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LIST, POLL EMICK, SET VIEWS & FEMINIST FANNY

BROADSHEET

NEW ZEALAND'S FEMINIST MAGAZINE
THIRTEENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION
SEPTEMBER 1984 ISSUE 122 \$2.50

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**THE FULL
DALKON
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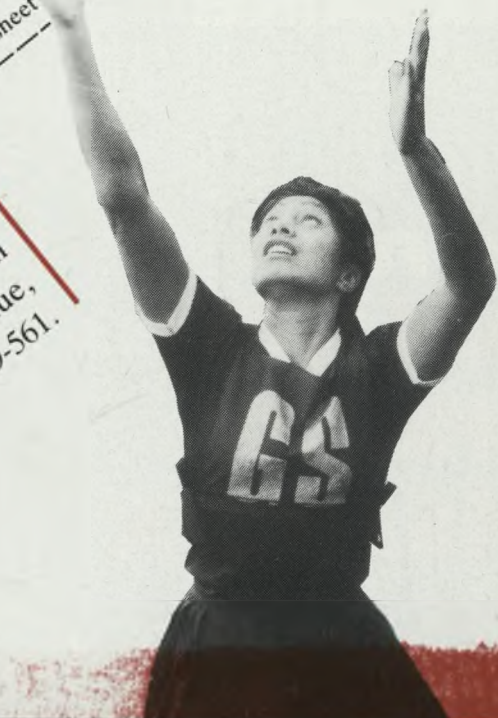
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NEW INSIDE HIT

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COVER Sonja Davies

FRONTISPIECE Netballers on the Windmill Road Courts, Mt Eden, during June/July 1984 photographed by Gil Hanly

THE BROADSHEET COLLECTIVE Sarah Calvert, Sandra Coney, Lyn Crossley, Bernadette Doolan, Sandi Hall, Heather McLeish, Claire-Louise McCurdy, Diane Quin, Jenny Rankine and Renee.

THESE WOMEN WORKED ON THIS ISSUE Beverley Ansell, Athina Reay, Penny Winter, Deborah, Lesley Smith, Leonie Child, Anne Waters, Chris Forbes, Jess Hawk Oakenstar and the enveloping women.

BROADSHEET is published by Broadsheet Magazine Ltd, PO Box 5799 Wellesley Street, Auckland; Registered Office: 1st floor Gane Building, 43 Anzac Avenue, Auckland 1; and printed by Wanganui Newspapers Ltd, 20 Drews Avenue, Wanganui. Published: 1 September 1984.

BROADSHEET annual subscription \$NZ24, overseas surface \$31, overseas airmail Europe \$43.50, America and Asia \$39, Australia and South Pacific \$33.

Permission must be sought before articles may be reprinted.
Broadsheet is on file at the Women's Collection, Special Department, Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois 60201, USA.

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

**CORRECTION:
BROADSHEET'S
PHONE
NUMBER
IS 794 751**



LETTERS

PETRA KELLY

Dear Broadsheet,

As organiser of Petra Kelly's visit to New Zealand I should like to reply to the gratuitous attack on Values at the end of Karen Mangnall's report on Petra Kelly (July/August issue).

Petra Kelly was brought to New Zealand at a very substantial cost borne by the relatively small number of dedicated people who are the backbone of the Values Party. She is a most outstanding woman, but with her dedication and intensity of commitment is in serious danger of physical collapse. While she was in New Zealand she worked from 9am till 3am despite suffering from major health problems. Each night she spent several hours on the phone dealing with her West German political duties on top of the work of researching and recording the issues in the places she was visiting and preparing for her speeches and interviews.

For this kind of effort she has been accused of fostering a leadership cult, not by grass-roots Die Grunen party members, but by those who feel themselves competing with her. Immediately before her Australasian visit she resigned as one of the three Die Grunen spokespeople in favour of a group of six women who had put themselves forward as a "take it or leave it" package. She commented that only two of these women are feminists (the others having entered Die Grunen via the peace movement with Church connections) and that she felt their tactics were an unacceptable "male power play".

She has written of the comfort she finds in the links she has made with like-minded political movements outside West Germany. With all the jealousies and criticisms she has to suffer within her own party it is a pleasure for her to be reminded that she and Die Grunen do serve as an inspiration and as an example to the rest of the world.

She is also acutely aware of political realities. "We started Die Grunen because we realized that we could get 400,000 people in Europe marching for peace but it did not make a scrap of difference to government policies. The only way to get change is to take votes from other parties." She also realizes that both in Britain and New Zealand the electoral system protects the status quo. Values

began seven years before Die Grunen with the same ideals and the same level of support but we have failed to win seats. The first step necessary for progress here is to change the electoral system to proportional representation so that the Government cannot act in the interests of only 40% of the voters and so that new ideals and new voices can win parliamentary representation.

Karen Mangnall implies that Values has severed links with the "grassroots movements". I know that will raise bitter laughs from many Values people who feel that many of these movements betrayed Values at the first sound of a piece of window-dressing waffle in their direction from National and Labour.

It is a fact that Values has never weakened its stands on any of the causes of environment, justice and equality that it is based on. It is also a fact that many pressure groups have capitulated to National and Labour in the false belief that these parties can be influenced to change the distribution of power in our society without political confrontation. It is a fact that many members of pressure groups in New Zealand are not actually willing to change their political allegiance in the interests of the cause they profess to support – and they do not wish to believe they must do so.

Karen Mangnall may be surprised to know that we in Christchurch told Petra Kelly about **Broadsheet**, gave her our own personal back issues to read and keep, and urged her to speak with you. It is hard not to feel that yet again Values support has not been fairly reciprocated.

The charge that Values co-opted "taha Maori" for its own cause could equally be levelled at **Broadsheet** – we and you tread a fine line between showing our sympathies and being accused of opportunism. Petra Kelly was not impressed with the sexism and violence of the Maori cultural heritage. Let none of us pretend that we have all the answers or all the virtue.

I am proud that Values brought Petra Kelly to New Zealand. I am not proud to say that Dairne Shanahan told her before a taped interview for the "Sunday" TV programme that she would not be permitted to make any links between the green movement and New Zealand, nor any mention of

the ANZUS issue. I am not proud that TVNZ then scrapped the interview in favour of Bob Jones bad-mouthing Gordon Dryden and so prevented New Zealanders hearing one of the most remarkable women in the world being censored by our very own Television New Zealand.

I hope this letter will not be censored by **Broadsheet** and will give your readers more understanding of the political facts of life.

Alan Wilkinson

Co-leader, NZ Values Party

I would like to comment on several matters raised in Karen Mangnall's article on Petra Kelly in your July issue.

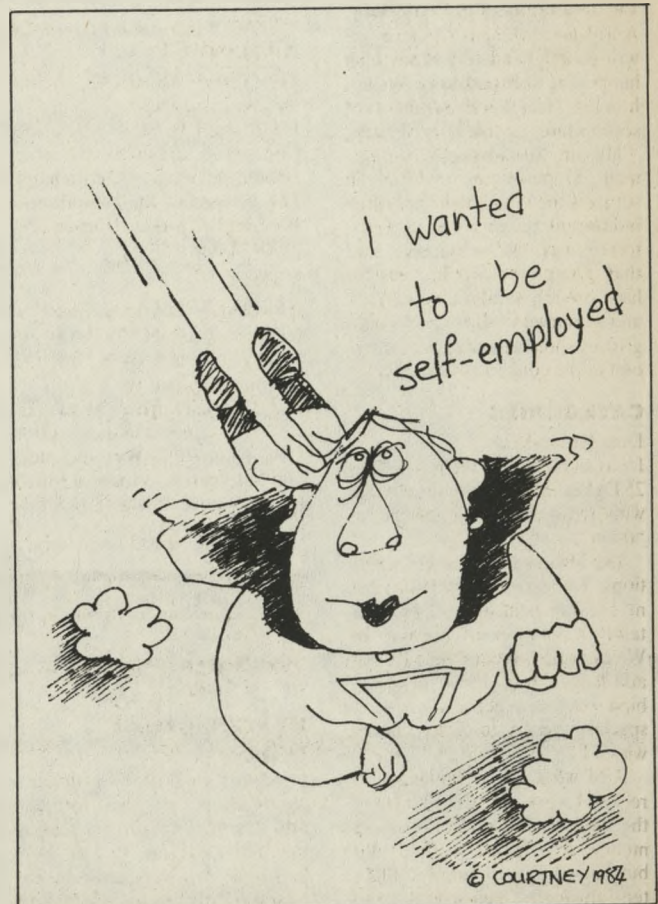
Karen mentions that she had heard that Petra wanted to talk only to people from alternative and feminist journals. She had heard wrong. While Petra certainly prefers talking to such people she appreciates that to get her message across to the unconvinced it is important to talk also to mainstream media such as the **Herald** and **Listener**, and she was very happy to do so while in Auckland. The **Herald** printed an excellent if limited article on Petra on 1 June 1984. Unfortunately it was relegated to their "Mainly Women" page, but even Bob

Jones doesn't always get the coverage he wants.

Karen objected to what she called the "consistent bandwaggoning" of the Values Party during Petra's visit. Values is extremely proud to have brought Petra to New Zealand, and we are also proud to be part of the worldwide "Green" movement. Doesn't Karen realise that Values was instrumental in getting the German Green Party established, and our international "green" links makes us unique in NZ politics?

As for Values people "co-opting and massacrining" the Maori language, we don't claim to be perfect. We try our best to promote Taha Maori, and we are the only political party which gives equality to all minority groups (including men). It is not easy to become fluent in a second language, and Values members would rather use little Maori than none at all. If our pronunciation is astray we would certainly welcome correction.

Finally I would like to say that, having been privileged to spend some time with Petra during her Auckland visit, I feel that Karen's article was a very fair portrayal of her, but Petra didn't come all this way on her own. Gert Bastian, although less fluent in English, gave some interesting insights into Ger-



man militarism. Karen may have felt that Petra had "lost that gaunt sleepless look", but the Values Party was very aware that she is an extremely sick woman, and at her request we tried to limit her public activities, and allow a little time for relaxation.

In the short time she was here we came to love and admire her, and her visit has indeed been a "shot in the arm" for Values. Such shots strengthen us in our continuing struggle for peace and justice.

Ruth Symons

NZ Values Party Auckland Delegate and Chauffeur to Petra Kelly

Ed Note: *Broadsheet* contacted the Values Party asking for interview time after seeing a poster announcing Petra Kelly's visit at the library. We were told we would have to take second place to the main media, television etc. We were never given interview time and Karen wrote her piece after attending Petra Kelly's conference. While Petra Kelly was in Auckland, *Broadsheet* was contacted by Values and told Petra Kelly would like to visit our offices the next day. We rang around the collective and gathered at the office. Petra Kelly and Values did not arrive; neither were we notified of any cancellation.

This note is not intended in any way as a criticism of Petra Kelly. And Karen Mangnall's piece was written independently of anything happening at *Broadsheet*. We do, however, feel that *Broadsheet* got second rate treatment by Values.

Despite *Broadsheet's* commitment to publishing material on subjects the main media are often indifferent to, or cover in a distorted way, we sometimes find that groups we would consider have broadly similar aims to ours, and whom we would expect would give us some priority, put us second to the conservative media.

CATEGORIES

Dear *Broadsheet*,
I was saddened by the letter from 25 Dykes. Maybe they should talk with straight women instead of "them".

I've always abhorred classifications. I'm a straight woman, but maybe I'm bent a little. I'm certainly a follower of the way of Wicca, which means that I bend and shape things. I love many lesbian women, especially two very special women in Christchurch whom I am very fond of.

And what about privileges? I reckon I work pretty hard most of the time, and I ain't got no spare money. I hate self-justification, but I'm working to put my daughter through high-school and perhaps varsity.

Tātou, tātou.

Pat Ocean
Christchurch

Dear *Broadsheet*,

Well, I say the Maori interviews are nearly always the best part of *Broadsheet*, without any doubt.

In reply to some letter-writers re any so-called "hatred" in *Broadsheet* or elsewhere: Maoris have been turning the other cheek for as long as I can remember. Do

how a hysterectomy looks to a hitherto healthy person, unfamiliar with hospitals or operations. Such matters are fortunately *not* general knowledge.

I had a hysterectomy at Wellington hospital just under two years ago, at the age of 48. I was both lucky and unlucky in comparison to the stories Lyn recounts. I was well briefed by the clinic sister on what to expect, had a technically competent sur-

ter tactics.

The specialist was apparently both frank and supportive at the interview where he advised me to have the operation, but I had never heard of my condition (atypical hyperplasia) and didn't know what questions to ask. He asked me if I had any more questions and I said not at present, but could I ring him up with more if they occurred to me? He appeared quite taken aback by the suggestion (was it the first time it had been made?) but agreed. I asked would it be all right if I followed the procedure I always do with my very helpful GP, that is leave a message so as not to disturb him at surgery and allow him to ring me back. He agreed, with a total lack of enthusiasm.

He told me at the initial interview that "atypical hyperplasia" meant I had a proliferation of abnormal cells in the endometrium which might progress to cancer, and whilst the sample he had taken during my diagnostic D & C was not malignant, he could not rule out the possibility of a hidden malignancy being there already. I asked what was the statistical likelihood of someone with my condition developing cancer, and he said that couldn't be estimated because such uteri, when found, were nearly always removed.

On reflection, after the interview, it struck me there was a fallacy there somewhere. If generations of doctors thought that atypical hyperplasia progressed to form cancers, and consequently removed uteri to prevent this, neither women nor doctors would ever be in a position to know whether it did in fact progress. There was also a catch - only a brave woman would care to test the assumption by putting her own life on the line.

The best solution seemed to be to use the month I had before the operation (I had been placed on the semi-urgent waiting list) to inform myself as fully as possible, from books and by further questioning of the specialist. Then maybe, in the absence of statistics, I could still get an idea of what order of risk I ran. I found nothing written for the layperson on atypical hyperplasia, but with the help of a feminist librarian managed to track down some relevant and partially readable material. It seemed to show that the link between atypical hyperplasia and cancer was a circumstantial one, and that experts were divided on its significance. The main points were:

rice chairs and another typewriter.

SIS COLUMN

Sisters Intelligence Service is an opportunity for us to learn what's happening around the country and for you to write and tell us what's happening in your area. This month we hear from Tauranga and Napier.

WHERE WE ARE

On the first floor of the Gane Building, 43 Anzac Avenue, Auckland. Our office and bookshop is open between 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 1pm on Saturdays. Our box number is PO Box 5799 Wellesley Street, Auckland, New Zealand. Phone 794-751.

BOOKSTALLS

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DEADLINES

Deadline for November - September 10 and for December - October 10. Small items, What's New? and advertisements can reach us up to two weeks after that date.

ADVERTISING RATES

Classified \$3.80 per column, quarter page \$70, half page \$140, third page \$97.20 and a full page \$260. Inside covers \$360 and outside back cover \$720. Contact Diane or Renee.

FRONTING UP

In this issue we introduce a TV column, Set Views. Feminist Fanny, who was last featured in September 1979 just five years ago, returns to brighten our lives. Hit List will record women's actions against sexism and Poll Emick presents her own particular brand of fanaticism. You may have noticed that we have a new type for our name on the cover. We decided to have a masthead that symbolised our approach to life, bright and bold, in this our thirteenth year of publication.

THANKS

Thanks to all those people who have used the automatic payment form to pledge us a regular amount. Thanks to all those who are going to. Every dollar helps to keep us alive.

APOLOGIES

To Terry Mehlman, Debbie Swanner and Midge Quant of the US Radical Feminist Organising Committee, who wrote the article "Bombs Don't Discriminate". The address of the committee is 109 Ellerbee Street, Durham, NC 27704, USA.

TABLE

Broadsheet workers need a medium sized table for pasting up cuttings, writing, typing etc. Our last one only had three legs on it and it's finally driven us so crazy we've consigned it to the corridor. Can you help? We also need another heater, as many castlight folders as we can get, sellotape dispensers, teaspoons, stable of-

you want them all to walk on water as well?

Nicky Negrescu
Nelson South

HYSTERECTOMY

Dear Sisters,

I found Lyn Potter's article on hysterectomy of great interest, and Dr Hutchinson's letter to her horrified me by its arrogance. It was so centred on the hospital institutional setting that it completely failed to envisage

geon, excellent nursing care and only a very minor complication. However, my gynaecologist succeeded in robbing me of my right of informed consent despite my best attempts at asserting myself. Unlike Lyn, I did not temporarily forget to act like a feminist, but my assertiveness still did not achieve the desired result. I am writing about my experience in the hope that others will be able to learn from it and evolve bet-

- The peak age for atypical hyperplasia is the late 40s;
- The peak age for endometrial cancer is mid-50s;
- Fewer women in their 50s have atypical hyperplasia than women in their 40s, leading to the inference by some writers that it has mostly regressed by then and by others that some has regressed and some gone on to develop into cancer;
- The reason that both these inferences can be drawn is that there is a link between high levels of estrogen production and both conditions – by the 50s women's estrogen levels have dropped to a low level, however cancer typically takes at least 10 years to develop after the stimulus which produces it;
- Estrogen by itself by itself is not thought to be the culprit, it is estrogen unopposed by progesterone, which can occur both during adolescence and premenopausal, however the condition barely exists in the teens (my reading did not explain why this latter fact should be, but the specialists did, in his initial session – AH is more likely to develop after a lifetime of high estrogen production, in the sort of woman who menstruates early and has a late menopause, which is my family history – apparently the occurrence of anovulatory periods, without progesterone production, is the last straw);
- The cells of AH have an appearance somewhere between normal endometrial and cancer cells but their reproduction, though excessive is not uncontrolled;
- Where endometrial cancer is found there is often AH as well;
- Where endometrial cancer is found there is often AH as well;
- Some types of AH are harder to distinguish from cancer cells than others and in these cases surgery is more strongly recommended than for others;
- Surgery is the "treatment of choice" for all cases of AH where the woman is getting on for menopausal age and has completed her childbearing – in younger women hormone (progesterone) therapy might be tried first (the three textbooks which said this included Llewellyn-Jones' basic textbook for medical students, but did not say whether progesterone therapy actually worked, whether these cases produced a high incidence of cancer, or why surgery was the treatment of choice for older women – I do not to this day know the answer to these questions, as the specialist was no help);
- The reason why health statistics are no help, I discovered, is not only because all the uteri are re-

moved – it is also because there are no separate statistics for AH – it has the same code number in national and international health statistics as carcinoma in situ (an early cancer which hasn't spread) of the endometrium. Consequently the mortality and survival statistics for the two conditions are printed out together under the caption "Carcinoma in situ of the endometrium," which had an encouragingly high survival rate until one reflects that besides being a very early form of cancer it is mixed up with a totally benign condition.

To sum up, I discovered enough to make me agree with the specialist that there was probably some risk in not having the operation, but nothing to help me place it anywhere on a continuum from negligible to overwhelming. This was the point when I got back to the specialist on the phone with a fresh lot of questions. I wanted to ask whether I had any of the more extreme indications shown in the literature (very suspicious looking cells, very suspicious bleeding patterns etc) and what position he took in the controversy about the link between the two conditions.

My first mistake was to ring and leave a message which he received when he came out of surgery. I now know enough about the workloads of surgeons to realise I should have made an appointment to see him in person during clinics. I hadn't realised this was possible for a second consultation. My second mistake was to open the conversation with reference to my reading and ask a few questions using some medical terms. I was immediately ticked off for misusing the terms. Every opening I made was rubbished on the grounds of my ignorance, in a contemptuous manner. He did not say so in so many words, but the attitude was "Trust Big Daddy and leave it all to me. If I tried to tell you, you wouldn't understand, because you've just shown me how ignorant you are."

