have substantial power — economic and political — are either disinclined, or actively unwilling, to share it, even with other male elites, least of all with women.

There are palliatives and tokens all around to persuade us that this is not so, or that it is not as bad as we feel it is, or is perhaps even a figment of our historical imagination. And it takes a considerable amount of resolution and integrity, personal and political, to resist and analyse this supposed evidence of our progress.

Attitudes are mental and emotional biases towards or against something. If feminism is to be an effective force, a force which does more than merely change the gender of half the employees and employers and politicians and public servants and conference goers in the world, but instead changes the social and economic systems of the world itself, then we must concentrate on less sloppy sentiments than these. The enemies of change are other people, with all their baggage — attitudes, properties, associations, resources, and power.

This is about to state, gravely, that, like many other women, I am profoundly disturbed by the apparent direction of the women's movement; that I am disappointed by early reports on the numbers of women political parties appear to be selecting for the coming general election; that I am deeply anxious about the fate of girls leaving school inadequately equipped to enter the economic system; that I am extremely disappointed that we have been so unsuccessful in persuading the "rest of the community" (i.e. the men) to share the burden of childcare and domestic work equally with us; that in many areas I see women, and their movement, going backwards, not forward.

It is true, all these things bother me as much as they do you. And, like you, I am appalled by the costs to women of their relationships with men. More and more evidence is appearing to document and record the inhumanity of men against women; the hopelessness with which millions of women live out their degrading lives; the impotence that women feel as they take up, and abandon, small courageous forays against the embedded power of male-dominated economic and political systems.

I am continually reminded in my personal life of the ambivalence women feel about men — on the one hand despising (openly or covertly) their insensitivity, their arrogance, their ignorant assumption of power and authority, as though they were human rights, not hard won returns for wisdom and balance and self-restraint; on the other hand, afraid to tangle with the most powerful men, afraid to tackle, head on, the proper educator of my sons without which the feminist education of my daughters will be little more than an introduction to continuing struggles with pain and humiliation.

I comfort myself by thinking that it is all the way I was conditioned, and on the whole, it is someone else's fault (my parents, their parents, my husband's, my education, my lifestyle and so forth). I often see myself, as you do, as the tragic victim of my own and other people's attitudes. The reality is that this is nothing more than a failure of nerve and imagination and analysis. If you can read you can cook. If you think hard, you can be a self-reliant, compassionate and intelligent person who welcomes the chances that the 1980s bring to fight for a feminist future, not just a world that is safe for women.

Since the early 1970s, New Zealand, like other capitalist economies, has been in a state of radical change. Not just the surface symptoms of racial disorder, sexual discontent, social reordering and so forth, but radical economic and political change. We are in a sense at a watershed in the history of capitalism, a point in history not unlike that which produced the welfare state.

The welfare state, as we have experienced it in this country, and as Americans and British people, Swedes and Canadians and Australians know it, is part of the inherent logic of the capitalist system. Absolutely essential to the profitable pursuit of capitalism was the guarantee of a stable, tractable, suitably qualified, healthy workforce. The most convenient repository of collective power to provide this workforce was the State itself.

Hence public roads, transport systems and housing developments, public education, public hospitals, publicly funded doctors, state health benefits, social welfare benefits, sickness benefits, accident compensation, unemployment payments or temporary employment schemes, police forces, social workers, educational psychologists, marriage guidance counsellors, adult education experts, probation officers, vocational guidance counsellors, public entertainment systems which could also transmit essential political and commercial information to the workforce.

The welfare state provided bread and circuses. It ensured a continuing supply of healthy workers, adequately trained for absorption into the profitable economic system of capitalism, which thrived at least as much on war as it did on peace.

But the capitalist economic system has now changed in several important respects:

Firstly, it needs a guaranteed supply of energy, and human energy is both in shorter supply, and more critical of its deployment as slave labour than it was at the beginning of the industrial revolution. The substitutes for human labour (oil, electricity and so forth) are suddenly in short supply, and there are global disputes over the ownership and power to control the energy sources that do exist, or may be developed.

Secondly, technological innovation and scientific experimentation have suggested that large scale human involvement in the profitable business of capitalist development can be drastically reduced, in a replay of the first industrial revolution, as machines displace people in offices, factories and industrial and commercial enterprises of all kinds. Quite specific classes of persons (technocrats, systems analysts, enterprise managers, communication experts) are now needed, and the work they can do, maximised, as it now can be by the enormous technologically sophisticated systems they control, is capital, not labour-intensive.

Thirdly, the costs of the welfare state, slowly built up through a series of huge bureaucratic empires over the past 50 years, have grown larger than the capitalist system can tolerate. The cost of welfare provisions such as schools, public roads, public transport, public hospitals, subsidy payments, transfer payments, benefits of all sorts has eroded the profitability of the economic system. More money is required through taxation or borrowed funds than the capitalist system wishes to pay, or can pay if it is to continue investment in profitable enterprise. International inflation is imported into New Zealand. The impact of struggles between capitalist and other economic systems for control of the world's natural resources is felt immediately in New Zealand. Those in control of the State system, which used to be so beneficial to the capital mixed-economy, now resent the load of welfare responsibility that they traded for political power over several decades. They are afraid that their managerial and political skills will not be equal to the task of reconciling the welfare demands of the electorate with the economic demands of the capitalists. They are beginning to dismantle the welfare state, slowly, but deliberately, with much the same sensitivity and finesse that powerful elites have always shown towards those they exploit.

Hence, we have thousands and thousands of unemployed young people, women and Maoris. We have longer waiting lists in public hospitals that are understaffed and poorly designed for modern health provision. We have the erosion of professions where women have clustered (teaching, nursing), and an increase in coercive agencies where men predominate (the police-force). We have government endorsed interest rates for money which almost preclude the opportunity for individuals to build their own home, or buy now-commonplace household aids like clothes driers and cars without taking on heavy time-payment commitments.

These are the real problems facing feminists, not just the attitudes that cluster about them. These are tangible, systemic problems, capable of analysis and debate, susceptible to change under social and political pressure. Because we must ask ourselves: what is the future to look like, what special vision of future social and economic life can feminists describe, and in what respects is it significantly different from the visions of men? If it is not different, but instead is hedged about with platitudes of better material well-being, then let us fold our tents and return home.

We are either engaged in a life and death battle for a revolutionary movement for change, or we are tinkering with history — placing ever more ambulances at the bottom of innumerable cliffs, always too late, always too little, always too willing to placate our consciences with helping, not fighting to control what happens at the top of the cliff.

I would not suggest for a moment that this sort of talk could recommend itself to most New Zealand citizens. Most New Zealanders are inextricably trapped in the actual workings of the system, in the legacies of history working themselves out through their daily lives.

I do not believe that it is possible to engage the imagination and energy of the mass of people in dramatic adventures of the soul and spirit because their own experience of history tells them that ideology kills, that welfare becomes dependence, that trust becomes deceit, that faith becomes a commercial commodity. And this is a good thing. We may still cling sentimentally to the idea that there are leaders who will deliver us from whatever bondage we happen momentarily to be in.

But we know that leaders seldom do more than serve their own narrow interests and foster their own specific prejudices and purposes. We may want a Women's Appointment File which will help produce female captains of industry, cabinet ministers, permanent heads, senior advisers and so forth. But our salvation will not, and cannot lie in the numbers of women we promote to the leading elites. We will fail in our larger endeavours if we merely accept the world as it is, but nicer for women.

I think the only genuine political decision we can make is the choice between the definition of a feminist future, or a future in which women share equally with men the responsibilities and consequences of the existing social and economic systems.

Even if we decided, in some rush of blood to the head (because the notion of sisterhood is a powerful symbol for energy and companionship) that we would seek a political and economic feminist future, we would still have the task of deciding what that was.

I would like now to refer to three different questions which could usefully be discussed by this conference, from a feminist perspective. I don't propose to go into any of them in detail, but simply raise them for your consideration.

The first is what I see as the need to identify our interests in the Springbok tour issue. This question has been totally dominated by men. The sport that passes as central to the debate is a men's sport. Certainly, women comprise a very large reservoir of interests as spectators. But the resources, the status and the dominant control in rugby are made by men. News media time and attention is given to the sport to the considerable detriment of sports played predominantly, or in equal numbers, by women. Resources allocated by the state and private interests to rugby are ordered according to male priorities. Profits are redeployed by men. The Springboks and the All Blacks are men. The administrators and spokespersons are men. The defending and the opposing politicians are men. The political systems for which rugby football has symbolic importance are dominated by men. The victims of male obsession with rugby are overwhelmingly female.

I think that as political feminists we have a direct responsibility to our sisters in South Africa. White women, though economically and politically favoured by virtue of their colour, are necessarily oppressed simply because they are trapped in a system which is self-regarding, greedy, exploitative and at considerable risk of radical overthrow. If a major conflagration were to occur in South Africa, you may be sure that, as in all wars, white women would suffer, along with their children, more than white men. The condition of black and other ethnic women scarcely needs restatement. We should, in my view, publicly declare our total commitment to, and support for, the interests of our sisters in South Africa, and our strong awareness of the price that black women pay as a result of male indifference, ambition and oppression.

Related to that, but in quite another area, is the question that has been raised so piously by so many in the past few days — the principle of collective ministerial responsibility. There are undoubtedly persuasive constitutional and political arguments why the electorate should be able to have confidence that all members of the executive will share a considered, collective view. On the other hand, let us note whose interests are served by the operation of this principle.

All Cabinets in the history of this country have been overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, male. Every elected legislature in this country has been overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, male in composition. The permanent administrative bureaucracy is, at its most senior levels, almost exclusively male. The political parties in office are overwhelmingly male. The interests of the State are, as fifteen years and more of careful feminist analysis and documentation has shown, almost exclusively those of the male half of the population. So, I think we must ask, as we listen to the platitudes about the sacred nature of the principle of collective ministerial responsibility — who really benefits from its application?

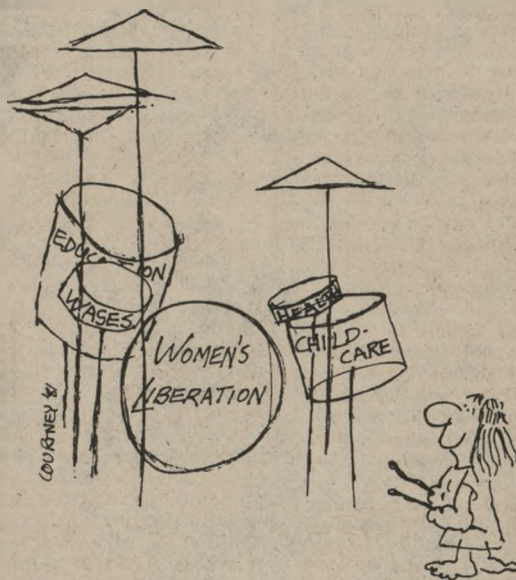
Finally, to a matter which I am sure will be the subject of much discussion this weekend, the proposals for a new Committee on Women. Again, I think, we must ask, whose interests are served when a committee is appointed, and its members are to be chosen as individuals in their own right? Deliberately differentiating between women as individuals and women as representatives may have some advantages, but it also deliberately removes them from their own community power-bases. Even very talented and determined individual women may find it inhibiting and debilitating not to be able to summon up the group support which a reference group of organised feminist opinion may provide.