Eventually I gave up asking any detailed questions and blurted out, "Would you say I had a high, medium or low chance of getting cancer?" Without any hesitation he replied "High," but he would not tell me his reasons for thinking so.

I pondered the advisability of getting a second opinion but decided against it because my reading had convinced me there was some risk, and also because his face and body language and tone of voice at the initial interview conveyed (besides arrogance) a definite urgency. Nevertheless I remain angry with him because one should be given firmer evi-

dence than an air of alarm. The basic problem was that he and I had totally opposing ideas on my role. I believed my task was to find out the consequences of having the operation and not having it, weighing the options against each other and then deciding whether to have the operation. He saw my role as listening to his first, carefully prepared and staged performance and then to trust and obey. He ceased being kindly and supportive as soon as I stepped out of my prescribed role.

After I had the operation, my uterus was sectioned and analysed and found to have no cancer, and no more atypical hyperplasia. It had all been removed by the preceding D & C. Now, nearly two years later, I am in excellent health and glad I had the operation. I had a few problems in the first six months. My bowel and bladder which had always had some problems due to childhood polio and had circulation, gave me worse problems for the first three months, and no-one, either nursing staff nor the specialist, was the slightest bit interested. In effect it meant my first two months back at work were marred by frequent long sessions at the toilet. But that is not classed as a complication. I had a healing problem – growth of granulated tissue on the internal wound, which was painlessly cauterised and gave no trouble, and that was seen as a complication. I had an area of "Hyperaesthesia" – painful skin and flesh about three inches about the wound for six months, but it was only regarded as a curiosity by the medical staff. It has something to do with damaged nerves growing back. To me it was a constant irritating reminder that my tummy was not the way it had been before, something I would have liked to put out of my mind for most of the time. I suffered from the usual sudden onslaughts of extreme fatigue, frequently for three months and occasionally for another three.

Three months after the operation I had a great surge of hormones which made my breasts enlarged, sore, lumpy and secreting milk (23 years after having given birth). I consulted my GP who was quite helpful. He prescribed vitamin B6 and regular vigorous exercise to prevent hormone fluctuations. These had been a big problem for the three years leading up to the operation. The specialist had said he was unable to help with these problems, which would probably continue after the operation. Nevertheless the breast symptoms were more extreme than any I had had before and in my opinion were an effect

of the operation. The other hormone effects, nausea, heartburn, rashes and tension, have eased considerably since the vitamin and exercise therapy.

I was fortunate enough to have no depression following the operation. I now have far more energy than I had for 10 to 15 years before the hysterectomy, which suggests that I had been "dragged down" for years, first by hormonal birth control and then by heavy, erratic bleeding. My GP suggested, after reading the specialist's report, that this would have been the major reason for having it done. If this had been put to me I would have been more likely to feel easy about going along with the gynaecologist's recommendation. The return to work six weeks after the operation I found too sudden, although I was rearing to go the week before. I would suggest to other women that they should ask for a certificate allowing gradual part-time return at first, working up to full-time as soon they feel able, and returning for a while to part-time if extreme fatigue recurs.

I see this is a very long letter but am unrepentant. Women of my mother's generation were figures of fun for getting together to talk about their operations. I blench when I think of the traumas they must have gone through in ignorance and unsupported. Knowledge is strength, and like Lyn I want to share the knowledge I have gained.

Letter No. 2. This one is to congratulate you on an all round excellent June issue, especially Sandra Coney's article on Sharon Kroot. Also, congratulations on the quick action which must have been needed to get the July issue out with all the relevant election material. I enclose a small further donation to help **Broadsheet's** survival.

Karen Peterson Butterworth
Tawa

SHARON KROOT

Dear Broadsheet,
Thank you very much for the **Broadsheet** that you so kindly sent me. Would it be possible to get another for Sharon's sister; she would very much like to have one.

The article read very well. The only thing is "Girls can do it" – I bred the horses, not the father. I have been one of those people who cannot sit in a pigeon hole. I try anything and everything that takes my fancy.

Thanks again for your consideration.

Marita Kroot
Whangarei

Poll Emick

The other day I was sitting at my table sending my daily hate-waves towards men. Feminists do this all the time. I'm sure everyone knows that. After I'd finished my daily stint and said my personal hit list aloud, viciously, three times, my eyes turned to the window. Outside I could see a tall tree and my thoughts turned immediately to that wonderful old song, I think that men will never be As satisfied with trees as me A tree that stands alone all bare And concentrates on being there Poems are made by some but we Just smile when we see a tree

My reverie was interrupted by a friend who dashed in gibbering disjointedly (yes, I know you can't gibber any other way). She thrust a piece of newspaper at me.

"Look at that," she said stridently (feminists always talk stridently).

Now I'm used to a bit of the old fanatical ranting and raving which we feminists love to indulge in but she seemed to be going a bit too far.

"Read it!" she cried emotionally (feminists always...)

I turned the newspaper up the right way and there in front of my hard beady eyes I saw,

For Hire: Six metres of heavy chain. Used once.

"Why on earth would you want this?" I said shrewishly.

"Its one of those things I've always wanted," she said hysterically.

"What for?" I asked shrilly.

"It's this idea I've got," she replied. Her face, devoid of makeup, was a stark and nerve-racking sight.

"Careful," I said in sinister tones, "you know as well as I do that it's very dangerous when women get ideas."

She ignored my warning and said in a hard and very deep voice,

"I want to do one of those collage pieces, you know, heavily symbolic, layers of meaning, that sort of thing."

"As long as you can remember that the personal is political," I retorted, getting in a hefty clout of feminist diatribe.

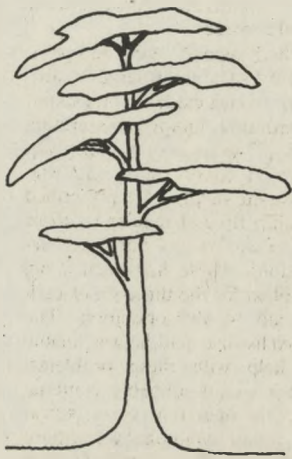
"I've thought about it all very carefully," she said beligerently, "its got to combine so many things. A dash of liberalism, a good sprinkling of homophobia, a song called *Poor Me* with backing from The Establishment, you know the sort of thing."

"It sounds possible," I said in husky tones, "where will you display it?"

"I've thought and thought," she shrieked bitchily, "and somewhere at a university seems to be a good place. It's the sort of enterprise that goes down well there don't you think?"

"Mmmmn," I said with all the pent-up revolutionary force I could muster, "but what will you call it? The title is so important."

"Oh that's easy," she said, tossing her lank, unstylish hair over her shoulder. "I'm going to call it *Compound Dues*." □



set views

Random violence, a grimy wheezing stationhouse, everything happening at once under a continually shifting focus, moments of silence and power.

Hill St Blues (HSB) isn't an ordinary cop show or sitcom. It has a large ensemble-style cast, several often unfinished plot lines in each episode, and it deals with corruption, racism, suicide, police violence, rape and other controversial issues. The characters gradually grow and change, unlike other American sitcoms where the same quirks make for the same jokes in episode after episode.

When I first saw it, I loved it. It doesn't talk down to its audience – no telegraphed jokes, no characters changing suddenly to fit the needs of the plot, no cardboard protagonists blended from stereotypes and oddities.

But towards the end of its first season, I started to like it less. One reason was the treatment of one of the three women regulars, the precinct captain's ex-wife Fay. She was written as an extremely dependent, helpless, fuss-making woman who came into the station every day to bother Captain Frank. The writers meant the viewers' sympathies to be with his endless patience and understanding. Fay became interested in feminism and was talking admiringly about lesbian activists for a time. Through her, feminists were presented as always confrontory, always challenging at the wrong moment. This fad soon passed, as all her others did. But in recent episodes, her character has been changing for the better, becoming more independent and assertive.

The other two token women in HSB are a lawyer and a cop. The only way to deal with tokens is to increase their number, till we have real representation, so this is an improvement. Both these women are competent; you feel her partner could count on the cop Lucy in any difficult street situation. The three women are white, however. The token woman of colour still hasn't appeared permanently in HSB. Other women cops who briefly pass through the programme are invariably involved in problematic sexual relationships with male cops.

The station staff is racially mixed, and racist attitudes often get shown up, especially those of

the token reactionary bigot. But white values still run the system and this isn't shown up so much. Corruption happens (in other precincts, not Frank's). It's always only a few individual cops, rather than the whole apparatus reinforcing inequality while paying lip service to the promises of the Constitution. In one episode, Frank lost his temper with a Chicano gang leader who had gambled away a community grant on the futures market. How many corporate whites who do similar things get caught, or are even thought of as criminals?

The station is in a predominantly black, very poor area. The viewpoint is the cops' – it's a violent world out there and cops have to deal with it violently. All their arrests are vicious – beatings, slammings against walls. Other violence in the show is random and unexpected. Black characters are shown coping with death with great strength and dignity, but overall they remain victims. There's recognition that lack of power and opportunity leave robbery and other crimes as the only way to survive. HSB mentions affirmative action, but only to put equal numbers of blacks in the white hierarchies.

The ordinary cops have flaws, are convincingly sexist or racist or bigoted. But Captain Frank is close to perfect. Liberals see males like Frank as role models, examples of what men should be like. He has the perfect equal relationship with the lawyer Joyce under very stressful circumstances. The episodes frequently end with the two of them in bed, finding release from the stress of the outside world in each other. That started to pall after a while. The other cops drown their sorrows together, but Frank in his lonely eminence, has only his lover.

The drawback in liberal programmes like HSB is the invisibility of the bias in the whole system. Individual corruption and bigotry is acknowledged, and solutions seem nearer and easier than I've found them to be. However, I'd rather programmes that regularly show racism and shady politicking as serious issues, than those that ignore them or make jokes out of them. Especially when they're also excellent television. □

Jenny Rankine.

BEHIND THE NEWS

BEYOND ANZUS

CHRISTINE DANN was one of the organisers of the **Beyond ANZUS Conference held in Wellington in June.**
She talks about what the conference achieved.
LUISE BRANDT went too, she gives her impressions.

The snap election stole the conference's media thunder, and this was disappointing. However, radio publicity for the major speakers was good, and useful links were established between local media people and some of the overseas speakers.

Australia is a more important partner in the Anzus alliance than New Zealand, and



Christine Dann (by Gill Hanly)

the conference organisers were very keen to start dialogue with Australians on their plans for getting out of Anzus. Sixty Australians came to New Zealand especially for the conference, and the contact between Australians and New Zealanders proved stimulating and valuable. At the time of writing it looks as though Australia will be joining the US to pressure NZ to stay in Anzus, so the increased communication between our two countries fostered by the conference has great potential.

The conference, as the name Beyond Anzus implies, was intended to look beyond the alliance towards better solutions to the problem of security for New Zealand. Enter a wide variety of views! While

no participants appeared to disagree with the fundamental proposition that you can't have peace without justice, there was divergence over what priority should be given to struggles for justice compared to campaigns on specific "peace" issues; which justice issues were most vital, and how they should be tackled. There was also the question of the connection between means and ends, with some participants criticising the conference structure as being part of the system we are trying to oppose.

Key words: Maori, Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific, racism, colonialism, pakeha, women, sexism, violence, heterosexism, freedom, Aborigine, power...

Getting away from the US and its imperialist values means moving towards something. In terms of immediate defence and foreign policies this is not a difficult problem, and Owen Wilkes and Ross Stevens made some excellent practical suggestions at the conference which we should pressure the government to take up as soon as possible. However, in terms of what New Zealand is, who its people are, what they want, where we are going, and what our role as a Pacific state is – the questions are many, and the conference was more successful at raising areas of conflict and difference than in providing neat solutions. That's politics!

The organisers did not want the conference to be a place where resounding remits were passed and then forgotten. Some workshops did produce resolutions which were endorsed by the final plenary – but more exciting were the ac-

tions which started straight away and which seem to be continuing. One workshop produced a leaflet for the election. Another took the whole conference with it down to the French Embassy to protest the latest bomb test at Moruroa. Others made plans for further national contact and coordination on issues such as Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific.

The ultimate test of action coming from the conference, though, will be whether public opposition to Anzus can be increased, and the Labour Party held to its pledge to ban nuclear warships from NZ ports, even if this means getting out of Anzus.

For those wanting to work on this issue I think the conference provided useful information, contacts and inspiration. □

Christine Dann.

"Beyond Anzus" is not a very inspiring name, and when one is asked to present the women's perspective on ANZUS in 15 minutes one could give up all hope if it weren't for the Goddess. We came up with the story of how the order and balance of life, birth, and death was not acceptable to man – who in fear of his own death, took the power of women, indigenous people and of the land by raping and pillaging until we end up with the present day situation of man, suicide button in hand, standing powerfully, conqueror on the backs of all he has oppressed. But we oppressed challenge the power that has been taken and assumed – any conference looking for peace or change must listen first and foremost to those challenges – something even (maybe especially) the liberal white peace movement finds difficult.

We had started having women's meetings on the first day of the three-day conference at lunchtimes. It was the only part of the conference where we started to make personal contact with what was

going down. By lunchtime of the second day we were fuming. The voices of us women, of the indigenous people, had by now been swallowed up – we were listening to experts on "ANZUS & NZ", "ANZUS



Luise Brandt (by Gill Hanly)

& Australia", "Nuclear Warship Visits". We decided to issue a challenge – to question the proceedings of the conference. We went back to the town hall where people had started to gather for the next session (on "Real and Perceived Threats"). We gathered at the front of the hall and sang to each other – the singing began to change the atmosphere of the hall – began to act as a signal to other women. We had let the organisers know what we were going to do – we did not ask.

"Use a microphone," yelled out an incensed male who had placed himself at the utmost possible distance from us.

"I don't want to. I don't know how to use a microphone but you know how to move closer," said Stephanie.

"Order, order. I will have order," yelled the chairman – everyone was reacting with emotion, instinct, even passion – it was wonderful. Talk of real and perceived threats!

Finally a compromise of sorts was reached – each expert limited to 10 minutes on the stage – the rest of the time to be spent in small groups consulting our inner "expert" on the matter.

The next morning it was decided to meet and discuss how the conference should proceed – it was decided to move the chairs into a circle and do away with the stage – everyone had the right to speak uninterrupted and the

invited speakers would use the same forum as everyone else. It really showed up what a narrow grasp most pakehas have of mutual respect and speaking what we feel – it is virtually impossible for us to handle this type of interaction. We are painfully slow in our learning.

It was resented by some that we had not *voted* to move the chairs, that a minority group had forced change on the majority – we kept grasping the microphone to air our petty grievances and quarrels like I've seen many a politician do. Yet again it took a Maori woman, Titewhai Harawira, to set us back on the right track – to listen to speakers and react in a way to move through and not get caught by our unsolved personal problems.

It was only through our group bonding that we found the strength to identify what

was going on for us and to challenge it. I experienced the active use of women's spirituality – singing, silence, confessing, expressing to one another in order to make the necessary bond.

It is a lack, it is a death, to

disassociate our feelings from our brains – understanding only comes through a balance – it is not good enough to take notes off experts and report back yet more information. □

Luise Brandt, Inner City Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific.

HELL-HOLE-CUM-HAVEN

MOANA RANUI writes about the recent housing evictions in Tauranga. The tenants were taken to court for an eviction order, which gave them a higher priority with the Housing Corporation for alternative housing. They did not have to pay any costs or back rent from the court case, despite overstayng their notice.

One can never understand how gross disruptions can arise unexpectedly and successfully manage to turn one's world upside down. My 15 month-old son, Bobbie-Joe,

and I were singing a new Kohanga Reo song on the way home. I'd sing peke and he would jump, then I'd sing oma and he would pretend to run. It was neat and he would gig-

gle his little heart out and want more. I had already parked and unpacked the car before I realised people were in a group on the front lawn.

Now, if ever I had seen angry people it was then. These people were my neighbours and I had always thought we had no gripes with each other. Trying to overcome my fear I took the plunge only to find out minutes later that we had all been served with an eviction notice to quit. It took a tragedy such as this to bring a block of eight separate families, 33 people, together and work it through. Not fully being aware of the implications of the notices to quit, we joked, yelled, shed tears and laughed to try and keep up our spirits. We're gonna leave this \$50 per week hell-hole at last, but as the days wore on it was a hell-hole-cum-haven! Because the land-lord had never seen the premises internal structure he chose not to demand bond nor were we bound by a tenancy agreement (not something I would recommend).

Questions began to well in our minds. What are we going to do? Who can help us? Can we afford what's going? Where are we going to go? We were reasonably good tenants who paid rent, the grounds never suffered through unkemptness, there were pakeha tenants so that ruled out the possibility of a racial issue so other than asking for possession (vacant) of the said dwellinghouse what other reason could there be for our eviction? We later learned that the company owning the flats had gone into receivership – just our rotten luck! I went on the netball court that night in the hope to take my frustration out on the game – it didn't work. Of course practice finished early and by the time I got home I was seething.

For fear of our housing future I took the initiative and responsibility by going to the various government departments to pursue a solution to our dilemma the next day. From every possible angle we received a negative response so we included the media, press and radio station to



Housing Evictions in Tauranga (courtesy NZ Herald)

highlight the gross housing situation which was and is critical. It was that move that brought in constant criticism, hassles and biased comments from the general public. They regarded the tenants as stirrers who weren't prepared to help themselves "... and would rather wait for government assistance." Many different groups and people came in to support us physically, financially and morally from Auckland, Waihi, Matamata, Rotorua and Wellington including ones that are struggling in more ways than one. The steady correspondence with Friedlander (Housing Minister), Venn Young (Social Welfare), Ben Couch (Maori Affairs), Peter Tapsell (MP for Eastern Maori), the late Keith Allen (MP for Tauranga), Phil Goff (MP for Lower Hutt) and Mayor Noel Pope produced a familiar elusive reply: "... we are sorry for the inconvenience of your plight; however, we cannot assist you with your immediate future ...".

The Kaimai Trade Union Council became of invaluable use to us and were able to present our case to Mr Phil Goff, the new Housing Minister under the Labour Government.

If our housing plight wasn't the pits then I don't know what was, but somehow the stigma of solo mother also became an issue. It pays to be broad shouldered - it may have slowed me down but it didn't deter me from the main issue. It only hit me when I could no longer look a person in the eye but rather up their nostrils. What about the males who would rather retain their freedom than recognise responsibility? Some would choose to remain anonymous - a coward's retreat. It makes me sick!

By 20 June a family of eight, one of whom was the mum of a nine-month-old and also expecting another baby, were destined for a shed-cum-garage, four families housed in baches (month to month basis) and one family in a three bedroom home.

On D-Day 22 June three solo mums and their families

were forced to overstay the deadline reluctantly. The next door garage became a beehive with constant phone calls from the media nation-wide and well-wishers. People and supporters began arriving to offer moral support. Money was left on the doorstep in food parcels. It was freaky waiting to be forcibly evicted and I would hate to go through all that again. I must have misinterpreted my gathered information because nothing happened. Sure, there were a lot of unknowns parked along the street with the T V camera witnessing the whole event but no-one touched us. Banners were lifted, supporters all round were fantastic and the tenants joined in although a bit bewildered by the added publicity. Kotahitanga, an action group, along with the Trade Union Councils were our most avid supporters and they prepared a hangi feast that night. There was celebration but it carried the heaviness we were feeling and those sleepless nights had finally caught up.

Another meeting followed another and we knew it was time to seek out a lawyer. We had already received continuous legal threats regarding our protest. On 9 July they took us to court. It was all settled in the chambers and then formalised in court. We won the battle but lost the war!

It has now become a personal campaign and I have been in Auckland gathering relevant information to firmly establish a Tenants' Protection Association and finding means for funding workers.

Yes, our comfortably cosy little rich town has made history and as I and another family have five weeks to go in emergency accommodation (we're in the same unit) we have to try to piece back our lives. That's another of my pet hates - emergency housing is like a stopgap, only there to numb the pain. It's like offering a disprin for a heart attack! However, I look forward to the security of a permanent roof over my baby's head and those special times, a long time ago, we shared as a family. □



STANLEY ROCHE

Stanley Roche died on Friday, 11 May, this year. Just over a year before, soon after she was first ill with cancer, **Broadsheet** (107) reprinted an excerpt from her just-published book **The Red and the Gold: an Informal Account of the Waihi Strike**, describing it as "the first to uncover for us the role of women in the events, the effect the struggle had on families and what the women, men and children who fought for their principles felt." The December issue of **Broadsheet** (115) contained "Matarena's Story on Love and Death", as told to Stanley Roche, and an interview with her in which she spoke of her life and her writing: "If you're starting, as I am, in your fifties, it's too damn late."

It was too late for the writing she wanted to do to make the New Zealand past real to us. But her life was not only about writing. Her funeral became a celebration of her diversity. After the karanga freed the grief for our loss, there was time for anyone to speak - of her concern for women, of her work for the Labour Party, of the poems she loved and the students she challenged, of her clarity and disdain for cant, of her car which only went forwards...

And of her daughter Louise who returned to Palmerston North to live with her mother, enabling her many, many friends to share Stanley's life to the very end.

Claire-Louise McCurdy.

Left: Stanley Roche.
Below: Robin Morgan



ROBYN MORGAN TO VISIT

New Zealand feminists will be somewhat stunned to hear that Robin Morgan, poet, editor of **Sisterhood is Powerful**, and author of **Going too Far** and **The Anatomy of Freedom** is to visit New Zealand in September. Her visit is being paid for by the profits from the 1979 United Women's Convention.

The reason New Zealand women have not heard more of this is that Robin Morgan is only visiting the universities and most of her time is to be taken up lecturing to students.

Feminists should be concerned that money they contributed to the UWC is used for the benefit of students in elitist institutions like universities. There has been no public discussion of the choice of visitor and no discussion of what she will do, where she will go and who will be involved.

In the past, surplus money from the UWC has been used to help in the start of another one. This money could have been used to help New Zealand women who receive very little funding for any of their projects.

Feminists and women's media have only found out about this visit through women working in universities. No other information has been made available to **Broadsheet**. □

Sarah Calvert

AUSTRALIAN FEMINIST VISIONS

VIV PORSZOLT reports on the fourth Women and Labour Conference in Brisbane.

Wow! I am still on a high after coming back from the Women and Labour Conference held on 13-15 July. While it meant that I missed out on the election build-up and excitement here, it was well worth it. These conferences were started in 1976 and are held every other year in Australia. They are not run by any organisation or association but by an ad hoc committee set up each time in the city holding it. However, it still receives Government funding and universities and unions sponsor delegates. One delegate came from Canada on her Government's funds, saying it was the only kind she knew of in the world.

So why was I willing to spend the time and money carting myself across the Tasman to a conference in Oz? I have to say that it was a sense of frustration with the feminist movement, or rather, lack of it, in New Zealand. While solid work is being done in women's refuges, rape crisis centres and the trade union movement, there is little left of the overall progressive movement which united women. The fragments tend to be turned in on themselves and pessimistic. They have retreated from united political action. A Women and Labour Conference signalled to me an outward-looking perspective which views society as a whole and produces a willingness to bring about economic, political and hence personal change for all women and oppressed groups.

Well, I wasn't disappointed. The conference drew 2000 delegates – when you think of the vast expanses of Australia – Auckland is nearer to Sydney than Perth – this is really impressive. There was a wide

range of women there, but because of the format of the conference, it wasn't possible to get a concrete impression of this range except in the most general (delightful) way at social times. There were no plenary sessions. Apparently at the last conference, there were ructions and divisions (so what's new?!) and it was decided to dispense with them – a mistake, I feel. There were about 15 papers or workshops running concurrently, so the choice was agonising. People tended to stream off into their own areas of interest and cross-mingling was only possible if one chopped and changed one's interests in a sort of smorgasbord. I found it more satisfying to stick broadly with one since similar themes kept coming through from different points of view and this was very stimulating. But it did produce a rather partial view of the conference.

I found the sessions I attended very exciting. Some highlights: Two women from the Federation of Cuban Women, Isobel Jomarron and Hilda Vasallo – their problems and those of feminists in developed countries are so different. They kept saying "Men are not our enemies." About prostitutes in pre-revolutionary Cuba: "They were trained and given jobs. Now no-one remembers what kind of women they were." But what exciting vibrant women! They obviously saw Western feminism as a decadent product of a decadent society.

A paper on a "Feminist industrial strategy for Australia" looked at the differences in effects for women and the working class as a whole of a family wage (the traditional trade union strategy) and an individual wage plus state-

funded support for a one income family. The Trade Union Accord with the Labour government came in for a hammering for its neglect of women.

A session on Women in the Communist Party of Australia 1941 - 1951 was particularly exciting because of the presence of several women from that era. Women had entered leadership positions in the CPA when the boys went off to war. They were responsible for the peak party membership in 1942 and the highest proportion of women members. But when the boys came back, the women retired back home. Some women there said it was exhaustion as well as male dominated thinking.

"Women, Work and the Right Wing" was about the activities of the National Civic Council. (The initials NCC have a much more sinister meaning than they do here). This is a Catholic right wing subversive group dedicated to undermining progressive organisation. They have just completed a hatchet job on the Australian Union of Students. Women from various unions described the activities of the NCC in their organisation. The NCC leadership was voted out of the official positions in the Queensland Federated Clerks' Union two years ago. The newly elected officials needed a barrister, a solicitor, a locksmith and a cop to take over the union offices! They have been in and out of court ever since trying to get control of their union and have had to rely on donations from activists to finance this. The other Federated Clerks' Unions in Australia are still NCC strongholds.

A session on strategies for women to take power in unions was divided over whether to use the traditional structures or go outside them. There was a similar division over whether such activity should be aimed at specifically *women's* needs or workers as a whole.

These themes were taken up in a paper on the strike of garment workers against outwork in Montreal last year. It was only when a feminist

socialist action group both within the union and outside it swung into gear that the corrupt male leadership was exposed and ousted. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has a proud history and led the famous Bread and Roses strike. However, reformist leadership defeated the communists in the 1920's and 30's and conditions have been progressively eroded under a male established leadership. The industry is divided into a male skilled, highly-paid sector, (cutters and pattern-makers) and low-paid machinists, women migrants whose lingua franca is French. The leadership didn't speak their language! The strike was the first in 43 years – feminist methods and vision had unleashed it but these also defeated it. The feminists refused to take up leadership in what they considered patriarchal structures and the reformists were able to defeat the strike. It was a very moving session, a tragic object lesson in theory and practice.

Anna Davin, the socialist feminist historian from Britain led a workshop on the contribution of children to the economic survival of working class families in London around the turn of the century. The differences in school attendance between boys and girls exposed different patterns of contribution of each sex to the family.

My own paper on a Marxist analysis of unpaid domestic labour drew other women working in the area and they seemed to get something out of it. It was really good to be able to share ideas with others – we Marxist feminists are pretty thin on the ground in NZ!

As I've said, this was only a partial experience of the conference. Aboriginal and migrant women were a significant presence. In fact, racism was intended to be the theme. But because there was no stipulation that workshops and papers would examine feminist issues within the context of racism, papers dealing with it were just another strand. There were three papers on



•With more women in gov - ernment than ever it is fitting that we should remember the Suffrage Bill of 19 September 1893 and the long road yet to women's equality or full representation.



Aboriginal women by white women which were attacked by the Aboriginal women. I gather for their content rather than the race of the writers. These were withdrawn by the women concerned but there were notices everywhere asking women to tear these papers out of their already printed book of the conference papers, since they contained sacred information. Thus racial tensions and failures in organisation were revealed.

There was also considerable conflict over, believe it or not, whether men would be present at the conference. Apparently, one woman had walked out of the organising committee earlier, taking several women with her in protest that men were not to be on the organising committee or allowed to give papers. The compromise reached was that men should be allowed to register. If any woman in a session didn't want a man present, it was to be put to the vote, the man to be excluded only if a majority so decided. I heard that in one workshop - on sexual harassment, a sensitive area if ever there was one - objection to the presence of men was raised. It was put to the vote: 60% voted for the boys to stay, a significant

part of the other 40% walked out. What division among women over men! But it is significant that the majority voted for them to stay. To me, totally opposed to separatism as a world view, yet committed to women organising autonomously where necessary, all this was, to say the least, strange. It was obviously a strong ideological point. At the end of one workshop which I attended, and which had gone five minutes over the appointed time, a man bailed up the woman in the chair for cutting off his right to speak at the end. It looked very much like an attempt to intimidate. Very aggro!

The whole feel of the conference was really invigorating - this sense of action-orientated discussion but also during social times, lots of zingy vitality.

This was evident at the dance on Saturday night, marred but not quenched by the smattering of a dozen males. (The Student Union put on all-male bar attendants. I wouldn't be surprised if this wasn't a calculated affront to women's strength and sensibilities). The favourite number was the Topp Twins' ("Topp Tweens" in Strine) "Untouchable Girls". I fair puffed with Kiwi pride! When it was announced that Piggy Muldoon had been kicked out, the whole hall whistled and hooted and roared. Very gratifying!

I certainly think a wide-ranging conference like this linking women's struggles to those of other oppressed groups would be a real shot in the arm for women's liberation in New Zealand. We in turn could also send a larger contingent over to the next conference in Oz in '86 - teach them a thing or two about woman-power. I strongly recommend it - those gutsy Aussie women can teach us plenty. If we make our presence felt, who knows, New Zealand could become part of an Australasian Women and Labour circuit and we could host it here. CER of a better kind - it's worth thinking about. □

SISTERS INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

This new column will bring reports from around the country, especially from areas we don't hear from too often. We want to hear about issues affecting women in your locality, be it a factory closedown or outbreak of rapes, and actions taken. We're working on setting up contact women in many areas whose responsibility it will be to write reports or assign another woman to the task. Readers are invited also to send brief reports (200-500 words) when something of importance happens in their area.

SINGING FOR PEACE IN NAPIER

Lunchtime activities on May 24, Women's International Day for Peace and Disarmament, began with a discussion about the origin and significance of the day and about the women at Greenham Common.

Our decorations looked good. We had paper kites trailing multi-coloured ribbons floating just above our heads; rows and rows of "origami" white paper cranes were strung all around, posters, song charts and a banner lined the walls, and left-over cranes were strewn in the centre of our circle of cushions.

Night time, and all our troubles were worthwhile as over 50 wonderful women of all ages drifted into the hall, and took a candle and a song sheet each. We sat in a huge circle, seeking out rugs and cushions to provide comfy seats for everyone, and began the singing. It was a lovely sight, a candlelit circle of glowing faces in soft light.

For me, it was a wonderful chance to be with women who have had little or no experience of women coming together and for them to be part of the energy that generates from women caring and sharing.

Our talking lasted for about an hour, with some very moving moments as we all felt the anguish of fears for the future,

but also the hope that together we can have an effect.

Seven of us stayed overnight for our peace vigil and we nestled into our sleeping bags with renewed inspiration and a real feeling of richness to drift off to sleep. □

Barb Smith

RAPE HUI AT HANGARAU MARAE

Tauranga Rape Crisis was officially established in November 1983 at a public meeting of over 100 people. They now provide a 24 hour support/counselling service and offer a variety of educational opportunities to Tauranga and surrounding districts.

At the same meeting Tautoko Wahine/Tautoko Whanau publicly announced a similar service for the Maori people to be incorporated with health and child care facilities being set up on Whetu Marae, Welcome Bay, Tauranga.

Tauranga Rape Crisis and Tautoko Wahine had limited contact until a May meeting where an original idea that Tauranga Rape Crisis and Hamilton Rape Crisis should get together for an informal weekend became the first regional hui of Maori and white women involved in Rape Crisis to be held in this area.

The hui was held on 29 June - 1 July and Whakatane, Rotorua and Hamilton Rape Crisis groups were invited. Individual women could also

attend. Hangarau Marae at Bethlehem was a very appropriate venue because of its restful and beautiful wharenui. Tauranga women particularly, who had not been to a marae before welcomed the opportunity to understand cultural differences and enjoy the whanau spirit at the hui.

Matire Duncan from Tautoko Wahine and Linda Shaw from Tauranga Rape Crisis became co-organisers of the hui, and expressed the host group's aims for the hui in the panui:

- to get to know the Maori and white women Rape Crisis groups geographically close to us.
- to spend a weekend away from the society and culture that oppresses us and seek nourishment and support from other women.
- to have fun, laugh, be creative and begin new friendships.
- to evaluate what we have achieved so far, what we want to do and the best tactics to achieve our goals.
- to discuss topics such as grant applications, Dept. of Labour work schemes, Accident Compensation Commission policy and payments, education and political tactics, etc.
- to end the hui feeling renewed, strong and united to continue our work.

All of the above aims were achieved to some extent or another.

On Saturday afternoon the hui separated into cultural groups where white women discussed racism and cultural differences from their perspective and Maori women had an opportunity to be together. Matire Duncan summarises the feelings of the women at that time: "As women we are as one, but there are times when Maori women need to be together."

"The hui was a tremendous experience for many women," says Linda Shaw. "It had a more positive and diverse effect than we had anticipated. I was concerned however, that so many women were not well and wanted to provide an atmosphere where we could strengthen each other to con-

tinue our fight."

The positive things that came out of hui included the beginnings of a regional collective in the area which will be discussed at the next regional hui, the fact that the hui did not have the divisions and splits that have occurred at other women's gatherings and the bonding that took place because of the aroha and respect women held for each other.

Tauranga Rape Crisis does have a concern about funding the hui because of the uncertainty of grant applications to government agencies since the change of government. As with other voluntary community groups Rape Crisis gets by on donations and small grants. The hui cost Rape Crisis \$500 and they are currently applying for reimbursement of the money from the Advisory Committee on Women's Af-

fairs. Future regional hui will be funded in advance. □

Matire Duncan and Linda Shaw.

Tuatoko Wahine, 26 Resolution Rd. Tauranga. Tauranga Rape Crisis, 21 Jonathon St. P.O. Box 791, Tauranga.

WET T-SHIRTS IN TAURANGA

"A Wet-T-shirt competition - what will they think of next?" we asked back in 1980 in our report on a successful campaign against the competition. The answer is jelly wrestling.

Pubs in several parts of New Zealand have recently used jelly wrestling, wet T-shirts and "cheeky-cheeks" to attract patronage, and women's groups have been hard at them.

Around Easter, Leopard Breweries promoted wet T-shirts at its pubs. At Tauranga, press releases, letters to the brewery and a telephone campaign to the Papamoa Tavern manager, (who had advertised a "family day") by groups like Rape Crisis failed to stop the competition going ahead.

Next, promoter Benny Levin toured six women with a "Jelly Wrestling Play-A-Round Spectacular". In Tauranga police refused the license needed for any wrestling event, but a wet T-shirt competition took place at the Greerton Motor Inn.

Helen Dawick from Tauranga reports that a number of local groups combined to put the heat on the pubs and breweries involved. They wrote letters, telephoned, contacted the media, but they also employed another tactic.

"Licensed hotels need two licenses - a keeper's license which must be renewed yearly and a license for the premises and entertainment from the Licensing Control Commission. We are at present, with the Men's Action Collective (MAC), objecting to the renewal of the "keepers" license on the grounds that they've breached sections 126 (relating to the proper conduct of licensed premises) and 202 of

the Sale of Liquor Act which controls entertainment in hotels." A hearing has been set for mid-September when the groups will put their view to the Bay of Plenty Licensing Committee.

Recently representatives of the Women's Centre, Rape Crisis and MAC made submissions to the Licensing Control Commission arguing that jelly wrestling and wet T-shirt competitions are not "acceptable entertainment" of licensed premises. The Commission was investigating the Papamoa Tavern's premise's license for other reasons and the public can make submissions, so the groups seized the opportunity to make life difficult for the pub keeper.

In taking these actions the groups don't feel they can actually affect a hotel's license. Rather they hope by causing sufficient headaches for hotel managers and breweries to persuade them to abandon their sexist shows.

Already the keeper of the Papamoa Tavern has said he won't hold any more such competitions, and we understand Dominion Breweries has written to all its managers saying it doesn't want jelly wrestling in its pubs because it is too controversial.

Says Helen Dawick, "We'd be interested to hear of action in other areas and would help others who might wish to use some of our methods." Helen points out that action could be taken through the Code for Advertising Alcoholic Beverages which prohibits advertisements suggesting a relationship between liquor and sex by placing "immoderate or immodest emphasis on romantic situations" or "by using illustrations or poses which are provocative or suggestive." It might also be possible to work in some way through the Human Rights Commission, although Helen says Tauranga groups have not explored that avenue.

Meanwhile, an Auckland pub is advertising jelly wrestling. □

Write to Helen Dawick at Tauranga Women's Centre, PO Box 368, Tauranga.

PLAY-A-ROUND SPECTACULAR

6 LOVELY LADIES IN THE

JELLY

WRESTLING

Wet T-Shirt & Cheeky Cheek Contests!!

English Comic BOBBY GEE

NON-STOP FUN-FILLED

GIRLIE ENTERTAINMENT

DOORS OPEN 7PM!



DB BELL BLOCK HOTEL

MONDAY, MAY 21 - 8PM!

▲ This ad appeared in the *Taranaki Daily News* in May where New Plymouth women protested strongly against the contests.

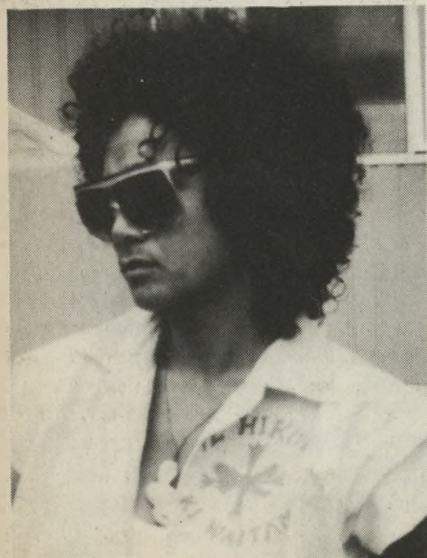
The election brouhaha is long over and the Labour government has settled in. So what's in it for us? We asked six women about their immediate reaction to the result, and what they expect, hope and fear for women over the next three years.

WHAT NOW?

DONNA AWATERE

To begin with, Labour will necessarily be consumed by the need to buffer up the economy after the economic landslide of the last 15 years. The first results will be an initial rise in confidence and widespread optimism. This will droop eventually. Labour, like National, will not address the fundamental issue, which is that New Zealand's economy is an anachronism on the world market. What is needed is a totally new direction but all we will get is a re-arrangement of the existing economic order.

Internationally we have a luxury economy and all the new initiatives in the economy are part of the luxury economy; for example kiwifruit, tamarillos, pine



trees. These are just as ridiculous as sheep. Other people can make our luxury products better and cheaper than we can. That's part of the problem. With secondary industry the situation is even more despairing. We aren't able to achieve the kind of economic miracle they've achieved in Asia. The problem is intellectual inflexibility. Our education system produces linear thinkers, while the East produces cosmos thinkers, problem-solving thinkers akin to the Maori. If the creative thinking of the Maori were unleashed, Maori could solve the social crisis of this country by re-defining what is to be valued and what isn't. It doesn't mean Maori International, that's linear thinking.