Secondly, whose interests are served by a deliberately vague constitution which does not include a specific power to co-opt; which gives the minister, not the committee itself, power to appoint a chair person (thus effectively complicating life for any committee not plugged into this single-leader concept of leadership)? Whose interests are served by removing the administrative and servicing of such a committee from the finance department of the Treasury to the much larger empire of the State Services?

I am not necessarily suggesting that I regard all, or any, of these conditions as dangerous or undesirable. I simply think that we must ask the question — whose interests are served? — and satisfy ourselves that this is the kind of government-level organisation we can support in the interests of women.

I wish you well in your meeting. The growth of WEL outside the main urban centres is one of its most striking characteristics, and must have profound implications for the distribution of power in rural and other areas, away from the main cities.

The continued existence of WEL demonstrates the diversity of interests among New Zealand women, and offers a very useful channel for the essential task of consciousness raising, political education and endorsement of women. I look forward to sharing the coming discussions with you, and thank you for the opportunity to participate in this conference. □



THE SPOIL-HER PACKAGE

If you go sailing, golfing or bowling in the summer, you should make up to your wife for those long hours she spends alone. Spoil her this winter and she won't complain next summer. We have designed the ultimate aid to the summer sportsman, the Spoiler Package.

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A la carte dinner for 2 in our Top of the Town Restaurant. One night's accommodation in a room with a view. (Double bed a must).

Breakfast in your room served with a bottle of local sparkling wine. (Check out at noon).

The Spoil-Her Package will run from June 27 to October 31 for a Friday or Saturday night at the bargain price of \$99.95, not even \$100.

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HOTEL INTER-CONTINENTAL
(A Vacation Group Hotel)

NZ Herald June 25-July 23. Sent in by Mary Irwin, Lorraine Wilson, Elizabeth Thom, Dawn Hutson & Ms. Hornburg, all of Auckland area, & Mary O'Regan, Nelson

Women, said his Divine Grace Bhavananda Goswami Vishnupada, were not very intelligent and generally less intelligent than men. "Only the most intelligent women join our movement."

For those women who have not joined, but thought they were intelligent, "our movement" is the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and Vishnupad Goswami (for short) is one of its world leaders.

Women dressed, said Vishnupad Goswami, to attract men. Western clothing was based on sense gratification, and women, consciously or unconsciously, dressed to please men.

"Women dress purposely to agitate men's minds and then they complain when they are raped," he said.

Wealth would be distributed equally in accordance with the Hare Krishna philosophy that Earth and all its resources, plus any material benefits which man (and an occasional woman) might create, belong to God.

Interview in Christchurch Press, July 16, '81.
Sent in by Carolyn Payne, Chich



HOGWASH

Send your contributions for the Hogwash pages to Broadsheet, PO Box 5799, Auckland.



The Grapevine
Auck. 'community' mag
July '81. Name of sender lost

A cuddle with Diana

Do you fancy lolling on a luxury waterbed with a pretty girl by your side?

If so your dreams could come true when you visit Shore City's Telethon centre this weekend.

Classic Waterbeds

have given a magnificent double bed (complete with dralon bedspread), and Angela Yelavich, the runner-up from the Miss Shore City contest, will be inviting centre visitors to cuddle up with her on the bed in return for a donation

to Telethon.

Should you want a memento of the occasion to impress your friends, there will be a photographer on hand taking instant photographs, and you may even be able to take the bed home with

you. Raffle tickets for the bed will be sold throughout the weekend and the winner will be drawn at 5.30 on Sunday evening.

Unfortunately Angela is not included in the prize.

NorthShore Times Advertiser, Auckland, June 23, '81
Sent in by Sue Matthew



NZ Women's Weekly, April '81
Sent in by Yolanda Wiseman



The beauty of...
NOVAROOF

Roofing iron advertising pamphlet. Sent in by Sheenagh

FEMINIST EYE



ONE WOMAN SHOW

DARIEN TAKLE PORTRAYS FRANCES HODGKINS

Who was Frances Hodgkins? Where did she come from? They say she was a fairy. Well she could have been. I like to think of her as one of those artistic mysteries . . . a lonely woman and her brush without food or warmth, struggling on, working, completing painting after painting, trying to survive in the harsh English climate and receiving even harsher treatment from her birth country, New Zealand, which failed to recognise her until after her death.

So who was Frances Mary Hodgkins? She was born in Dunedin, April 28, 1869. She left New Zealand in 1901 aged 31 and by the time she died in May 1947, she was considered the foremost woman painter in England.

But it is what went on in between that is most fascinating. I became interested in Frances Hodgkins while at Elam School of Fine Arts and five years ago decided to write a play about her. Called **Wings Over Water**, the play covers Frances' life from 1869 till her death. I will be playing Frances in the play; I feel my career has paralleled Frances' in many ways in that as expatriates we both had strong feelings about our country and about New Zealand's attitudes to the arts.

Frances said, "New Zealanders are kind, generous, hospitable people but for heaven's sake don't talk to them about Art." At the same time she yearned for recognition from her country: "Don't let NZ wait to put up a memorial tablet to my memory . . . let her help me now whilst I am working at work that I hope will live after me . . ."

Her work did live after her thanks to her own efforts and the support of her family, but no particular thanks to her country. How many New Zealanders who leave the country suffer the same? Many struggle on in this country trying to create and find interest in their work but many who, like Frances, realize the necessity for overseas stimulation, disappear overseas.