I was most keen for National to be returned to power because their policies over the past years have brought us to the point where there are no illusions left. The reality of our irrelevance to the world market has become pointedly clear. New Zealand has now taken a sidestep into a new magic machine.

I have no hopes for the future, only a certainty about what will happen. White people will become increasingly restless in this country. You are increasingly irrelevant in the world economy. You have defined yourselves in terms of work, you are what you do, and the world is telling you what you do is irrelevant. In this country we Maori watch you losing work and we also see that therefore you are nothing. A Maori is not defined by the job he does, he is defined by eternity. By his loins links with his tipuna. We don't have to "do", we only

have to "be".

Selye's theory of stress posits that people can achieve totally new life directions after a time of stress. Maoridom has been through a time of great testing in the past 15 years, the outcome of which has been to help shatter the strong colonial training that we have been subjected to through your ethical and education systems. In a way white culture has had Maoridom in a mindgrip which those of my generation have broken through. In contrast, white people can be subject to the same stress but there is no new direction, no way out for them. There is only a nothingness. So you'll see in the white community more nervous breakdowns, more violence, more expressions of growing self-hatred. Maoridom's way of avoiding mirroring this is through whakapapa. Whakapapa defines a state of being. It's everything.

In the short term, all should go better for our people under Labour. After all, two of us are in Cabinet. And a new deal is certainly in order after the volatile emergence of Mana Motuhake.

My fear is that Labour concern for our people will end up as not more than sentimentalism, given the restraint of the economy and inherent meanness of the pakeha culture towards us. As the cake gets smaller, gestures of cultural generosity fade.

Maoridom is in a state of longing right now. We yearn for the ways of our tipuna. We feel for our old people and their sadness at the white ways we now have. But we still have dreams even after all the knockbacks. New ones are coming up from the young. Labour can hook into those dreams or not. It's their choice. □ S.Coney

SONJA DAVIES



The election result is just marvellous. The thing that has really amazed me is the freeing up of the atmosphere – suddenly all that divisiveness seems to be melting away, which is really wonderful. It's like hitting your head against a brick wall – when it stops, it's wonderful.

I don't think any of us can expect a great deal in the way of financial rewards over the next three years, because the country is in a very parlous state. The coffers are just bare so we can't expect much wage-wise, except for the low paid workers – the government has that as a priority. The low paid are very often women, so women will benefit there, hopefully.

The establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs is not going to solve everything but it does at least establish that women's affairs are important.

I'm a bit sad that the government has made a bad start with their steering committee for the economic summit conference – it looks very like tokenism to me – one Maori and one woman amongst eight men – and I think they're going to have to do better than that. But things were being done in a great hurry and I suppose the old ways are hard to eradicate. However, I'm sure that Ann Hercus and the other women will be in there doing their bit. One of the great things, of course, is the number of women MPs in the House – I find that very exciting.

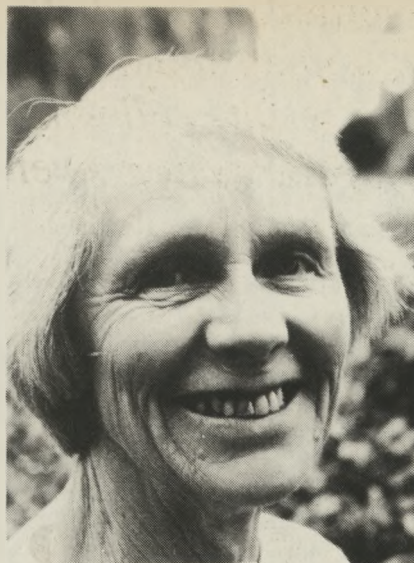
I think with the removal of the repressive laws that were brought in, we will see a whole freeing up of attitudes and go a long way towards that consensus the new Prime Minister is looking for.

My fears are the same as they've always been because I realise that for things to change dramatically for women, you have to change attitudes, and that begins at home. I don't see the resolving of the dual role, which is one of the greatest impediments to the advancement of women. We've got thousands of part-time workers in the Shop Employees Union and they still go home and do the housework and all the other chores, and that hasn't solved anything.

Although there's every evidence that men are still drunk with power and don't want to give it up, there is equal evidence that quite a significant number of men are not happy with their lifestyles and this climb up the ladder and this cardiac and ulcer area. Those are the ones which I think might be the spearhead to bring about change. If they don't, I don't think we're going to move forward very much at all. We've gone a long way but there's that barrier, because the other half of the

partnership is still a long way behind. □

Mary Sinclair



ELSIE LOCKE

Naturally I am happy to see twelve women in Parliament, eight of whom have signed the Nuclear Weapon Free register compiled by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Two Labour women who failed to sign apparently felt the issue was covered by their party's policy. Mana Motuhake, Social Credit and New Zealand Party candidates also signed readily, so that public support must be counted more extensive than the Labour vote for nuclear-weapon free zones and an end to the warship visits. I put this first because I believe human survival is the main issue, and that New Zealand can and must take practical steps to reverse the rush to destruction. Women have played a big part in this radical shift in our foreign policy – and I suspect we have work to do, to shore up the government against any tendency to weaken under pressure from the United States and Australian politicians. Along with this we must see that the government makes common cause with the island nations of the Pacific, including those under French or United States domination. The signing of the nuclear weapon free register is a personal commitment and I trust it means we can go to those women signatories for support.

We should never expect too much from Parliament, which does not originate great changes apart from matters of finance, war and peace. We now have a Cabinet portfolio for women's affairs. Would this need ever have been noticed if the activities of the women's movement had not revealed it? Parliament will not legislate for anything where the electorate is hostile

or indifferent; so far-seeing minorities have to use every means they can think of to break through to the decision makers.

We have come a long way. Women candidates were taken for granted this time, their qualities not their sex being considered in their nominations. May we soon reach a point where nobody exclaims with surprise at the selection of a woman as Minister of Police.

I have no fears for women apart from what concerns men and children equally – the appalling threat of nuclear annihilation. If we don't survive, obviously our dearest objectives in other directions will never be gained. Much energy gets wasted in niggling about minor differences among ourselves. We could aim for a broader perspective in which each of us can choose the most appropriate field of work for our particular case, knowing always that it is a niche in a movement very much larger than ourselves. □



MARY O'REGAN

This election, so we were told, was about deciding between the lot we had, "warts and all", or the other lot. I knew I didn't want the lot we had, especially not the warts (I wonder who he thought they were!) so the other lot it had to be. To that extent I was pleased with the result. I know it's naive to get *too* optimistic about pre election promises but there is some good stuff in Labour's policy and at this stage anyway I'm looking forward to moves towards a nuclear free New Zealand (and Pacific?), to the repeal of repressive anti-union legislation, to the end of racist rugby tours, to more resources for early childhood care and education and community education generally, and, with

A SPECIAL COMMENT BY ROSSLYN NOONAN



(Gill Hamby)

It was a funny election night.

As the results started to come through I felt an enormous sense of relief. But there was no euphoria, no excitement. Try as I might to ignore it, to pretend it wasn't there, I couldn't get rid of an underlying tension.

At Labour headquarters in Wellington, everyone who had worked for the party was welcome. By 9.30 victory was certain. I opted not to join the celebrations – I didn't want to be a damp squib and yet I couldn't pretend wild enthusiasm. Over the next week I discovered a number of friends who'd felt the same.

The relief was real enough – the truly evil oppressiveness of the Muldoon era was over: Merv Wellington wouldn't be able to do any more damage to our education services; Jim Bolger wouldn't be in any position to further weaken unions; it wouldn't matter anymore if Tony Friedlander persisted in the lie that there is no housing crisis; and we wouldn't have to put up with the insult of a spokesman on women.

Since the 1981 elections I have desperately wanted Labour to win. Now instead of being joyful at the end of a successful

battle, I felt we were just at the beginning of a long hard struggle. We had celebrated too quickly in 1972. On July 14, election night 1984, my mood was perhaps a warning against the possibility of disappointment.

But while my expectations may be set unnecessarily low, the hopes of others are high. And on election night that increased my sense of foreboding. The fourteen-year-old was jubilant about Labour's victory. Why did it matter so much? "Because I'll leave school under this government and it means I'll get a job. It also means we've got a chance of surviving." Jobs and no nuclear war – my heart sank. Could any New Zealand government deliver?

Yet I can't deny the value of the hope that the mere prospect of a new government was creating. Hopelessness and despair had already generated a pernicious self-destructiveness amongst many of the young. Muldoon and his yes-men have a lot to answer for: they have denied a whole generation of kids dreams, hopes, realisable expectations; they have denied them even a basic sense of security.

There wasn't any euphoria on election night but there were some moments of real delight: the great performance of the women candidates; the parochial pleasure at seeing all of Wellington right up to the Manawatu go Labour and knowing that in the city electorates women voters had made clear their reasons for doing so; the failure of SPUC to make the slightest impact; the knowledge that the presence in Parliament of an increased number of women would have a real impact, particularly within the new government caucus.

So why wasn't I overjoyed? I think the campaign had something to do with that nagging worry which stopped me from whooping it up on election night. The Labour campaign had emphasised consensus, consultation, involvement, openness. Much of it seemed to be speaking to those who had already benefited from the hard times. It seemed designed to reassure the finance houses, the big companies, the newspaper owners. Perhaps a necessary task – a coopting of the enemy to render

them powerless. But could we be sure that the focus was really on the low-paid night cleaners who had been hit again and again by Muldoon; on the teenagers without jobs or prospects; on the women almost defeated by the battle to provide somewhere decent to live, enough to eat, let alone holidays for their kids. What could we point to during the campaign which would reassure us that those coming to power were aware of the racial tensions in our streets and schools; that they knew and understood the demands for Maori Sovereignty; that they had rejected forever the attacks on Pacific Island migrants of the 72 – 75 government.

Members of the incoming government have said several times that they have learnt the lessons of the last Labour government. We may disagree on what those lessons are, but there are certainly some to be learnt by feminists.

The campaign notwithstanding, this Labour government comes to power with a far stronger commitment to equality for women than any previously. Women play a more powerful role within the caucus and the party organisation than ever before. But little will be achieved if we sit back and wait for things to happen, saving our energy to carp and criticise when they don't. We must organise, agitate and work as never before. We must seize every opportunity and push as hard as we can. We must work with those within the Labour government who support our goals to create a climate where our priorities become the nation's priorities, where change is possible. We must never underestimate the difficulties ahead, but nor must we forget that we now have a chance that may not come again for a long time.

On election night, if I'd thought more about Labour policy and less about the campaign, I think I could have celebrated with an easier conscience. We owe it to our daughters to make sure that the term of this Labour government stands out as a time when women made progress in New Zealand. Labour women over the past years have laid a solid foundation; let's help them build on it. □

some reservations, to the establishment of a Ministry of Women's Affairs and affirmative action programmes for women in education and employment.

On the face of it, New Zealand women stand to fare better from this government. We have more women in the House, ten of whom are in the government and two in cabinet. I don't know yet where all these

women stand on feminist issues and of course if they're not pro-women, we're better off without them there at all. I think it's safe to say that we have a government which is, at least, not anti-women and at best will make it possible for us to move an inch or two further towards equity. Realistically I don't think we can hope for more than that. Issues affecting women are always

more prominent in pre-election rhetoric than in post-election practice. We have a lot of power on voting day and they know it but it's a bit of a one-day wonder until the next time. Besides the Labour party has a fairly powerful women's lobby whose influence is evident in policy but we're a long way from the day when women's issues are THE issues.

I'm pinning my hopes on the affirmative action promises. It's the only way of making a start towards turning the myth of equal opportunity into some sort of reality. Affirmative action has enormous potential: it recognises the subjective nature of current selection procedures in education, training and employment and it means being female can be an essential criterion for a job or a training programme just as being male is more often than not an unspoken essential now. It means setting targets – and reaching them. It means flying in the face of prevailing attitudes and it recognises that granting rights through legislation is not enough. It means not waiting any longer for a change in the hearts and minds of men. It means having more than one woman on the Summit of Accord!

And that's where my fears started creeping in. Do they actually know what it means? Will they actually do it? On the sort of scale necessary to achieve some demonstrable progress? After all, affirmative action is not a new concept in New Zealand. There has been a theoretical policy of affirmative action in education and training programmes for Maoris for years and it hasn't noticeably altered their status in the social or economic life of the country to date. I doubt that it's touched the life of a single Maori woman.

I have fears too about the Ministry of Women's Affairs. I welcome it and consider it long overdue but its potential for effectiveness is dependent on funding and staff. It needs a decent budget and it should be staffed by women who are appointed not just because they've served time in the public service but because they understand the issues which affect women's lives. It needs status and teeth. Unless it has these essential ingredients it will be counter-productive. (Let's not forget it was ACWA which recommended to government that it shouldn't ratify the UN Convention and their arguments have been used ever since in the anti-Convention propaganda from North Cape to the Bluff.)

Time will tell what this Government really offers NZ women. At this stage I'm prepared to wait (not long) and see. □

CATH TIZARD

Obviously, I'm very pleased that the Muldoon administration is out, and that Labour is in with a decent sort of majority. But I look with caution at the size of the vote that Jones' greedies (as Muldoon calls them, and just for once I agree with him!) siphoned off, and hope that Mr Lange



keeps the arithmetic in mind – the Jones vote coupled with the National vote equals 48% of the vote – which is more than Labour got.

Just the same, the figures show that Labour won on merit, and has a clear mandate to act for New Zealand. I wouldn't like to be part of the government with economic crises of this magnitude facing them, I must admit. But given all that, thank heavens we'll get some progress in, for instance, education, and a rational government that is looking to the long term needs of the country, rather than three year election vote-getting exercises.

I'm thrilled about Anne Hercus and Margaret Shields in cabinet – that's the most women ever!

My hopes are in the not too long term, to see progress made in the area of child care facilities, arising from a rational attitude to giving women control over their lives, which fundamentally means child care, and an attitude change to that at community level.

My great hope is that this government will give positive and high-minded leadership to the community especially in regard to women.

My fears are that Labour will be limited in what it can do as government because of the economic crises it has inherited, and so get bogged down in the day-to-day survival problems for the whole country. □

CHARMAINE POUTNEY

I am pleased we have a Labour government, because the type of leadership style by government has a more profound effect on people than we imagine. We need the courteous, consensus style of leadership and representation of the Labour party and Lange, unlike the pugnacious,

one-man band Muldoon.

Women can never expect anything from a patriarchal government, and the presence of two women in cabinet doesn't make it less patriarchal in structure. Women need to act decisively over the next three years, to work through the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Labour party to ensure change occurs. Government by itself can do nothing, but this government has opened new channels – two women in cabinet and a woman party president, thus ensuring women can't be ignored by the Labour Party any more.

I hope that the new Ministry for Women's Affairs works to provide legislation and policies for affirmative action for women. Also that this government gives status and power to Maori people covering a wide range of issues. Sexism and racism are inextricably intertwined in our society. To restore Maori sovereignty to Aotearoa, adequate use of broadcasting, media time, inclusion of Maori people and women in locally made drama and advertisements.

I hope to see really positive action for women and Maori teachers in education. Proper recognition given to special skills and contributions they can make, rather than attempts to select by criteria suitable to white males.

These are some of the things a government should be doing by legislation and example. The most vital task for women,



from the most radical left to the comfortable right, Maori or pakeha, is to recognise the fundamental nature of power, its place in the human psyche and society.

All over the planet a shift is happening with people's consciousness. Old forms of power over others, backed by force if necessary, no longer provides a sense of worth and achievement for the oppressors.

NEW WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

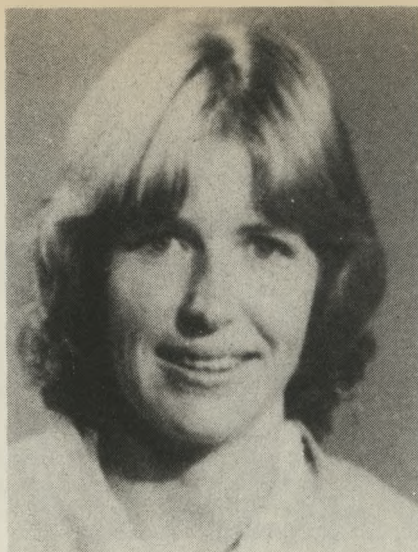
by SANDRA CONEY

Women have generally been elated at the prospect of a government with an unprecedented 12 women MPs, two women cabinet ministers and a woman Junior Whip. Such things are unheard of. But let not euphoria disguise that the power nexus of the parliamentary Labour Party is not good on women.

The top boys include the Methodist Lange, the Anglican Prebble and the Catholic Moore, all named as preferred candidates by SPUC before the election. Finance Minister, Douglas, was the architect of Labour's infamous "baby bonus" election bribe. Against the advice of women in the party that scheme offered a pitiful pittance to women who would stay out of the workforce. He also wrote "Limousine Liberals", a paper attacking feminists in the party. Palmer is a smoother character, but there's little about him to be reassuring.

This little lot will probably not do anything for women they're not shoved and prodded into. Of course, the composition of caucus and cabinet now create the conditions for a strong lobby for women in parliament. Add Margaret Wilson as party president and the boys could have a tough time ahead as long as principles are put ahead of personal goals and party platitudes.

or a sense of security for the oppressed. My hope is that this shift in consciousness will be more openly discussed so by the next election a lot of people will have a clearer view of the kind of leadership they want, and will be looking for elected representatives who will work with and for them rather than over and above them.



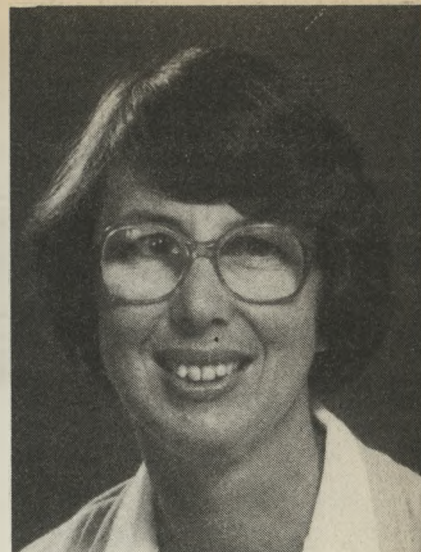
ANNE FRASER

What of the new crop of women MPs? Unlike their predecessors none has been close to the women's movement, so there's no history of involvement to go on. Mind you, finding the women's movement to be involved with hasn't been easy for some years. The party and peace have been more accessible, thus they both figure largely as a route to parliament for these women.



Anne Fraser (East Cape) showed she can take on a difficult job and do it by winning East Cape. She has small children, four and seven years, and is used to combining parenting with working on and off as a school teacher. Her husband's also a school teacher: he plans to stay home next year while Fraser's in Wellington. She noted after her first week in parliament that there were no highchairs to be seen in Bellamy's, something she aims to change. (What does baby Lucy sit on?) She sounds like she'll support the right of mothers to move out of the domestic ghetto. And she should understand the stresses on young families.

Fraser's been active on nuclear issues in Whakatane, her base for the past eight years. She tried to get the local council to



JUDY KEALL

make Whakatane nuclear-free - they wouldn't, but then Whakatane's not Mt Eden and it wasn't easy there.

Local women's groups have found her accessible, helpful, and ready to talk to people. She's said to be aware of Maori issues. With an electorate that's 42% Maori she'll need to be.

Fraser is described as forthright and not one to stand back. She's fine on abortion. She's on the Labour Women's Council. All this should lead to the prediction that Fraser is entirely reliable. However, there is some uncertainty. Fraser has had a lot of support from women in the party, it's not known if she'll return the favour.

Judy Keall (Glenfield) was persuaded to stand for selection in Glenfield because no other woman was. Apparently she didn't expect to get selected. She was surprised again when she took the new Glenfield seat by a sizable majority. Another teacher, she's been largely out of paid employment for ten years while bringing up three children. In that time she's been active in the community service areas women traditionally work in - PPTA, Red Cross, Play Centre, peace. When selected for Glenfield she said her major qualifications were she's a woman and a mother. While not wanting to knock that, she didn't say it because she's a feminist. Keall knew little

I would also like to see research into and treatment programmes established to cure violent offenders, rapists and child molesters. The acknowledgement of the problem as one of a criminal and dangerous nature rather than being secretly admired and upholding the macho image.

I fear that we won't get ourselves suffi-

ciently organised to provide a working base for continuing change within and through the Labour party. From this there will be a very powerful backlash from the "rigid right". Unfortunately these people often have positions of power, because the very rigidity of the control they exercise over themselves makes them very experi-



ANNETTE KING

of women's issues and hadn't had contact with feminists but she isn't unsympathetic and I'm told her awareness has grown over the campaign. It's hoped she'll keep on growing. On radio after the election she side-stepped a question about pushing women's issues. Her primary focus is education and she campaigned hard on Glenfield's efforts to get extra teachers and increase night classes.

Annette King (Horowhenua), of all the new women MPs, has the most reassuring political background. She comes from a family of coal miners and learned trade union politics at the tea table.

She is a solo mother with a 14-year-old daughter and won a degree in history and politics the hard way – at night and part-time and that's a good grounding in how women drag themselves up. She's following a pattern many of our best women have set by branching out in her mid-thirties. Such women usually run rings round men who've always had it easy. She's been involved in consumer affairs in Wellington, is articulate, and broadcast a running commentary on price rises during the price freeze on Radio Windy.

Her involvements run from traditional women's areas like guides and PTA to Corso, Women Against the Cuts, PSA and dental nurse's struggles. She's currently



MARGARET AUSTIN

national vice-president of the State Dental Nurses Institute. Her dental nurse background is not your usual stepping stone to parliament (law and teaching seem to be it currently) so she brings experience of a female intensive service industry that has been under threat of redundancy and male takeovers and has gained in militancy.

On radio she said she wanted a "more equal, socialist society"; immediately she wants to see relief for low income workers and beneficiaries.

She's a close friend of Fran Wilde's, sees Fran as her political mentor and is seen as being in the same mould as Fran – hard-working and solid.

What little I've discovered of **Margaret Austin** (Yaldhurst) is less reassuring. She's seen as conservative. She's 51, is a professional woman in a family of professionals and hasn't, it seems, come up against the hard knocks of most women's lives. She's senior mistress at Riccarton High School, is well-regarded in her profession as extremely capable and efficient. She impresses as self confident. Her background is science and her main interest is in ecology, especially industrial pollution. There are suspicions about her position on abortion, raised because she's an elected member of the First Roman Catholic Diocesan Pas-



KATHERINE O'REGAN

toral Council. On radio she said she didn't want "to be lumbered with women's issues". Whether that was just an unfortunate choice of words, perhaps reflecting her background as a biologist, or a statement of intent to women, we don't know yet. But it's not promising.

Katherine O'Regan (Waipa), against the decisive nationwide swing to Labour, gained over 2000 more National votes than her predecessor Marilyn Waring. A vote for homophobia?

O'Regan was for five years Marilyn Waring's electorate secretary, and Waring worked skillfully to manoeuvre O'Regan into the candidacy. Waring's support should say something about O'Regan's position on women's issues.

O'Regan farms with her husband. She is a Waipa County Councillor. Post-election, she was anxious to establish her own identity, separate from Waring – "This is a new era now, the O'Regan era". At times, though, she came close to disassociating herself from Waring, the person and the politics. She didn't expect to be as "rebellious" as Waring. "All issues are women's issues, as they are men's. They are our issues." Reassuring words no doubt for the farmers of Waipa and the routed party, not the words of someone who'll go out to bat for her sex. □

enced to dominate others. The trapped trap others.

The only way to deal with such people is not by attack or frightening them more, but by quietly ignoring them or, if we must take issue with them, taking issue with their fears, rather than the issues of morality or behaviour they attempt to create.

The questions should be asked lovingly and with real concern, otherwise we fall into the trap of fear and hatred, by becoming the enemies and trappings ourselves.

What would really please me the most is if every woman in New Zealand would read **The Bone People**, Doris Lessing's **Canopus in Argos: Archives** or Marge

Piercy's **Woman on the Edge of Time**, digesting them and their message of the spiritual insight into the possibilities of the future and the dangers of the present. If it were possible then many solutions to problems facing women would be resolved this side of six months. □

Heather McLeish



Women now face epidemics of infertility, cervical cancer and breast cancer, related one way or another to contraception. New Zealand women injured by the Dalkon Shield can now receive compensation in American courts. Phillida Bunkle tells the herstory of this dangerous contraceptive.

DALKON SHIELD DISASTER

Here is a typical case history of one woman's involvement with the Dalkon Shield Intra Uterine Device (IUD).

C. had a Dalkon Shield IUD inserted by her local GP. Five years later she returned to her GP because she had been told that it was a good idea to change an IUD every five or six years. The GP told her not to worry about it, there was no need to change it so long as it felt okay. The shield was therefore left in place.

In 1983 C. went to her GP with general malaise and swollen glands. The glands were examined and she was told she probably had a low grade infection somewhere in her body. The possibility of a connection with the IUD was not considered. For four months C. had symptoms of sub-acute pelvic infection. She felt really low, and it was a difficult time for her.

In June she suddenly felt very ill indeed. Sick, dizzy, weak, and with extreme abdominal pain. C. had the typical signs of acute Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID).

Her doctor was called and was quite concerned but could not find the cause. She spent a terrible night and was taken back to the GP by a friend who was concerned about the pain. C. was admitted to Wellington Women's Hospital. A diagnosis of PID associated with IUD was then made and her Dalkon Shield removed and antibiotic treatment started.

C. was extremely sick. She remained in the hospital for a little over two weeks, but responded to the antibiotics in time to avoid a hysterectomy. For a while she was too ill for a laparoscope examination of her uterus and tubes to be performed. When it was done the surgeon said that her tubes were badly scarred by extensive chlamydia infection and she was probably sterile.

1984, C. has come through this illness really well although she was weak for a long time. She was told that if she gets run down she may have a recurrence.

In fact there is a very high incidence of recurrence of PID. This is either because damaged tissue is especially susceptible to subsequent infection or because there are pockets of infection that antibiotics have not been able to reach within the damaged, scarred tissue which may erupt later. C. has about a 20% chance of being infertile after one severe episode of PID but this will rise to 45% if she has more than one and over 60% over three or more recurrences. The younger the woman the more likely she is to get PID and the more likely it is to make her sterile. Yet C. was not told that the infection was sexually transmitted, and therefore her partner needed testing and treatment. She was not told that the development of acute PID from infection of the lower genital tract was related to her use of an IUD. Nor was she informed that the record of the Dalkon Shield was so bad that its manufacturer, A. H. Robins, had withdrawn it from the US market in June 1974 and

suspended world sales in April 1975. Or that many thousands of American women were bringing suits and winning very substantial damages for injuries similar to hers. C. had not heard that a US Federal Court had recently accepted jurisdiction for cases brought by women injured by Dalkon Shields wherever they were living, hence opening the way for her to receive compensation for her injuries.

In a judgement in favour of the women in one such case the judge made a plea to three top executives of Robins:

"It is not enough to say, 'I did not know', 'It was not me', 'Look elsewhere'. Time and again, each of you has used this kind of argument in refusing to acknowledge your responsibility and in pretending to the world that the chief officers and directors of your gigantic multi-national corporation have no responsibility for its acts and omissions.

Today as you sit here attempting once more to extricate yourselves from the legal consequences of your acts, none of you has faced up to the fact that more than 9,000 women claim they gave up part of their womanhood so that your company might prosper. It has been alleged that others gave their lives so you might prosper....

I dread to think what would have been the consequences if your victims had been men rather than women - women, who seem, through some quirk of our society's mores, to be expected to suffer pain, shame, and humiliation.

If one poor young man were, without authority or consent, to inflict such damage upon one woman, he would be jailed for a good portion of the rest of his life. Yet your company, without warning to women, invaded their bodies by the millions and caused them injuries by the thousands. And when the time came for these women to make their claims against your company, you attacked their characters. You inquired into their sexual practices and into the identity of their sex partners. You ruined families and reputations and careers to intimidate those who would raise their voices against you. You introduced issues that had no relationship to the fact that you had planted in the bodies of these women instruments of death, of mutilation, of disease.

Gentlemen, you state that your company has suffered enough, that the infliction of further punishment in the form of punitive damages would cause harm to your business, would punish innocent shareholders, and could conceivably depress your profits to the point where you could not survive as a competitor in this industry.... But no court will heed the plea when the individual denies the wrongful nature of his deeds and gives

"Your company, in the face of overwhelming evidence, denies its guilt and continues its monstrous mischief."

"... none of you has faced up to the face that more than 9,000 women claim they gave up part of their womanhood so that your company might prosper."

"The market was open slather for anyone with a bright idea for something to stick up the uterus and the desire to make a quick buck. The experimental population was us."

no indication that he will mend his ways. Your company, in the face of overwhelming evidence, denies its guilt and continues its monstrous mischief.

.... the profits of your company continue to mount. Your last financial report boasts of new records for sales and earnings, with a profit of more than \$58 million in 1983.... The company has not suffered, nor have you men personally. You are collectively being enriched by millions of dollars each year. There is no evidence that your company has suffered any penalty from these litigations. In fact, the evidence is to the contrary.

.... Under your direction, your company has continued to allow women, tens of thousands of them, to wear this device - a deadly depth charge in their wombs, ready to explode at any time.... We simply do not know how many women are still wearing these devices because your company is not willing to find out. The only conceivable reasons that you have not recalled this product are that it would hurt your balance sheet and alert women who have already been harmed that you may be liable for their injuries. You have taken the bottom line as your guiding beacon and the low road as your route. That is corporate irresponsibility at its meanest.... Face up to your misdeeds.

Acknowledge the personal responsibility you have for the activities of those who work under you. Rectify this evil situation. Warn the potential victims and recompense those two have already been harmed.

.... The policy of delay and obfuscation practiced by your lawyers in courts throughout this country has made it possible for you and your insurance company to put off the payment of these claims for such a long period that the interest you earned in the interim covers the cost of these cases. You, in essence, pay nothing out of your own pockets to settle these cases. What corporate officials could learn a lesson from this? The only lesson they might learn is that it pays to delay compensating victims and to intimidate, harass, and shame the injured parties.

Your company seeks to segment and fragment the litigation of these cases nationwide. The courts of this country are burdened with more than 3,000 Dalkon Shield cases. The sheer number of claims and the dilatory tactics used by your company's attorneys clog court calendars and consume vast amounts of judicial and jury time. Your company settles those cases out of court in which it finds itself in an uncomfortable position, a handy device for avoiding any proceeding that would give continuity or cohesiveness to this nationwide problem. The decision as to which cases are brought to trial rests al-

most solely at the whim and discretion of the A. H. Robins Company. In order to guarantee that no plaintiff or group of plaintiffs mounts a sustained assault upon your system of evasion and avoidance, you have time after time demanded that, as the price of settling a case, able lawyers agree not to bring a Dalkon Shield case again and not to help less experienced lawyers with cases against your company.

Another of your callous legal tactics is to force women of little means to withstand the onslaughts of your well-financed team of attorneys. You target your worst tactics at the meek and the poor.

If this court had the authority, I would order your company to make an effort to locate each and every woman who still wears this device and recall your product. But this court does not. I must therefore resort to moral persuasion and a personal appeal....

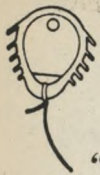
Please, in the name of humanity, lift your eyes above the bottom line."

Such a judgement could never happen in a New Zealand court. In this country the medical industry enjoys such extra-ordinary legal immunity that such a case could not even be brought. C. can however, now seek compensation for being made sterile through the American courts.

The history of the Dalkon Shield tragedy used in this article is documented in the case of Twana N. Willis v. A. H. Robins Inc. brought by the court in the District of Columbia.

To understand the background it is necessary to go back to 1962 when the Population Control Lobby convened a conference to promote the development of IUD's, various crude prototypes of which had been around for years. The pill came on to the market that year after trials on a total of 132 women. Women imagine that contraceptives used on them en masse are subject to some sort of control or testing or safety trials. They do not know that because IUDs are "devices" not medicines neither the US or NZ government had any control over them at all. The Health Department accepts no responsibility for the safety of IUD's imported into this country. The market was open slather for anyone with a bright idea for something to stick up the uterus and the desire to make a quick buck. The experimental population was us.

One of the doctors who got tinkering in the 60s was Hugh Davis, Professor of Ob/Gob at one of the leading American universities and director of family planning at the university hospital. Davis was well placed to experiment. In early 1968 he entered into a financial agreement with an inventor. He began testing their prototype shield in September 1968 at the university clinic. Two other partners joined in their enterprise.



"We do not know how many women are still wearing these devices because your company is not willing to find out."

"... because IUDs are 'devices', not medicines, neither the US or NZ government had any control over them at all."

"... a deadly depth charge in their wombs, ready to explode at any time."

A year later in September 1969, Davis submitted for publication a paper purporting to give the results of this trial, called "The Shield Intrauterine Device? A Superior Modern Contraceptive". The paper, claiming near perfect results for the Dalkon Shield with a pregnancy rate of 1.1%, was published in the February 1970 issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*.

The paper did not reveal either that Davis allowed no period at the end of the trial to allow pregnancies and infections to become apparent. The paper did not disclose that Davis was advising an unknown percentage of women to use spermicides in addition, nor, more importantly, that he owned a 35% financial interest in the product.

One month before publication of his article Davis gave evidence to a Senate Hearing to determine what warnings or restriction's government should require on consumer labels on the pill - Davis was very positive about the IUD, claiming that a new device offered as good protection as the pill against pregnancy without the serious risks. Davis was asked directly by a senator suspicious of his enthusiasm whether he had any commercial interest in any IUDs. Davis falsely testified he had no such commercial interests.

As far as I know Davis has never been tried for perjury nor was his university position jeopardised. Davis is estimated to have made over \$700,000 from the Dalkon Shield. As far as I am aware to this day he enjoys this fortune unimpeded. The claims in Davis' study formed the basis of the deluge of advertising around the world. When the study was extended to 14 months, time for some pregnancies to be revealed the pregnancy rate at least doubled. The publicity claims were never changed although they were known to be false. Furthermore doctors had been reluctant to prescribe IUDs for women who had not already had children. The Davis paper however claimed that the results were satisfactory for such women, on the basis of the experiences of the 51 such women included in the study. Davis and his associates realised that there was a huge market potential among such women. They therefore designed a smaller modified version of the shield which they claimed was especially suitable for such women. This was not designed at the time of the study and was therefore never tested. After aggressive market promotion the use of IUDs in women who have not yet had children became much more common.

It is normal in the medical industry not to reveal the financial interests in research. The theory is that the objectivity of the work will be safeguarded by the process of "peer review", that is the process of critical selection for publication and subsequent evaluation. No one has yet questioned why this process failed to expose the falsity of Davis' findings, nor how much patronage either the journal or the "peers" enjoyed from IUD manufacturers. The fact

that drug company ads largely finance these important journals is deemed "irrelevant".

The owners of the Dalkon Shield now found themselves with a highly endorsed, sellable product and a large potential market but without the organization needed to push it. They therefore sold it to pharmaceutical giant A. H. Robins in June 1970.

Robins realised they had to move fast if they were to capture a sizeable share of the rapidly expanding IUD market. Prior to purchase top executives of Robins checked Davis evidence. They became aware that the corrected number of pregnancies after follow up was higher than 1% and that the period was too short to allow confident predictions to the women as a whole.

Knowing the Davis article to be false nevertheless Robins made it the basis of a massive national advertising campaign. One of Robins consultants did warn "that the device was not superior, that the pregnancy rate would be in the order of 5%, and that the study by Davis was biased. Robins ignored his warnings."

As the Willis case puts it:

"with the full knowledge that the original statistics published by Hugh Davis were false and incorrect, the national marketing strategy and campaign nonetheless employed the Davis study as its primary basis All advertising, labelling, and promotional materials stressed the Davis paper, claiming medical safety, superiority to all the other IUD's, lowest pregnancy rate, new and improved insertion technique, and overall superiority to the pill

Robins went to market with the modified, untested devices, relying on the preliminary Davis study and touted the device as medically safe and thoroughly tested."

The company did however begin a couple of tests. One was a safety study on baboons. Just as with Upjohn animal studies on Depo the results were disastrous. One in eight animals perished and one third got uterine perforations. Robins were marginally more successful than Upjohn in not letting the public or the medical profession know.

The marketing campaign went into high gear in January 1971. An extraordinary amount of promotional literature was distributed to doctors by Robins 500 or more pushers. One of the pushers said a CBS 60 minute program "We were told to get in our territories and concentrate on the shield - make what other calls we had to as absolutely necessary, but get that shield going, and get it going right now.... There became an extreme amount of pressure then." One division sent its pushers telegrams which read "Northern Division will not be humiliated by a lack of Dalkon sales. If you have not sold at least 25 packages of eight, then you

"... what many doctors apparently learn is that pelvic pain is likely to be psychophysologic."

"... women are, after all, well known to be frightened by mice and facts."

"It seems that New Zealand doctors have learnt very little from the sad story of the Dalkon Shield."

"... if women could sue their doctor it would be bad for medicine in New Zealand."

are instructed to call me. Be prepared to give me your call-back figures. No excuses or hedging will be tolerated, or look for another occupation."

At the same time as the saturation strategy on the doctors, Robins began a campaign to persuade women. They planted favourable pieces on their IUD in newspapers, magazines and TV programmes. Women's magazines are suckers for such "informative" material. They rely heavily on advertising for income. They must attract advertisers. From the advertisers' point of view any feature space that does not reinforce their product is waste space, and critical feature comment is intolerable. As the dependence of magazines on advertising revenue has grown the independence of feature material has declined. Features and editorials are sometimes directly "sponsored" although rarely acknowledged, but even if they are not they have to be "compatible" with the advertised products. As a major multinational Robins had many lines to advertise and much potential patronage for the media.

Despite this media blitz adverse evidence against the shield began to emerge. Robins chose to ignore the following evidence:

- Reports from doctors that the shield was not as effective as advertised and caused severe PID, septic abortion (miscarriage) and uterine perforations.
- Evidence from a woman doctor on the staff that the "tail" could wick water and might therefore transmit bacteria up from the vagina into the uterus.
- A specific complaint of danger from an independent senior Ob/Gob.
- Warnings from one of the original Dalkon owners, Dr. Earle, who had been retrained as a consultant, that he had had six women become pregnant of whom five had septic miscarriages.

Although Robins chose to ignore it, the septic abortion issue became the central safety issue. It is speculated that when a woman conceived with the IUD in place, her womb increased in size, particularly between three and six months, drawing the tail and associated bacteria into it. The uterus would then become infected, she would miscarry, with the threat of death from septicemia or hysterectomy or sterility from the infection. Given that approximately 5% of women were becoming pregnant it was a sizeable risk. Seventeen women in America are thought to have died in this way but many more were made sterile. The five to six fold increase in the risk of PID was less evident at the time but it has emerged more clearly through the court cases.