She started to make an impression almost immediately because of her originality and perseverance in a style that most of her contemporaries considered ultra-modern.

Frances felt that the life of the artist was not the life for a woman and advised her nieces against following a career in the arts: "I hope they (Girlie & Ba) may never grow into artists but marry young and happily and only know enough about Art to appreciate their Mother's and their Grandfather's and Auntie's pictures. No woman can be an artist happily unless she has hundreds of pounds a year to live on. Nearly 75% of the clever people of this world have endured poverty and hardship but a woman comes through bad times less easily than a man if that ugly parasite nerves settles upon one, then it is all up with her. Art absorbs your whole life and being. Few women can it successfully. It requires enormous vitality. That is my conception of genius — vitality. One is fighting mental inertia all the time."

She felt constantly threatened by society's views of women who followed a career and was torn between duty towards her mother and the role of maiden aunt, and her great belief in her work. Her work became all important and she cut herself off from society in order to concentrate on painting. She confessed to dressing eccentrically so



Collection of the Auckland City Art Gallery.

people would not bother her in the streets or while she was painting, and this enabled her to think and be private. Her life was lonely but this is what she preferred and although she was greatly loved and her wit sought after at gatherings, she always kept her private self separate. She was a very proud woman who did not wave her poverty around but was often found suffering from rheumatism or severe influenza wrapped in newspapers trying to keep warm in an unheated studio.

But despite such adversity she created her unique vibrant watercolours and had a strong following: "Miss Hodgkins is in the front rank of contemporary English painters"; "Miss Hodgkins belongs to no school"; "as an artist she stands alone . . ."

Frances did not return to New Zealand as a famous artist and it is only in the last three decades that she has been fully appreciated in this country. Eric McCormick has just published a biography of Frances Hodgkins and the Auckland Art Gallery plans a special Frances Hodgkins Room, but still very little is known about the "Woman" and the "Personality", which through her letters and through personal reminiscences is shown to be quite extraordinary.

Frances Fields, a nephew of Frances, has allowed me access to all the letters Frances wrote during her life, so I have been able to research her life thoroughly. A couple of years ago I visited Corfe Castle where Frances lived in the last years of her life and where she became demented enough to have to spend her last months in a mental institution. All those hard years and two World Wars had taken their toll. David Brindley, a friend of Frances Hodgkins, remembered Frances with great passion and cried over memories of this tiny, eccentric, strong woman whose wit and courage stayed with her through extraordinary hardship. □

Wings Over Water will be presented at Theatre Corporate, Auckland, for a three-week season from September 23 — 6.30pm, Wednesdays to Saturdays, Eric McCormick's biography **Frances Hodgkins** is available from **Broadsheet** at \$19.50, plus 75 cents postage and packing.

FILM FESTIVAL REVIEWS

On Company Business, USA 1980, Dir: Allan Frankovich,

On Company Business is an extremely effective, comprehensive denunciation of the US Central Intelligence Agency's international terrorism on behalf of US multinational companies.

The film mixes interviews with current and ex-CIA executives and agents, people involved in liberation movements in many countries, old newsreel footage of various US wars and presidential cover-ups, newspaper clippings, videos of various investigations into the CIA, and internal documents from notorious US multinationals like ITT. It is all information from the horse's mouth and must have been a mammoth project to film and edit. But the editing is superb, creating a damning contrast between what the US government and the CIA say (democracy, freedom, choice) and what they do (supporting totalitarian regimes, training torturers, subverting democratically elected governments, assassinating popular but anti-US leaders, and fomenting wars).

The film is divided into sections on CIA activities in various political arenas, including Cuba (an invasion), Ecuador, Angola (a war), Iran (training the Savak secret police), Chile (a coup), and other, mostly third world countries.

Philip Agee, an ex-CIA agent, blames the CIA's violent and interventionist activities on "the system", and says that until the system is radically altered the CIA will continue more or less as usual. But "the system" is not defined or clearly identified. The film could have stated more clearly that when CIA propaganda talks of US interests it means not the interests of the US people, but the interests of US Big Business.

On Company Business unfortunately did not mention the ANZUS treaty or CIA activities in New Zealand or Australia. However, it is being circulated widely (film festivals in six countries in the last year alone) and is an essential first step towards countering the influence of US government terrorism. I look forward to similar comprehensive film on CIA infiltration of radical groups inside the US and other countries.

On Company Business is essential viewing for all radicals — but take a cushion and glasses as it is three hours long and some of the subtitles are small.

□

Jenny Rankine



Meetings of Anna, France/Belgium/West Germany 1978, Dir: Chantal Ackerman, Starring: Aurore Clement.

Meetings of Anna is a film about human loneliness and heterosexism. Anna is a film director touring Germany, Belgium and France promoting her new film. The camera follows Anna through long periods of silence as she explores impersonal hotel rooms, or waits in dark train stations, and the encounters she has seem like extravagances of sound and communication in comparison.

But as her meetings with a male German teacher, a male train passenger looking for a wife and happiness in France, her mother in Belgium, her ex-fiance's mother, and her male lover in Paris follow one another, we realise the communication is all on their side and full of subtle pressures.

Anna listens to the three men talk about their loneliness and never mentions her own. They expect her to be there for them as a patient listener, a healer of their hurts, a sexual partner, and a stop gap for their insecurity.

Her ex-fiance's mother remonstrates with her for breaking the engagement twice, for rejecting the conventional heterosexual woman's destiny. Both she and Anna's mother repeat that it's not natural for women to be alone, and pressure Anna to start on a "normal" heterosexual family life.

The only time Anna shares her own feelings is when she tells her mother of an encounter with a woman after a film showing, when they both talked about their lives and made love. This single expression of feeling after so much silence and listening highlights the heterosexist behaviour and assumptions of all the people Anna meets.

The film ends with Anna again alone. It is an unhopeful ending, and an unpromising film, which is unlikely to enjoy commercial release. But *Meetings of Anna* is a valuable portrait of a woman dealing with loneliness and societal pressures. □

Jenny Rankine



Moments, France/Israel 1979, Dir: Michal Bat-Adam, Starring: Michal Bat-Adam, Brigitte Catillon.

Michal Bat-Adam turns writer-director with Moshe Mizrahi producing, to tell the story of love between two women who meet on a train bound for Jerusalem. Bat-Adam plays Yola, an Israeli would-be writer, Brigitte Catillon is the French tourist Anne, whom Yola flirts with, and Assaf Dayan plays Avi, Yola's lover, later to be her husband and father of their son.

Michal Bat-Adam and Moshe Mizrahi, long time creative partners, enjoy the distinction of being Israel's most internationally acclaimed film-makers. Technically this film is unremarkable. *Moments* is a tentative, passionless, somewhat moral script about the games heterosexuals sometimes play with each other. It was billed as a lesbian love story. It is not. Certainly there is a real attempt to say something about the interesting quirkiness of people's relationships. It manages only a pedestrian look at sexual repression and moral hypocrisy with the sanctity of the Nuclear Family mercifully pitched in for good measure.

Ninety-two excruciating minutes of desire, denial and departures. The opportunity to teach us something about human nature was there, instead we are fed the cat and mouse routine which gradually palls. Nothing is lost because nothing is gained. The closest Yola and

Anne move towards consummating their feverish fantasy is when Yola encourages Avi (on a visit from Tel Aviv) to make love to both of them in a shabby little menage a trois. Wholly predictable. Terrified she will lose Avi, Yola flees with him back to Tel Aviv to set up house and family.

Anne visits Yola, Avi and son four years later. The two women clasp hands to recall their first meeting. This recollection is the crux of the film. It trudges along collapsing into dreary silliness. Avi turns outraged husband in the classical male mode. He cannot cope with Anne's presence. Dutifully Yola drives Anne to the airport for another farewell. Wearily we listen to Yola's voice over as she returns home, telling us that already she misses Anne, they must keep in touch, one day she will find the courage to tell her true feelings. I shuffled out of the theatre as near to catatonic as I ever want to be. □

Sharon Alston



comforting and nurturing one another through yet another predictable marital crisis, I expected them to "discover" one another in lesbian terms. That never happened, though these scenes were full of joy in, and care for, each other. And the film does end with both women returning to the factory hostel knowing their husbands are no longer a major part of their lives.

Director Marta Meszaros has an eye for location which reflect isolation, stress and implacable conformity: a dour house used as a drinking place, in which the two women share a drink and then are made so uncomfortable by the men's overt and leering glances that they leave; the greyness of the hostel's corridors and furniture; the drying-out asylum where Juli's husband blearily vomits is attended by a lank-haired, overweight and very indifferent woman.

Implacable conformity is a theme also explored through the rigidity of bureaucratic thinking Mari fights when Juli's 6-year-old daughter is discovered living at the hostel and Juli is threatened with dismissal. Is this an insight into the

reality of life in the Communist bloc?

Perhaps the fragmentation I felt the film had lay in my confusion about Juli's sexuality; but the final scene, with Juli's daughter Zsuzsi running away from both women screaming that they were both lying, certainly left me with the conviction that lying to themselves was a definite though subconscious aspect of each woman. It is here that subtitled films deprive viewers of the vital essence of language, and thereby insights gained through patterns of speech and nuance of inflection. I wish I spoke Hungarian, so that I could see it again, to see what the sparse subtitles left out. □

Sandi Hall



Portrait of Teresa, Cuba, 1979,
Dir: Pastor Vega, Starring Daysi Granados, Adolfo Llaurado.

Teresa is a post-revolutionary Cuban woman doing domestic battle with a pre-revolutionary blockhead of a husband.

The Two of Them, Hungary 1977, Dir: Marta Meszaros, Starring: Marina Vlady, Lili Monori.

This film bothered me. I liked it, but when Juli, the younger woman in the film appeared, I immediately felt and thought that she was a lesbian, even though I knew from the programme that she wasn't intended to play such a role.

Each time she and Mari, the manager of the factory hostel in which both women work and live, had scenes of



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She, striving to be a good daughter of the revolution, works all day at a textile mill, is active in her union, organises a dance group of her workmates, and strives to win party membership. But she's still left with the major part of running the house for her three delicious sons and nagging husband. He, feeling rejected, throws a temper tantrum and walks out; the latter part of the film shows his efforts to get back into Teresa's life (and knickers). Teresa, realising he won't change, ultimately rejects him.

Teresa is portrayed by Daysi Granada as a strong sensitive woman, if a little dour at times and somewhat prone to spout rhetoric even in the most intimate situations. The film looks at some familiar themes: the sexual double standard, the double workload of women, the changed sexual consciousness of different generations of Cuban women, and the difficulty of challenging entrenched sex roles. All this good meat to the feminist table is given an added piquancy by the exotic setting and the opportunity to see something of Cuban life, even if it has been doctored for foreign audiences. My companion, not long returned from Cuba, said that Havana had not seen so much paint in twenty years. Neither, she said, do African and Indian Cubans rub shoulders quite so amicably as shown in *Portrait of Teresa*. □

Sandra Coney



Peppermint Soda (Diabolo Menthe), France 1977, Dir: Diane Kurys, Starring Eleanor Klarwein, Odile Michel and Coralie Clement.