As women began to share experiences of traumatic reactions market resistance grew. "Old Wives Tales" that the IUD was not

as safe and effective as the industry claimed quickly spread. Robins reacted by mounting a publicity counterattack.

They changed the publicity brochure to allay fears about septic miscarriages, and blitzed the medical journals with an eight page "progress report" which was actually an ad bought by them.

The "report" once again used the original Davis paper's claims plus some additional studies. Everyone of these studies was either spurious or misrepresented. They included:

- Work by a man named Ostergard. Technical executives had criticized Ostergard as unreliable, but this criticism was ignored by senior officials who chose to use it in advertising anyway. Ostergard travelled extensively defending and promoting the product. He told a Congressional Committee that he was not a consultant and only received expenses. In fact he was getting \$500 a day *plus* expenses.
- The work of Dr. Mary Gabrielson. The ad quoted her preliminary finding of a pregnancy rate of 1.9% but ignored her final results that were available before publication of the ad showing the 5% over 18 months that was to become more or less standard.

I don't think that the issue of a 1% or a 5% pregnancy rate is crucial. What it does illustrate is how the company distorted and misrepresented evidence.

The space bought in the medical journals for the "progress report" wasn't enough to support sales. Robins tried to counteract the mounting evidence in a number of ways, including searching for positive evidence to buy from doctors; hiring a panel of doctors to act as an "advisory board" of experts; and convening a septic abortion conference timed to counter adverse publicity that would follow the publication of an independent paper linking the shield to deaths from septic abortion.

Finally during 1973 evidence against the shield became public. Robins sent a "dear doctor" letter to every doctor in the US warning of the threat of septic abortions. Planned Parenthood Federation wrote to all their clinics suggesting stopping prescribing it and *recall* from all women with one. They also mentioned that 26% of women to whom they had prescribed it had had severe problems with pain and bleeding.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began hearings on safety. A member of the committee running the hearings said, according to an article in *Mother Jones* "throughout the entire proceedings the halls and offices of the FDA were crawling with Robins men. It was disgusting." Before the FDA made its recommendations, Robins suspended US sales in June 1974. Overseas sales were not however suspended until April 1975. About 2.3

hit list

This is a column in which we target products, promotion or advertising and invite you to join in. The more negative responses manufacturers receive to their insults and blunders, the more likely they are to change and be more sensitive in the future. We'd also like to hear from readers who've written to firms complaining, whether they initiate a complaint, or follow up ours, so we are alert to new targets for Hit List and aware of how effective we are.

Smiths Crisps General Foods

Sheryn McFadyen of Richmond drew our attention to the Smiths Crisp radio advertisement which has played on several radio stations nationwide. The advert is entitled "Ways to pick up girls - episode 2". It takes you to London where a man is trying to pick up a "girl" to take back to his place for a "knees up". The "girl" is not interested and says no to all his blandishments and bribes, until finally her "noes" turn to "yes" when he mentions he's got Smiths Crisps back at his flat.

Women have seen in this scenario the typical rape myth that a woman's "no" really means "yes". "Seduction" will work if you are persistent. The woman will finally "give in". It also plays into the idea that women prostitute themselves for goodies; you just have to strike the most appealing goodie to get her in the sack.

According to Brian Garlick in General Foods advertising department (ph Auckland 274719) there had only been two complaints about the Smiths Crisp ad; one from a woman in Nelson, another from the Whangarei Women's Resource Centre. He saw the ad as "humorous" and "caricatured" and says we are reading more into the ad than is there. Some people he said, would always take offence at jokes, for example, the Irish didn't like the English's Irish jokes. He was silent on the subject of whether advertising should be sensitive to the reactions of people who are the butt of racist and sexist jokes. "Advertising reflects society... it is not in the forefront of change." He would not comment on whether the advertising would be changed or included in General Foods new Smiths Crisp campaign.

Write to General Foods manager at 113 Carbine Rd, Mt Wel-

lington, Auckland. The advertising campaign was conducted by Campaign Advertising, PO Box 801, Auckland.

De Winkels Yoghurt

Broadsheet has received a record number of De Winkels Yoghurt ads, for its Hogwash column. The ad, which has appeared in newspapers nationwide, shows a woman's face with pursed mouth and flirtatious eyes under the heading "A touch more tart". Mr M. Niemeyer of De Winkels Fine Foods has received five letters about this ad, but doesn't really agree with the complaints. He hadn't replied to my letter of six weeks previously because he wanted to wait for other reaction and he thought I had "generalised a bit too much". He agreed that "tart" was a derogatory term when applied to women, but said the drawing showed a "sweet looking lady, rather than a tart". Peter Love of Omega Advertising, the firm which constructed the campaign, saw the woman as "stylish" not as a "tart" or "slut". Research, he said, had shown that a discerning woman is by far the major purchaser of De Winkels Yoghurt, she likes it because of the sharpness of taste. He expressed his concern at language in general being dehumanised, so original meanings were lost. Words were losing their "thrust and sting". Adverse reaction had been "minute". Omega prides itself on being socially conscious, Love contended. He, like Mr Niemeyer, drew attention to the fact that women were involved in the art work for the campaign and didn't find it offensive. This was said as if to imply that women who do find the ad offensive are over-reacting and nit picking. Mr Niemeyer couldn't promise that the ad wouldn't reappear in the next campaign. Peter Love said he would do some research on housewives, but wasn't going to pull the ad out.



De Winkels Fine Foods can be found at 94a Glengarry Rd, Glen Eden, Auckland. Omega Communications is at 2 Whittaker Place, Auckland. □

Sandra Coney

◀ DALKON SHIELD DISASTER from page 21.

million had been distributed in the USA, about 2 million overseas, some destined for New Zealand women.

No one knows how extensively the shield was used in New Zealand. The Health Department exerts no control over IUDs, and the firm that imported and distributed them no longer exists.

The *New Zealand Medical Journal* has a couple of entries about the shield by Mr. Ron Jones, a consultant at National Womens. The first is a letter written by Mr. Jones in the 28 August, 1974 issue. Apparently in response to the Robins "dear doctor" letter on septic abortion Jones examined the National Women's records on septic abortion. Jones' figures suggest an association between IUD use and mid trimester septic abortion but did not suggest that the shield was worse than any other IUD. He suggested that the idea reflected the fact that the "shield is the most widely used IUD in the United States". Mr Jones clearly recommended removal if pregnancy should occur. He did not however suggest any caution about continuing to insert shields. Neither does he mention that the device had been withdrawn from the American market two months before.

The second paper published in the issue of 13 August, 1975, studied the records of 490 women who had had shields inserted at National Womens. Jones found a cumulative pregnancy rate of 5% over 2 years, (there appears to have been little problem with infection) but 14/5% were removed for medical reasons, mainly pain and bleeding. Mr. Jones suggested that after vacuum aspiration abortion "The Dalkon Shield because of its low expulsion rate should be the first choice...". The shield had been withdrawn from world markets four months before this article was published. Mr. Jones did note this in a brief addendum but this information does not appear to have affected his evaluation.

Since these 490 women were the largest identifiable group of users I phoned Mr. Jones at National Womens to ask him if he had plans to inform the women injured during the course of the study that they now had a legal remedy available to them. He agreed that there had been injuries, and that the records still existed. He was however hostile and appeared affronted that I should ask him questions about the implications of his work. He said "I abhor your approach" and said that he had no plans to inform the women because he felt that the Dalkon Shield was no worse than other IUDs. My effort he said was "misdirected" because had I been thoroughly informed I would know that evidence against Dalkon was refuted because other IUDs were as bad. Furthermore he believed that if women could sue their doctor it would be bad for medicine in New Zealand.

I hope that these cases do open the way for the possibility that women injured by the other American-made contraceptives may have a remedy, thus getting protection from American courts that we do not get from our own.

If Mr. Jones is anything to go by doctors are unlikely to cooperate in informing women. It will be necessary to seek publicity to let women know about this possibility. It seems that New Zealand doctors have learnt very little from the sad story of the Dalkon Shield. Many are quite complacent.

There are four ways that IUDs can make women sterile: through perforation of the uterus, septic abortion, PID, and high rates of ectopic pregnancy. Mr. Jones recently instructed the Post Graduate School of Obstetrics and Gynaecology training seminar in family planning on the use of IUDs. His notes say:

"SUBSEQUENT FERTILITY: Most studies have suggested

Continued on page 36 ▶

ANNE ELSE TAKES APART
GERMAINE GREER'S

SEX AND DESTINY

Barbara Conway

Sex and Destiny is not a feminist book. In some passages Germaine Greer's views are identical with those commonly espoused by feminists; in many others, it is not so much that Greer contradicts feminist thought, but rather that she argues as if feminism had never existed.

Reduced to its essentials, Greer's thesis is that the West is evil. Obsessed with narcissism and consumption, it has rejected child-bearing and child-rearing, ostracising mothers and segregating children from adults. It has divorced sex from fertility and turned it into a pointless recreational pastime. Worst of all, it has then attempted to force "modern", often draconian, methods of population control on traditional societies where mothers are honoured and children are seen as a blessing, not a curse. It has done this out of racist and elitist paranoia, depriving the poor of their children, destroying time-honoured birth-spacing measures, and spreading enforced sterility, at the same time as it faces the consequences of bungled contraception and cultural decay among its own selfish, over-fed, aging citizens.

Of course this summary is over-simplified, but so are Greer's arguments. They display the same romantic, highly selective view of "traditional" peasant societies as was so evident a flaw in *The Female Eunuch*, when she eulogised a pastoral version of life in Calabria. To treat other cultures in this simplistic way is only a more subtle, but just as arrogant, form of ethnocentric imperialism as to condemn them for not being Westernised.

Unfortunately, because they are by no means consistent, Greer's arguments can easily be twisted to play neatly into the hands of those whose primary aim is to keep women in subjection, and to whom all feminist thought is anathema. The media, too, loves nothing better than an apparent recantation by a feminist, especially one who made her name as an outspoken, fearless advocate of freedom for women, particularly sexual freedom. It is interesting to note that

most media treatment of the book has focused not on Greer's views about the Third World, but on her condemnation of the West, in particular its sexual attitudes and "anti-family" tendencies.

It is true that the West has, inexcusably, paid far more attention to the so-called "population explosion" than to the major problem of poverty, for which most of the blame can be laid at the door of the rich nations. It is also true that Western culture has made a fetish of sex, to the point where women have extreme difficulty in reconciling their two prescribed roles of sex-object and mother. Combining the roles of parent and worker has always been problematic under industrial capitalism, which forced production to separate from the home. But to treat traditional cultures as benign for women and children is to fly in the face of the facts.

In *For Her Own Good*, Ehrenreich and English neatly summed up the differences between "traditional" and "modern" societies. They explained how, under the "Old Order", "woman's work was cut out for her; the lines of authority that she was to follow were clear. She could hardly think of herself as a 'misfit' in a world which depended so heavily on her skills and her work. Nor could she imagine making painful decisions about the direction of her life, for, within the patriarchal order, all decisions of consequence would be made for her by father or husband, if they were not already determined by tradition."

In traditional societies today, women are valued or valueless not according to their own unique individual qualities but primarily by how well they perform their reproductive function. In many societies, this means not just bearing children, but bearing sons. This is the reality behind the warmth and support found in "the dense human enclosure of the family": within which women in traditional societies live and die and find their *raison d'être*.

Two personal factors, I believe, lie behind the inconsistent, uneven, confused polemic of *Sex and Destiny*. First, there is nostalgia for a way of life which automatically provides every woman with a meaning and purpose, so much more easily found – though infinitely more harsh to sustain – than our own angst-ridden, individual paths to identity and self-esteem.

Secondly, every woman's views about fertility, child-bearing and child-rearing are coloured by her own personal experience, and Greer is no exception. Briefly, Greer, who is now 45, has herself had two abortions, and has suffered a good deal from the effects of contraceptive techniques. She has since tried very hard indeed to conceive again, undergoing a lengthy last-chance operation (on private health) which was unsuccessful. The meaning of "the personal is political" was perhaps never so clear as in this case, where Greer has decided not to let readers in on the facts of her own reproductive history and allow them to judge what relation they bear to her arguments, let alone to make the connections between the two herself.

In feminist terms this makes for a fundamental dishonesty in the book, since most readers will not know the wri-

ter's personal history and therefore cannot take it into account. Women have often criticised male writers for just such hidden bias; we cannot excuse it in a woman.

The sexist terms which are used throughout the book are also infuriating. Her syntax is completely pre-feminist; it is a long time since I have read so many references to "man", meaning the human race, and her use of the male pronoun when she means both sexes gives rise to some very odd passages indeed, eg on page 41:

"Tinbergen believes, and there is a mass of evidence to support him, that *man* is at present in a phase of disadaptation, of loss of viability, brought about in part by *his* failure to modify *his* reproductive behaviour to compensate for *his* meddling in the scheme of things by keeping the unfit alive. *His* ambivalence can be sensed . . ."

That last "His" refers to Tinbergen, not "man". In this whole passage, Greer seems to be agreeing that the process whereby the "unfit" were weeded out by "natural selection" was a good thing – a position she is wholly opposed to when it is espoused by "eugenicists", determined to improve the nation's "stock" by sterilising those they consider unfit to breed. Interestingly, it is in the chapter dealing with abortion and infanticide that we find (page 193) what is perhaps the most lucid and compassionate statement of Greer's central theme insofar as it concerns "over-population":

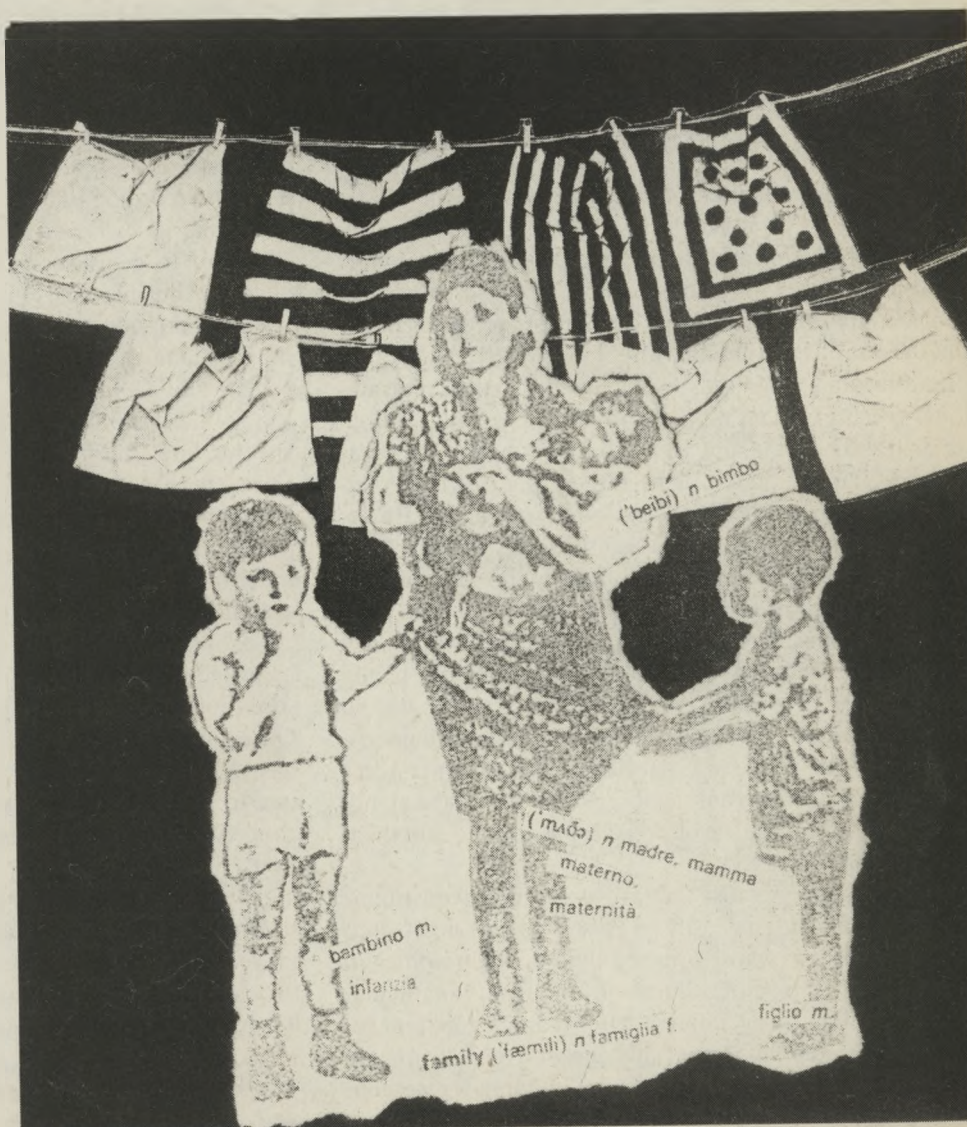
"The pushing of contraception (in the Third World) involves an intrusion into the privacy of people whose defensive space is very small, reduced perhaps to genital modesty alone. It involves crass assumptions about the frequency of intercourse, about where it takes place, about beds and baths and rooms and running water and a 'healthy' sex life. The problem is too desperate for so dandified a solution, and it is not the problem of over population which as the statisticians created it, they may also solve. The problem is the birth of unwanted children, the failure of endogenous systems of control after hundreds of years of mischievous interference. The ancient checks on population growth will probably never reassert themselves; in the meantime Western technology ought to exert itself to

fill the gaps in systems which are by no means utterly obsolete. The most immediately useful and effective measure would be to establish the kinds of abortion services which can masquerade as contraception at every lane's end."

Yet a recent *Time* article¹ on the "alarming" rate of population growth in the Third World notes that the Reagan administration's policy requires that US "family-planning aid (\$240 million) be allotted in ways that prevent its use in population-control programmes that permit abortion".

Greer's critique of present-day "modern" contraceptive techniques is comprehensive, accurate, and hard-hitting. She also cuts firmly through the rhetoric and doublethink surrounding abortion, but is less successful on infanticide, fudging the issue of why it is mainly girls who are killed.

When she discusses traditional contraceptive and birth-spacing techniques, she is far from incisive. In the interests of condemning the West, by which she seems to mean affluent North Americans and Europeans, Greer is prepared to overlook any shortcomings in other cultures, and even to praise highly practices which do have some benefits for women, but are also designed to keep



them all the more firmly subject to patriarchal control. For example, coitus interruptus may well be, when skillfully used, a successful and harmless method of contraception as Greer avers; but it is also, obviously, totally male-controlled, and therefore suits a patriarchal society very well.

But in this book, such feminist considerations do not seem to matter to Greer. She can contemplate female castration with equanimity, dismissing it as a "trivial" factor ("The Yoruba do practise clitoridectomy upon young women – in a fairly off-hand way.")¹ She can write disapprovingly of the Shah of Iran's action in outlawing the veil (in 1937), because "he did not so much liberate his people as announce their dependency upon the West", whereas the old heavy chador now resumed "confers upon young women the aspect of military nuns . . . their hands are free to carry weapons. The veil is now a symbol of liberation through self-discipline".² Perhaps most oddly of all, she can assert that: "For the struggle [to control fertility] to be institutionalised so that the individual may merely carry out the moral prerogative of others is to degrade human beings even more than did throwing their girl children under the feet of blindfolded bullocks, because it denies their free will."³ How much "free will" did those who bore the children have?

She is appalled, apparently, by the fragmented, market-ridden, over-individualised alienation of Western life at its worst, and in particular by what she sees as its inability to retain meaning and value in human reproduction; therefore she turns for inspiration to those societies which continue to exemplify the Old Order, and overlooks all their sins, particularly their sins against women, because they hold fertility and reproduction (at least of sons) so dear. Her stance is hard to reconcile with her own lifestyle, past and present; in particular, one would not know from this book that in *The Female Eunuch* she had been one of the main exponents of precisely the detached kind of "anything goes" recreational sex she now so vigorously condemns.

Nevertheless, the book contains some fascinating and comprehensive accounts of some of the more revolting aspects of modern Western attitudes and practices, especially toward the poor or "non-white" races: for example, the chapters on "Eugenics" and "Governments as Family Planners". However, I found the virulent attack on Margaret Sanger and Marie Stopes extremely disturbing, not because it criticised these women, but because of the way it did so. Anyone who has read Dale Spender's account of how "disagreeable" women are destroyed, in order to be removed altogether from the record, will recognise in Greer's account of their lives and work almost every trick Spender describes – the unsubstantiated assertion, the demolition of character, appearance, and sexuality (for instance, she states that Marie Stopes "succeeded in reducing two husbands to impotence and guilt in remarkably short order.") and above all the portrayal of two women so egocentric, arrogant, stupid, and generally unpleasant that no sane person would ever want to know anything else about them.



Germaine Greer (by Ilene Perlmam, courtesy MS)

At the heart of all discussions of fertility, child-bearing and child-rearing lies the question of the position of women, as those genuinely concerned with eliminating poverty and hunger are just beginning to realise. Seen from our own alienated, cynical viewpoint, the "unity of biological and economic, private and public, life"⁴ which characterises older societies may seem extremely attractive. In such societies, there is, as Ehrenreich and English point out, no "Woman Question"; that emerges only with "the arrival of the industrial epoch which, in the space of a few generations, will overcome all the 'fixed, fast-frozen' relations of the Old Order", so that the old unity of life is shattered . . . Industrial capitalism freed women from the endless round of household productive labour, and in one and the same gesture tore away the skills which had been the source of women's unique dignity. It loosened the bonds of patriarchy, and at once imposed the chains of wage labour. It 'freed' some women for a self-supporting spinsterhood, and conscripted others into sexual peonage."⁵

It is this contradiction which Greer refuses to grasp. She tries to put the issue of fertility "above" sexual politics, but in so doing she ensures that she will be unable to deal with it coherently. By leaving out the issue of the oppression of women, she is able to pose a black-and-white confrontation between the Old Order and the New which is inherently false. □

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- ¹ Ehrenreich, Barbara and English, Deirdre: *For Her Own Good: 150 years of the experts' advice to women*. Pluto Press 1979. p8.
- ² *For Her Own Good*. p12.
- ³ "People, People, People". *Time*, 6 August 1984. p18 (cover story).
- ⁴ p93.
- ⁵ p105.
- ⁶ p49.
- ⁷ 317.
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- ⁹ *For Her Own Good*. p13.

Sex and Destiny is published by Secker and Warburg. \$19.95 (See On The Shelf).

TEAM-WORK

Tupou Manapori and Maiki Marks both play netball; Tupou also coaches and is a provincial umpire. At Hillary College in South Auckland, where they teach, they talked about Maori and Pacific Island women and netball. Lu Cormier transcribed the tape.

Tupou: In 1975 I started coaching. Mainly Cook Island women are coming, but I also have Samoans, Niueans and European women. We have five teams for netball. They're called Newcomers, but the thing is I don't believe in just coaching netball itself. There's a lot of things you can bring in. How they are getting on with their family, that sort of thing, is there any way I could help, advise them. Now I've got a lot of young people in my club, from the street, ex-Hillary College, most of them. You know how hard their parents are at home. There's no way they're allowed to be out. So I have made myself available. I will talk with parents in a way where there will be some kind of communication.

I have some of these young people who have left school and are in trouble; and I keep them at my house, and I contact the parents and tell them not to worry, bear with me. And they feel because of my not being involved with liquor or anything, that their kids are quite safe. And I've got Maori kids that I've brought up, you ought to see the number of kids that call me mum everywhere I go.

I find our Maori and Island women very shy. They won't come out, yet they've got a talent, they've got ability to play netball. Again, it's fear of their husbands. I've made myself a sheer example. I've got a husband who says to me, "You like netball more than you like your family", which is not true. He's keen on his weight-lifting and body-building, and he wants me to join him, but when I ask him to come and watch me play netball, he says, "Oh no, that's a woman's game," and that's not on.

They see me in my role and I say, "Right, I'm going to netball." As long as I do my chores then I'm fine. The last part of the year when I don't have netball, he is happy because I'm home all the time. But I take up something else, I do tennis. I feel sport does a lot of things for me personally. It makes me relaxed and free to express myself in a lot of ways.

We are told a woman's place in the Pacific Islands is in the home



Gil Hanly photographed teams playing netball on the Windmill Road Courts, Mt Eden, during July/July 1984.

and the man is the head of the family, that you do what he likes. Pacific Island women, once they're married and have a baby, they feel old. They're told by their husbands, "You can't play netball, you're old now. You have to stay at home and look after the kids." I used to be once a very dedicated, very faithful mother and wife. My husband used to work at night and come home at midnight or one o'clock. I got up, warmed up the tea ready for him to eat every time. Those days are gone now. I had my children here in New Zealand. Since the day they were born, they went to the netball courts with me. So he's got no excuse whatsoever to say that I've left him to look after the kids. No.

Maiki: Tupou and I have a parallel there. I played the sport, and when I married and had the children, I formed two housewives' teams. We would car-pool, we had a really big day out. All our kids ended up-playing together, lots of playmates. Better than a kindergarten really. And of course when we went home, the mothers were tired physically, but refreshed mentally.

We lived up in the North Shore when it was new, and when people had babies in those days, there wasn't very much money around when double incomes were down to a single income. Those women that didn't play netball or mid-week sport tended to be a little bit depressed in all. They had morning teas where they would chat and be catty about everybody. But the ones who went to netball, they didn't have time for that. I suppose I'm being a bit unfair on those other women, but I couldn't help but feel we got a better deal. The ones who play netball, they're fit from running around, and they've got the motivation and application on their side. They tend to be better organised and better within themselves.

Tupou: My advice to my players is: don't get married yet. I always advise them - have fun, play your game, enjoy it.

Maiki: Those are the sorts of things they get taught at netball, to have fun. They talk about all sorts of things, they talk about the politics. Women are getting information on the spot and different groups are listening to what other groups are saying, and then they come together and it's amazing the types of things that are communicated.

Tupou: They feel that's the only place where they can talk about it.

Maiki: They don't have any other situation unless they work together, and not very many workplaces have that amount of women at the same time. On a tournament day you've got all these women from 8.30 in the morning till 3.30 in the afternoon.

Tupou: I've got a few solo mothers who have expressed their feelings of anger and concern at being left with a child to look after while he takes off somewhere. In the beginning, they probably won't believe you when you say, "Have good fun, and I'm sure one of these days you'll come back crying 'Oh I wish I'd stayed.'"

I say, "You'd better travel while you can now. Once you settle down, that's it, finished. If he says to you, stay home, you're too old, you're going to stay home, unless you're a person like me, who is very strong about a lot of things, because I believe men and women should be equal." It took my husband a long time to understand, but only because I have worked so hard to try and make him understand how valuable life is, for himself and me.

Sunday we invite all the girls to come with their children, a day at home at my place. We have a barbecue, we talk netball, we talk other things, you know. I think it's a big boost for them to comment on how they got on that particular day. When they get back to their own homes, there's nothing. Nobody says anything about it.

It's not very often that people say to you, "Oh gee you're good." There's plenty of times when people tell you, "Oh, you didn't do

well today, you know, you didn't pass the ball, you didn't do this." But with my beliefs and my way of getting around the women, no matter how badly they play, I often say, "Right, you made the mistakes, we don't mind. Don't worry about it. Winning is not always the answer. Have you enjoyed it?" "Oh yes." If they've enjoyed it, I say, "Well, you've done your day's good turn. You played well for your team and that's all that matters." It didn't worry me whether they're going to win or lose. Other people look at the game as mainly competition where you go to win. But not for me. As far as I'm concerned, I have to educate them to be good losers as well.

Maiki: I think that on the whole, Maori and Polynesian women are good like that. I know that they get on and play a good hard game. And that's what pakeha women don't understand, especially the young ones. I think we play a different style of game. I hear the comments; "Oh, they're rough." But I've watched young kids, I've watched ladies my age play, I've watched the over forties play. It's not rough, it's just that once they get on, they give everything they've got to it. I know that when I come off the court, I really feel it.

Tupou: All these young ones will say, "Oh I can't play." I say, "How old are you – nineteen? Look at me. If I can run from one end to the other without coughing, then I can't understand what's the matter with you." I feel the women just need a little bit of en-

couragement from someone. They say I'm the hardest person to be with, because I've got rules and I do it right. When I do training, I mean training – no smoking, nothing else.

But I think you've got to keep doing some other exercise as well as netball. See, I go to the gym, for body toning and do some exercise. Two days a week we train. One day you have physical training, exercises and all that, and the other day we play netball. But I think they've got to be advised on how to keep themselves fit, especially after having babies and coming back to it.

But they enjoy it. They'd rather be told those things than not. Sometimes I feel so guilty, I say to my husband, "I think I've been too hard on them", and he'll say, "Oh yeah, you're always on the negative." But I know somewhere down the line he supports what I'm doing, yet he doesn't say it.

Maiki: Well, that's a typical Maori/Polynesian male way of looking at things, eh? If they like it they'll grizzle, grizzle, grizzle, but if they don't stop you, that means that's alright, they're happy with what you're doing.

Tupou: I set goals for the women in the club every year. This year our goal was to go to Hawaii for the international tournament. But we got turned down at the beginning of the year, we were told by the Auckland Netball Association that they're not taking any new teams. Then a couple of weeks ago I got a letter from them saying there are eight vacancies, some of the teams



have fallen out. So it's too late now, the girls have lost the interest now.

We fund ourselves. We put our own money in for the club team, for the whole netball season. We have another bag for injuries, so we give a little donation to at least pay the first bills for the doctor. Sometimes we have a little for the girls who have babies, who don't want anybody to know, but it's nice if we can pay a little something. We'd rather do our own, and I've never gone outside and asked people to sponsor my club.

I think the pakehas get a lot of sponsorship.

Maiki: They ask, they go out and ask. One team is sponsored by a local garage, and they take the name of the garage for their team, and they get their uniforms.

Tupou: Our women buy their own uniforms. That's how we've worked all along. They're so keen to play the game, they're not going to wait around to get the people to sponsor them for uniforms or whatever. They want something, it doesn't matter how much it costs. They're going to put some money in. So the only other way we get funds for travel is to have a social function.

Netball used to be the cheapest sport before. Every year, at the general meeting, we get up and say, "Why are the fees going up?" Every year we hear, "Oh, we have to do this, we have to renovate part of this." Now netball's most expensive because we've got to pay fees to the association, you've got to pay for your own uniform and your own club fees. Thirty-three dollars we paid this year per person to affiliate ourselves with the association.

We see all these big banks and whatnot sponsoring the rugby, the soccer and everything. But the women of this country, they're just as important as those male counterparts.

Maiki: But if there was money put into netball so that all our players had to pay was just their club fees and their uniforms, I'm sure we'd have more kids playing netball here. Kids can't afford to play netball after school because they can't afford to pay the fees, their uniform and travel - \$2 every time to go from Otara to Auckland and back again.

But if the government spent some money on women's sport, we wouldn't have so many Maori and Polynesian women in mental hospitals, because of low self esteem and all these other things. I look at all these women who I know would like to play a sport but they're too shy to say we can't play because there's no money. They don't say it, but you know that they just can't afford it.

About a Maori tradition in netball. There have always been Maori players in netball right from the primary, intermediate, secondary schools. This is marvellous. In Howick, where I play, they play in all grades.

Tupou: Well, Maori I think are there at all levels, but the Pacific Islanders are coming up now, slowly getting there. See this year we've got a Cook Island team training in Auckland. That's a good

go. Even in the national side, we've got a Cook Islander now, with Margaret Matenga. And there's of course Rita Fatialofa, who's Samoan.

I'm also secretary of the Cook Island Sports Association of Auckland. On Labour weekend, we have a national day where each city travels to the other. This year we're going to have Wellington. All of the Cook Island people in Wellington are coming to Auckland and we're hosting that whole tournament for that weekend. Netball, rugby, tennis, indoor golf, and church activities.

We have eight teams including the golden oldies, and the mothers and fathers, so it's one big occasion we look forward to every year. Next year we'll have the reverse. Either we'll go to To-



korua, Hastings or Wellington or something like that. We also have Rotorua and the South Island. So netball and rugby are the big games as far as the Pacific Island people are concerned. Cricket is the other. We have a Cook Island cricket competition with one particular island in Pukapuka.

And every year on Queen's Birthday weekend we have the Auckland Cook Island field day, where just Cook Island teams (there are about 44 netball teams and 15 to 20 rugby teams) come together. People really psych themselves for it, and really work hard. I find that we feel very happy, different from the field days that we go to on Sundays. You know you see people sitting on the side, and while they're waiting, they're singing away or eating or something like that. The music is going. It's really full of fun.

In the evenings you will find that in every little space we can steal or put a rug over or something, we play some kind of sport. I think the Pacific people are very sports minded people. I think that's the same with Maori people.

Maiki: Now Maori women don't feel that they have to have the same support systems. They join any team really, they feel confident. But you still have teams that are predominantly Maori women, and they do that because they like to play with one another and it's a social thing for them. But I can't help but think that the government or somebody should fund netball. I'm sure more women would be coming.

If you looked at most of us that were involved in so many other things; well, I've had to give up a lot of other things for netball, but I'd never leave a fitness thing off my schedule. I hate doing exercises by myself.

Tupou: I do my own at night when everybody has gone to sleep. I stay up. And when I get up really early in the morning before my children get up, I get into the sitting room and do my other exercises. But sometimes you get bored doing it on your own. I like the walks. I might say, "Okay, let's go for a run around the street." You need it. Just something extra. Don't ask me about how I get the time. God knows, it's a miracle. It just happens when it comes. □



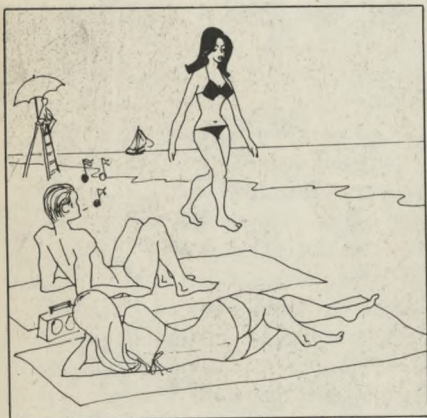
Dear Feminist Fanny

I am a 16-year-old boy and my mum's run off to live with the vicar's wife. My father's heartbroken and can't cope. We have takeaways every night, my bed has not been made for a week, and the washing is blocking the toilet door. How could she do this to us?

W. H. Inge.

Dear W. H. Inge.

Easily.



Dear Feminist Fanny

I've organised a men-against-drama-lecturers march, cake stalls for the men's centre and creches for feminist ovulars. Still feminists won't be nice to me. What more do women want?

M. C. Liberal

Dear M.C. Liberal,

For starters we'll have your porsche, your gold mastercard, and your ten bottles of Chateau Neuf du Pape.

Dear Feminist Fanny

I hate men because they rape and sexually abuse women and children. I get mad when the boss touches me. I yell back at men when they whistle in the street. Now the men at work are calling me a ballbreaking dyke.

BBD.

Dear BBD,

Congratulations!

Dear Feminist Fanny

I am an English lecturer at University and I'm scared of being chained to a tree. What should I do?

Mack Adamia,

(author of **Wet Dreams**)

Dear Mack,

If the chain fits, wear it.

Dear Feminist Fanny

I'm newly married and I've discovered a

FEMINIST FANNY

pile of **Playboys** in the garage. My husband says he buys them for the interviews but my mum says he's a filthy beast. What should I do?

Newlywed.

Dear Newlywed,

Subscribe to **Dyke News** and say you buy it for the layout.

Dear Feminist Fanny

I read in the newspaper that the Labour Party is going to have a Ministry of Women's Affairs. Could you please tell me who to contact as I am really interested in having an affair.

Primrose.



Dear Primrose,

Unfortunately you have got the wrong idea. However, you could approach the new government and ask about the introduction of a private member's bill. Best of luck.

Dear Feminist Fanny

My husband has asked me to learn fellatio but I already speak fluent French and German. Don't you think that's enough?

S.A. la Vee.

Dear S. A. la Vee,

More than enough. You will have to be very cunning. Alas, husbands have these ideas from time to time. C'est la guerre!

Dear Feminist Fanny

We have to move rather suddenly and I'm worried about lifting the lilliums. Is it the right time?

Turk's wife.

Dear Turk's Wife,

We asked our gardening expert and she advises that you should lift the lilliums immediately and wrap them in some old copies of **Hansard**. When you get to your new place throw away the lilliums and bury the **Hansard**. Things will be better that way. Whatever you do, don't get blue about it.

Dear Feminist Fanny

My husband and I have an equal caring sharing relationship. We have a joint family home and the car is in both our names. What are these feminists on about?

Contented Housewife.

Dear Contented Housewife

Who cleans the toilet?

Dear Feminist Fanny

We have been married for 30 years and now my wife says she's bored because I never talk, go to sleep in front TV and only bathe once a week. After all this time I expected something better.

Leo the Lion.

Dear Leo,

So did she.

Dear Feminist Fanny

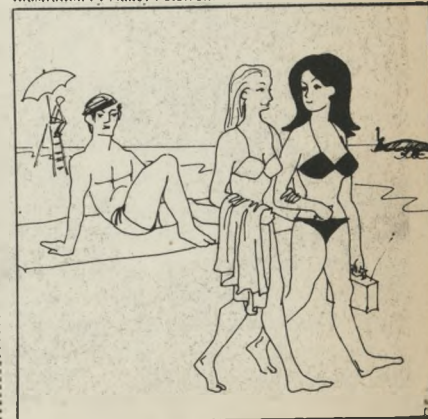
I want to work on the railways, but my dad says its no place for a girl. What do you think?

S. Hunter

Dear S. Hunter,

It's a woman's right to choo-choo-choose.

Illustration by Nancy Petersen.



Our Public Face

THE PRESS ON HOMOSEXUALITY

In 1983 Paula Wallis studied the two Auckland dailies and the Sunday papers for preference to lesbians and gay men. This is what she found.

In the 12 months from January to December 1983 just over one hundred articles dealing with homosexual issues appeared in the two main Auckland dailies and in the Sunday press. These articles provided the public with their main source of information about homosexuality. They created the conditions for acceptance or rejection, for approval or disapproval of a homosexual way of life.

What was the media image presented in 1983? I divided the 108 references into topic headings:

Court/legal	52
AIDS	20
Gays in the Church/Weddings	5
Young Gays in schools	4
Transsexuals	4
TV/entertainment	3
Equality bill	3
Air NZ	3
Out magazine	2
Paedophile groups (men attracted to young boys)	2
Miscellaneous	10

A positive/negative/neutral scale showed 91 negative references, no positive references and 17 neutral references.

A gender breakdown saw 92 references to male homosexuality, five references to lesbianism, seven non-gender specific references and four references to transsexuals.