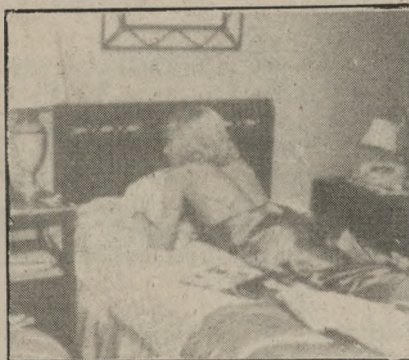
What struck me about this smoothly crafted film from France was the clarity with which both of the teenage women are depicted as complex people in their own right. The years lumped together as "teenage" years contain generation gaps far more chasmic than in older people; this film makes those separations very apparent.

The superb acting of Coralie Clement acutely details the sullen resistance of a 13-year-old to authority, as well as her ability to manipulate adults who still see her as a child. Two examples spring to mind: the delicious scene in which she tells outrageous lies quite nonchalantly, to prevent her mother from meeting her science teacher because her marks are so bad; and the chilling portrayal of selfish singlemindedness used with her knowledge of her father's guilts as she manipulates him into taking her on the skiing holiday she wants.

Through the older sister, director Diane Kurys draws a delicately deft portrait of a girl-becoming-woman. As she passionately rails at her mother about left wing politics in the school, as she moodily rages at her sister for drinking peppermint soda in a restaurant "after hours", and as she eagerly returns the interest a spotty young man shows her, Eleanor Klarwein unstintingly gives us the rapid mood changes and conflicts that buffet 17-year-olds.

The sisters are guided by the compassionate understanding of their mother, warmly played by Marie-Veronique Mavrin. It is her mother-knowledge that knows the lie as it is told, understands the passion as it rises, puts balm on the wounded nerve as it begins to bleed. Yet Kurys hasn't neglected the vulnerable side of the mother either, as shown in the scene in which she, panic stricken, rings to tell her lover that she has an incurable case of psoriasis, which soon turns out to be nerves!

A satisfying example of a film about women directed by a talented woman. □
Sandi Hall



Head Over Heels, USA 1979, Dir: Joan Micklin Silver, Starring: John Heard, Mary Beth Hurt.

Although it has some good lines and goofy situations, *Head Over Heels* is not really a comedy at all — certainly not to me, at any rate. Charles is an arrogant,

bored, piggish man; he falls suddenly and obsessively in love with Laura, a vaguer, less confident, older Annie Hall. When she goes back to her A-frame salesman husband, Charles spends all his spare time sitting outside their house, builds an elaborate model of it (putting the "husband's" head in the gas oven), and broods about their affair endlessly. He asks out Betty, pathetic and eager (and plain), only to ditch her mid-evening when he finds Laura has left home again. Laura rejects him again — finally, he thinks — and I sigh with relief — she has some sense, after all. But no. He comes home some weeks later, and there she is in the kitchen, cooking his favourite dessert. Yuk.

Charles is not funny, because he is dangerous; one might believe Joan Micklin Silver thought so too, were it not for the final cop-out. He is at least, though, a real person, as many women who have suffered from this kind of obsessive pursuit would quickly acknowledge. Laura is very little more than a pretty peg to hang his fantasies on. She has no true existence of her own, so the final implication, that she cannot live without Charles, ought to come as no surprise. Coming from the director of the excellent *Hester Street*, this is a shallow, disappointing movie, but one which may well have considerable commercial success, thanks to its veneer of "insight", its energy, and its apparent humour. □

Anne Else

The Deputy, Spain 1979, Dir: Eloy de la Iglesia, Starring: Jose Sacristan, Maria Luisa San Jose.

The Deputy is one of those very rare films about unstereotyped homosexuals that is sympathetic and powerful. In showing the persecution of a male homosexual socialist politician in modern-day Spain, it very effectively relates homophobia to fascist politics. Although the politician is a fictional character, the party exists and enjoys popular support.

The politician is married, but comes to realise that he cannot deny his homosexuality. He buys sex from a series of young working class male prostitutes, before he begins a relationship with one of them. Unknown to him, the youth has been bought by a fascist terrorist group which wants to discredit the socialist party. The fascists despise the young gays, but are happy to use them as a gang to beat up and harass the socialists. It is obvious that if the

fascists came to power, the same gay youths would be targets for beatings in their turn.

The film's most positive statement derives from the contrast between the honesty of the politician and his wife as they talk about his changing feelings and earn the trust of his lover, and the fascists' hatred and dehumanisation of women and gay men. The link between fascism and homophobia is embodied in the young gays, whose self-hatred is at the root of their ultra-macho and violent behaviour.

The Deputy shows that freedom of sexual preference has to be part of any revolution. But it does not clearly challenge heterosexism, that bastion of the fascist state. If the politician had been a woman, for instance, her coming out could have raised the whole issue of heterosexuality as a socially constructed rather than biological institution.

If you want to see a powerful film about the true face of the right wing, grab the next opportunity to see **The Deputy** □

Jenny Rankine



Daughter Rite, USA 1978, Dir: Michelle Citron, Starring: Penelope Victor, Anne Wilford.

Since I saw Agnes Varda's **Cleo from 5 til 7** in the 60s I have been eagerly looking for films by women speaking about themselves and their lives. At this year's Wellington Film Festival the first film I saw made by women was **Daughter Rite**. It was preceded by **Witches and Faggots** — **Dykes and Poofers**, a film by the Australian One in Seven collective.

That film included a record of the 1978 Mardi Gras at Kings Cross which was intended to be a gay celebration and revealed once again the potential and the desire to oppress gays. I found it interesting and moving and close enough (for those who think of fleeing to Sydney should things get too bad here) to be very relevant.

Daughter Rite is presented as a documentary. (I thought the acting so good that it took me till near the end to question whether the main characters were actors or not.) The film is about the differing relationships of two daughters to their mother and their relationship with each other. The daughters speak to camera and to each other, and this is intercut with clips from old home movies of the girls and their mother. It is an episodic film, which at times I found disconcerting. You'd get to a "good ending" and think it must be the end and then another episode would start. But each time I became fascinated and moved and proud that the clarity and depth of understanding of ourselves, our mothers, daughters, sisters, friends — i.e. ourselves as woman was being portrayed with all its strength and beauty. There is a lot of anger and a lot of compassion. For example, the daughter rages at the waste of her mother's energy in repressed trivia and yet fears a trivial waste of her own energies.

It's so good the "generations" of women, the common history. We share so much we're so seldom aware of. I think you should see it. □

Lani Morris

Introducing Feminism

Jenny Philips, 1981, \$1.00

When I first saw this small booklet I thought, "What a good idea, a nice basic book about feminism!" Unfortunately, although there are some very good things about this book, it isn't quite what I had hoped for. There has been a need for a long time for a small, inexpensive book explaining the principles of feminism to women. As New Zealand women, we needed a book relevant to our experience and not one produced for American or European women. This book was produced in New Zealand (with financial help from the Committee on Women) by Jenny Philips. Jenny has been part of the New Zealand women's movement, and she wanted to counter the widespread anti-feminist propaganda. Her book is aimed at the ordinary woman who knows and understands little of feminism and who is fearful of it. The booklet covers "who is a feminist"; stereotyping of children and its future effect on women's lives; the commonality of women's experience; the feminist movement; what it is, what it is trying to do and where to get further in-

formation; available resources and so on. It is a nice short booklet, well written in everyday language.

But I have a few reservations about this book. It concentrates on the simple ideas we had in the early '70s, as though feminist political analysis had stopped somewhere. Many really crucial ideas and sections of the feminist movement seem to be missing from this book. I have always thought that feminism was about power, patriarchy, control, domination, oppression. Yet this book only mildly attacks patriarchy; men are non-existent as oppressors of women and most of the book's heaviest comments deal with sex-role stereotyping. Sex-role stereotyping was a very fashionable issue in the early days of the women's movement. As an issue it appealed to less radical women and provided a comfortable answer to the questions "Why are women oppressed?" It enabled these women to feel that men were also at the mercy of socialization. Thus oppression somehow didn't need to be without power and we could ignore the evidence of individual male oppressors beating and raping women. This book seems almost to take this stand. Thus that whole part of feminist analysis and writing dealing with the reasons for the oppression of women, the ways in which all men are part of the system of oppression and derive benefits from it, is conveniently ignored in this book. Lesbians are ignored, although most women seem to be aware of their role in the existing feminist movement, and there is certainly no presentation of lesbian feminist politics.

There's a softness about this book which leaves the impression that we need to be polite about feminist ideas and views but women are prepared to see radical ideas and beliefs, as long as these connect with their lives and experiences. I feel this booklet could have been much more hard-hitting and direct.

I also feel, as an introductory book it could have spent more time giving women ideas on what they could do to get involved in their own area. It is especially hard for women who live outside of Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch or Dunedin to begin to get involved in feminism and women need ideas and explanations of how to get started. More of this type of information would have been valuable in this book.

All that aside it is good to see a New Zealand book available that is aimed at women new to the movement. I liked the layout and the use of questions and answers as a way of explaining ideas.

Sarah Calvert.

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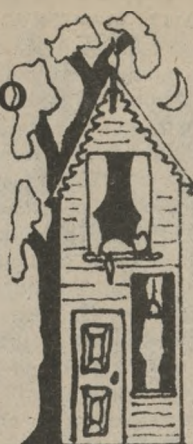
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SOS, P.O. Box 446. Ph. 775-502 or 36-284 after hrs.
 WONAAC, P.O. Box 446. Ph. 775-502.
 Working Women's Alliance, 52 Montague St, Dunedin.
 Working Women's Council, P.O. Box 5311, Dunedin.

GISBORNE

Lesbian Women's Group, P.O. Box 1398. Ph. 4285.
 NOW, 3 Dickson St, Gisborne.
 SOS, 37 Wairere Rd, Box 1398. Ph. 4285
 WEL, Box 282, Gisborne. Ph. 81-407
 Working Women's Council, c/o Margaret McQuillan,, 6 Ida Rd. Ph. 88-291.

GORE

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

GREYMOOUTH

ALRANZ, P.O. Box 421, Greymouth.
 WEL, 7 Domain Tce, Karoro, Greymouth.

HAMILTON

Cambridge Feminist Group, C/- Wendy Ennis, 33 Shakespeare Rd, Cambridge.
 Hamilton Feminists, P.O. Box 751. Ph. 83-381.
 Hamilton Feminist Teachers, C/- Shirley Smith, 92 McFarlane St, Hamilton. Ph. 67-491.
 Hamilton Women's Centre, P.O. Box 7025, Claudelands, Hamilton.
 NZ Women's Health Network Newsletter, C/- Sarah Calvert, 155 Galloway St, Hamilton.
 SOS, 155 Galloway St. Ph. 65-474.
 WEL, P.O. Box 9581, Hamilton North. Rebecca Judd, C/- Alyson de Boer, 102 The Terrace, Thames.
 Women's Studies Resource Centre, University of Waikato, Hamilton.
 Working Women's Council, C/- Barbara Ware, P.O. Box 80, Hamilton.
 National Office for Working Women's Council, P.O. Box 14042, Enderley P.O., Hamilton.

HUNTLY

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

INVERCARGILL

SOS, P.O. Box 676, Invercargill. Ph. 88-145.
 WEL, P.O. Box 676, Invercargill.

LOWER HUTT

Hutt Valley Feminists, 3 Taka Grove, Normandale, Lower Hutt.
 Media Women, 4 Godley St, Lower Hutt.

MARLBOROUGH/BLENHEIM

NOW, P.O. Box 607, Blenheim.
 SOS, 13 Linton St, Box 607. Ph. 87-561.
 Women's Refuge, C/- NOW, P.O. Box 607, Blenheim. Ph. 84-099.
 WONAAC, 1A Stuart St, Blenheim.

MASTERTON

WEL, P.O. Box 201, Masterton. Penny Bunney. Ph. 88-835.

NAPIER/HASTINGS

SOS, 28 Bristol St, Napier. Ph. 438-484; 600 Gordon St, Hastings. Ph. 68-642.
 Women's Electoral Lobby, P.O. Box 90, Taradale. Sue Askew.

ALRANZ, P.O. Box 476, Nelson.
 Onekaka Feminist Front, C/- Val Shapel, Onekaka. RD2 Takaka.
 SOS, 5 Victoria Heights. Ph. 83-025.
 WEL, P.O. Box 145, Motueka. Kathy Light. Ph. 89-482 (bus.). Ph. 818 Tasman (home).
 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, P.O. Box 72, New Plymouth. Ph. 79-304.
 SOS, 9 Te Mara Place. Ph. 84-937.
 WEL, C/- Patricia Keiller, 42 Pendarves St, New Plymouth.
 Virago Women's Action Group, 71 Bayly Rd.
 Women's Action Group, P.O. Box 4030. Ph. 80-168, 83-354.
 Women's Centre, 66 Brougham St, New Plymouth. Ph. 79-532.
 Virago Women's Action Group, C/- 71 Bayly Rd, new Plymouth.

PALMERSTON NORTH

ALRANZ, P.O. Box 639, Palmerston North.
 Palmerston North Women's Liberation, 38 Kimberley Grove, Palmerston North.
 SOS, 93 Monrad St, Palmerston North. Ph. 75-460.
 WEL (Manawatu), P.O. Box 200, Palmerston North.
 WEL (Kapiti), P.O. Box 66, Waikanae.
 WEL (Levin), 68A Queen St, Levin. Ph. 89-713.

ROTORUA

SOS, Box 4036, Ph. 88-763.
 WEL, P.O. Box 2011, Rotorua. Rosemary Norman.
 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. 63-260.
 Tauranga Women's Centre, P.O. Box 368, Tauranga; 42 Grey St (in Govt. Life Bldg). Ph. 83-530.

TE AWAMUTU

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

TOKOROA

ALRANZ, P.O. Box 380, Tokoroa.
 WEL, C/- Lynne Holder, 33 Tarapunga Place, Tokoroa.

UPPER HUTT

NOW, 18 Cruickshank Rd, Upper Hutt.
 Upper Hutt Feminists, 9 Thackeray St. Ph. 84-614.

WANGANUI

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

SOS, Box 3049, Ohope Beach. Ph. 757 or 348 Ohope.
 Whakatane Women's Collective, P.O. Box 3049, Ohope.
 Whakatane Women's Health Group, 281 Pohutukawa Ave, Ohope. Ph. Whakatane 7850, Ohope 550.

WHANGAREI

Gay Women's Group, P.O. Box 5083, Whangarei.
 NOW and WEL, P.O. Box 4294, Kamo, Whangarei.
 Sue Lawrence.

WELLINGTON

Abortion Rights Committee, P.O. Box 12-076, Wellington North.
 ALRANZ, P.O. Box 19-052, Wellington. Ph. 758-450.
 Circle Magazine, P.O. Box 427, Wellington.
 Committee on Women, C/- The Treasury, Private Bag.
 Committee on Women & Education, Education Department.
 Feminist Librarians, Pat Sargison, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
 Hecate Women's Health Collective, 6 Boulcott St (rm 14), P.O. Box 11-675, Wellington. Ph. 721-804.
 Herstory Press, P.O. Box 3871, Wellington. Ph. 847-583.
 Kidsarus 2, P.O. Box 9600, Wellington.
 NZ Working Women's Council, P.O. Box 27-215, Wellington.
 Rape Crisis Centre, P.O. Box 2059, GPO Wellington. Ph. 898-288.
 Society for Research on Women in NZ Inc., P.O. Box 13-078, Johnsonville.
 SOS, Box 28-099. Ph. 856-670.
 WEL, P.O. Box 11-285, Wellington. Kristin Jakobson (Sec.). Ph. 739-321 (office).
 + HOROWHENUA — C/- Gay Stewart, 7 Stuart St, Levin.
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 Wellington Women's Resource Centre, 6 Boulcott St (rm 13, 22). Ph. 721-970.
 WISE (Women in Schools in Education), P.O. Box 11-724, Wellington.
 WONAAC, P.O. Box 2669. Ph. 877-703, 848-541.
 Working Women's Alliance, P.O. Box 9012, Wellington.
 Working Women's Alliance, North City Branch, 6 Halswell St, Thorndon, Wellington 1.
 Working Women's 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, P.O. Box 27-215, Upper Willis St, Wellington.
 Values Women's Network. Ph. 797-611.
 Women's Action Group, C/- Victoria University.
 Women's Gallery, 26 Harris St, Box 9600.
 Women's Rights Action Committee, New Zealand Students' Association, P.O. Box 9047, Courtney Place.
 Wellington Federation of University Women, P.O. Box 2006, Wellington.

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