The overwhelmingly negative and overwhelmingly male-dominated nature of the references is striking. Fifty-two of the total 92 references to male homosexuality appeared on the court pages of the dailies or in sensationalized versions in the Sunday papers. These items construct a fairly comprehensive picture of the male homosexual. He is someone who molests young boys, then takes snap-shots of them, sodomizes adolescents, has a flat littered with pornography and has a Paedophile

Club membership ticket in his wallet.

The 20 references to AIDS made up the next largest topic group. These articles were alarmist and threatening in content and tone. They suggested that promiscuity in the male homosexual community was largely responsible for the dissemination of the disease. The publicity given to Darryl Wilson's threats to flood Auckland blood banks with potentially infected blood com-

"We are considered newsworthy only when a news item is outrageous enough to consolidate current prejudice."

pleted the negative picture conveyed by these articles.

And according to the papers those male homosexuals who weren't appearing in court or incubating AIDS were doing other pointless or nasty things. They were out and about town boycotting Air New Zealand for their failure to promote Gay Group Travel, protesting about Lange's use of the word "poofster", laying siege to the customs department for the seizure of two "Colt '84" calendars, petitioning parliament for the degenderising of NZ laws relating to sex offenders, or appearing in 30 second suggestive silhouette on television locked in shadowy embrace.

Lesbians fared little better. We scored a total of five references over twelve months. We are invisible unless indulging

in the sensational or bizarre. As when the **Auckland Star** reported that an English Court of Appeal had awarded custody to a lesbian mother. As when the same newspaper a month later headlined the word lesbian in mock-humorous vein concerning the Australian Union of Students declaration of 1983 as the "International Year of the Lesbian." **Star** editorial staff allowed a discreet four month interval to elapse before reporting the celebration of a "homosexual marriage" between two lesbians. Not, of course, in New Zealand.

The weekend papers were equally abstemious. **Truth** reprinted an advertisement from **Out** magazine outlining a request for someone to father her child. And the **NZ Times** in its sole reference to lesbians, typecast all as "militant lesbians" who had killed moves to legalize male homosexuality.

The stereotypical homosexual of the media is constructed less on what is presented than by what is omitted. It is the lack of positive references that is more damning than the warped perspective of the published material. There is no hint that gays and lesbians are teachers, work in shops and factories, are office workers and social workers. No suggestion that we are parents, live in the suburbs, survive on a benefit and shop at the supermarket.

At the moment, we are considered newsworthy only when a news item is outrageous enough to consolidate current prejudice. Newspapers create our profile and present us pre-judged to the public. We are sensationalised, termed bizarre, thought suspect and considered criminal.

Complaining about the media's failure to cover the kind of events not generally recognised as news is a long term job. Complaining about offensive items may have more effect in the short term. We can object to the continual projection of a negative image. We can have a list of prominent lesbian and gay spokespeople whom the media can contact. We can publicise activities and events. We can prepare positive press releases. We can even compliment the media when they do the right thing. We want the same acceptance for lesbians and gay men that heterosexuals get in the media. □

From February to November 1982, Sally Ruth collected two scrapbooks of clippings about rape and sexual assault from the Christchurch Star and Press. To analyse them, she talked to raped women, a rape crisis worker, a policeman and a lawyer. This is her report.

AND RAPE

This is an examination of the *public face* of sexual violence. The data available in newspaper clippings cannot be used to generalise about offenders or victims. It is well known that sexual violence is a grossly under-reported offence, and studies have shown that offenders seen in the courts are not at all representative of sexual offenders in general.

A composite picture of the clippings suggests overwhelmingly that the rapist/offender who goes to court is young, working class or unemployed, a stranger to the woman and likely to be Maori or a Pacific Islander. The victim is most likely to be attacked in her own home or alone at night in a public place. She is presented as being either very young or very old. Most of the assaults reported included some degree of non-sexual violence.

Such a picture, emerging as it does from a capitalist racist patriarchy, should not surprise any feminist. It is unfortunate that few recognize this for what it is – the *public* image only of the many cases of sexual violence that occur. Cases of sexual violence which fit the stereotypes are more likely to be reported, more likely to be taken to court and more likely to result in prosecution. Male offenders who fit the stereotype are more likely to be traced by the police. Where a case does not fit into such a picture; for instance if the rapist is a white bank clerk, and the victim is his best friend's sister (and if she has or has had a boyfriend) the chances of being taken seriously and 'justice' being done are minimised from the start. Attacks that include violence are more likely to be followed through. The police have insinuated that if you are being raped it's actually better for the prosecution case if you make sure you get a black eye or cuts as well.

Although it is becoming more widely accepted that all women are at risk of at least attempted sexual violence, and that husbands and lovers are as likely to be the offenders as a stranger, the newspaper clippings show an image of offenders and victims which differs markedly from this. Of 36 victims of sexual offences represented in the clippings there were only two who did not fit into the 9-23yrs and over-50yrs age

groups. Indications from 1983 papers are that these age splits have been even more marked. For offenders, on the other hand, 28% of 49 offenders were under 24. Of 33 rapists in court 18 were unemployed, two were beneficiaries, 11 were employed in manual or unskilled or semi-skilled jobs.

It is men who are powerless relative to other men who present as the public image of sexual offenders – men who are economically less powerful (unemployed, unskilled workers) and otherwise structurally powerless (Maoris, Pacific Islanders and gangs).

Because I accept that the cases that appear in these clippings represent only the tip of the iceberg of national sex offences and are *not* representative of sexual vio-

"It was clear that they did not seem to regard either sexual offenders, victims, potential sexual offenders or potential victims as members of 'the public'."

lence experiences in general, it must then be concluded that these less powerful men are more likely to be caught, prosecuted, and penalised and are *not* more likely to be sexual offenders.

A large number of the reports contain phrases claiming the woman was not hurt, not injured, or had not suffered unduly. Aside from it not even being true, such language and emphasis serve to maintain the common misunderstanding and misrepresentation of sexual violence as just another form of physical assault, and the idea that the possibility or actuality of physical violence is the most damaging and deplorable aspect of the crime.

Where non-physical consequences to the victim are mentioned, words like "upset" are used. This is both an under-

statement and a term with belittling connotations. Rape Crisis workers have said over and over that sexually violated women's non-physical scars can take a very long time to heal (if at all). The invasion of self, the disruption of lives, feelings of emptiness, soullessness, guilt, fear and dirtiness and the often punishing attitudes of family and friends cause victims immeasurably more suffering than physical force. These consequences, and their continuance are rendered invisible; they do not appear on the public face.

Journalists prize "objectivity" – the ability to distance your own self, values and views while writing, to present a supposedly unbiased or "true" account of what happened.

I believe that objectivity is both an unrealistic aim and an impossibility in most cases and is non-existent when dealing with so called "social issues". Newspapers do not present everything that happens, or even every happening they know about. They do not print everything that is written. The staff of a paper *choose* aspects of social phenomena for a re-presentation in their news reports; they construct a social reality in accordance with that selection, which may or may not reflect the actual reality initially observed. At each stage of this process individual biases may occur. Aside from the characters and beliefs of particular reporters, sub-editors and editors the process behind the presentation of news stories negates any possibility of objectivity. The selection of what is emphasized, what is ignored, the use of language and the idea behind the judgement of "newsworthiness" are all individual and subjective procedures.

Both the style and the claims of newspaper journalism suggest a non-judgemental representation of what others have said or done. From this the public often hold a view of media reports as the truth, and construct their own assumptions of reality around those presented by newspapers and other media forms.

To understand what went on within newspaper production, I interviewed two men from the *Star* and one man from the *Press*.

Reports of court cases must always involve the selection of portions of admissible evidence from the proceedings of the day. These are put together to form a supposedly fair and representative summary of each case chosen as worthy of publication from the large number of court cases which are heard in a typical day in court. I asked how decisions about this selection of information were made at their respective

papers. The men from the **Star** replied that there was "no suppression by this newspaper" that they print "a summary of all admissible evidence" in order to "get more information to the public" unless "the details are considered too unpleasant for a family newspaper."

The reporter at the **Press** said that their court reporters are "guided by good taste and the view that sexual violence reports should not descend to the salacious or dwell unduly on details, because we are very conscious of the fact that people are reading the **Press** with their breakfast." (!)

Both papers have at least spoken commitment to avoiding the possibility of sexual titillation from reading court reports. However the main concerns still appear to

Press is determined by who the victim is.

The rationale for specifying the female's marital status and not the male's (be he offender or victim) in the **Press** "to cater for the public who really **do** think its worse if she's married because although it's a gross physical and mental intrusion on the woman, it's worse if it intrudes on the whole family as well".

"Besides which," he said "it may be relevant. There have been several cases lately where the *husband* has been beaten up or forced to watch - then it becomes more than just a simple crime of passion". Reports of such cases in the paper show that when men are also involved as victims the case is regarded much more seriously and treated more sympathetically.

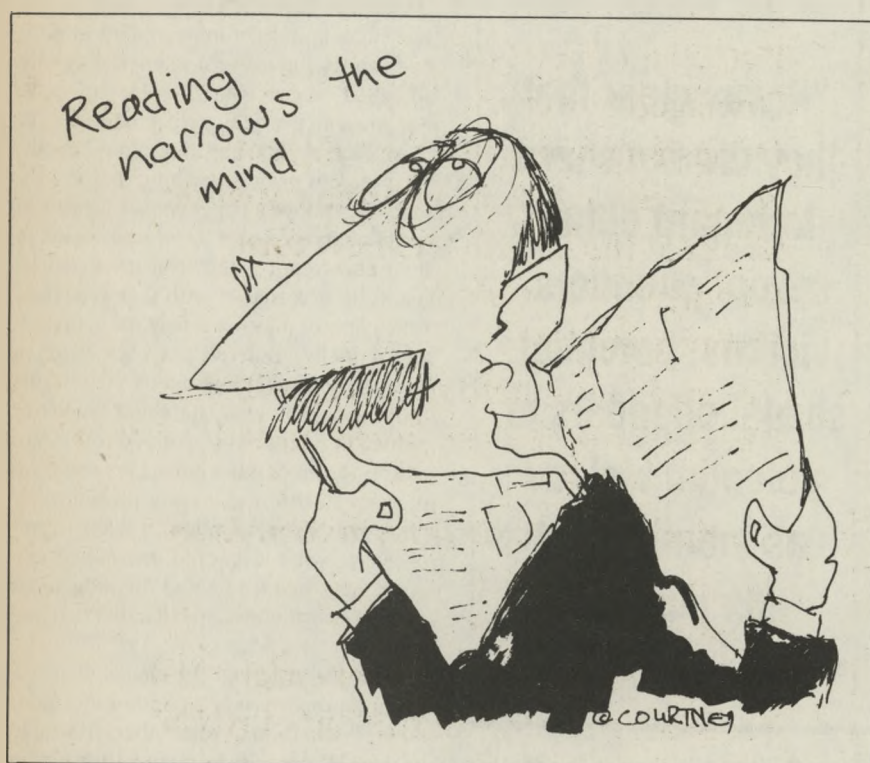
a bus it might not make it." (Laughter) The **Star** also said they tried to present a "balanced view," to incorporate a similar proportion of material from defendant, complainant and judge (if relevant). They were very concerned with "fairness" and protecting themselves against accusations of bias or slanting the case. This balancing act in the name of fairness clearly suggests that some newspaper reports are not even representative of *court cases*, let alone reality. If a case is dominated by the presentation of evidence for the prosecution, an attempt to even things up and be "fair" would seriously distort the image of the case.

The men from both papers consistently used a concept of The Public, without overtly indicating who their reading public was seen to be. My impression is that they conceive them to be white males aged about 25-60 years. It was clear that they did not seem to regard either sexual offenders, victims, potential sexual offenders or potential victims as members of "the public".

Newspaper accounts do include implicit warnings to other wimmin. Most of the detailed reports have at least an element of suggestion that the woman or girl in some way brought it on herself and that this should reduce the seriousness of the penalty. Often included in this type of report is the insinuation that some wimmin deserve rape more than others.

I found an examination of the headlines used to be rather revealing of the lack of fit between the expressed concern of the newspaper men I spoke to and the practices of the papers. Burrows' states "Extreme care must be taken with headings. They are not part of the proceedings but rather are the comments of the newspaper itself".

Headlines are the responsibility of the sub-editor who quickly reads and summaries a piece of copy into a few words. The speed at which sub-editors work was offered as an excuse for poor head-lines by both papers (eg "Facial injuries to woman"). I queries the basis for the use of the words "*alleged rape*" or "*a woman claimed she was raped*" in headlines (and in the body of the story). Legally they are required to use "*allege*" if the offender has not pleaded guilty, but this does not always occur. The **Star** said they sometimes make mistakes. The **Press** news editor on the other hand said that if, for instance, "logic" suggested that a woman in that place at that time would not fabricate a story of rape, *then* a headline like "Hunt for rapist" was permissible! The **Press** tends to use words like "doubt", "allege" and "suspicion"



be competition between the two, what sells papers and therefore what creates profit. Even though the **Press** representative said that "the **Star** reporters have to be more sensational, to catch tired evening readers" there seems little to distinguish the two papers in the way court reports of sexual violence are presented.

Selection of cases to be published hinges in both cases on "newsworthiness". Both papers had different bases on which this criteria is satisfied. The **Press** reporter said that any assault on children or the elderly is given prominence because "... the public have a particular abhorrence for these assaults (while) those cases of women in the middle age bracket (18-50) are not seen as quite as serious." So newsworthiness in the

The **Press** representative thought the public (as usual undefined) made "more of a fuss" about sexual violence cases than the media do. He believed that "The public often have mixed feelings about rape cases because they think 'there but for the grace of God go I'."

He confirmed that he did mean men in this context! While this seems to say as much about his personal fears as his attitude towards the public, it also indicates that he regards "the public" as all men.

At the Christchurch **Star** selection by newsworthiness is based on the penalty attached to the charge. As sexual violence cases are usually highly penalised, they are usually reported. "Although," one of them noted "if a woman's bottom got pinched on

more often in their headlines than the **Star**. I felt that the whole approach of the **Press** representative was one in which the *womin* was presumed guilty of fabrication until proven innocent; older people and children and so on were seen as less likely to make up such a story. It is another common myth that *wimmin* often "cry rape"; if the chief reporter of a major newspaper holds it so firmly then it is inevitable that this bias will show through in published accounts of sexual violence.

The fragmentation of the systematic and functional nature of sexual violence, ensuring continued scapegoating and the deflection of the focus away from the source of real power in society are some of the effects of malestream journalism's approach to such reports. Even recent increases in articles including social comment on the reality of sexual violence will not create significant change in the public image as long as the two sets of information remain so contradictory and newspaper placement of such articles ensures their isolation from each other.

Virtually nothing in the spoken and written experiences of rape victims who have *not* reported to the police coincides with the myths and stereotypes which are generated and maintained by the media. It appears that the private reality of sexual violence against *wimmin* is less dramatic but far more insidious and wide-spread than the imagined social reality that is presented by the written news media as the public face. This mask of sexual violence is so tolerable in its lack of threat to good, decent and ordinary people that it successfully disguises the reality that *wimmin* live every day. The news media is at least partially culpable for the obscenity of sexual violence by its very abdication of responsibility for the evidence of this mask, in the names of "objectivity" and "newsworthiness".

Thus not only is the reality of sexual violence in our society distorted by being largely hidden (unreported) but further bias is introduced both at the police station (how many reported offences get to court?) and yet again in newspaper accounts of actual court cases. □

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Gillian Edwin

DOESN'T ANYONE REALLY LISTEN?

She put her hands on the brown door
Pitted and scratched
Damaged by years
Of pushing hands and kicking feet
An ordinary door in an ordinary world
She held the handle feeling it turn
Obedient to her hands
Smooth and worn
The same as yesterday – she pushed
The door opened and heads turned

She saw herself mirrored in their faces
The teacher's voice –
"Late and in a mess" –
She looked for safety to her empty desk
Familiar, friendly but still out of reach

"Well" sighed the teacher "Why so late"
Pursed and impatient
Dictation disturbed
"These fellas fucked me down the field"
"Late and now swearing" said the teacher

One hundred lines
"I must not use bad language in class"

Choices in Childbirth . . . 3 new books

Yoga for Pregnancy and Birth

A Guide for Expectant Parents

Nina and Michael Shandler

This book offers a programme of physical postures, breathing exercises, meditation and positive behaviour through which expectant parents can gain great mental and physical benefit. 148pp, paper, \$16.50

Why Natural Childbirth?

A Psychologist's Report on the Benefits to Mothers, Fathers and Babies

Deborah Tanzer and Jean Libman Block

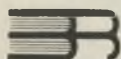
Two groups of women are studied in this report: one using conventional medication, the other using techniques of natural childbirth. The results persuasively demonstrate why natural methods yield remarkable psychological benefits. 290pp, paper, \$14.95

The Whole Birth Catalog

Editor: *Janet Isaacs Ashford*

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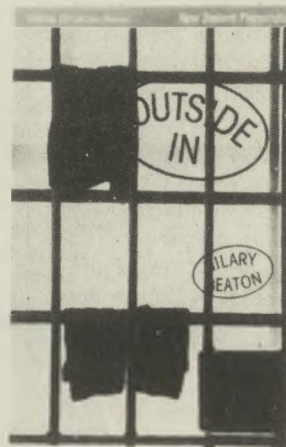
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Women and Punitive Welfare

Women have always been punished for having sexual liaisons or children outside the institution of marriage. A Century ago, when married women committed adultery, she was denied custody of her children. Twenty years ago single women were socialised and coerced into giving up their babies for adoption. Sadly illegitimacy ensured an inferior quality of life and the child was "better off" with a married couple, which is another way of rewarding married couples held in high esteem by society. When women asserted their sexuality and independence outside marriage, society came down like a ton of hot bricks, by punitively depriving the women of their children.

Today women with children and without a husband may keep their children, but only at a price and that is state intervention in, and public policing of, their private lives. Most New Zealand women have little experience of state intervention in their personal lives, until the day their marriage breaks down or they become single mothers. Welfare is then used punitively as a means of social control.

Sex role socialisation ensures that the women in our society are child rearers, and because of this they are excluded from achieving financial independence. Therefore women without husbands and with children are usually forced to go on the Domestic Purposes Benefit, basically because they have not been able to achieve financial equality with men, or independence of them. From the fat into the fire goes the woman who removes herself from the rule of one patriarchal male, by substituting patriarchal, bureaucratic welfare institutions in his place.

But you ask, is not a welfare system which supports women without husbands sympathetic to women, rather than punitively patriarchal? Several answers flare up here. The DPB is provided because of the children who must be cared for, it is cheaper than providing alternative care, it is an easy way of reinforcing patriarchy by keeping women subservient and dependent, plus a means of juggling the real dole queue statistics.

The provision of a benefit for mothers-alone does not constitute feminist progress towards sexual equality, because husband-free mothers are subject to stigmatisation and increasing "supervision"

COMMENT BY VAL UPTON "Women with children and without a husband may keep their children, but only at a price, and that is state intervention in, and public policing of, their private lives."

which is their punishment for deviating from the norm. Women alone are perceived as a threat to families and the institution of marriage (witness the hostility a single woman receives from safely-married women at numerous social occasions), so the lives of these "deviant" women have to be controlled, not perhaps as overtly as 100 years ago but by equally efficacious and punitive means.

To this end various institutions conjure up schemes whereby women are still to be punished for their "naughty" behaviour. Last year Plunket nurses suggested certifying young unmarried mothers as to their fitness to raise their own children. (Christchurch Press 17.2.83). In 1982 the idea was that the age of dependent children of women on welfare be lowered to 13, effectively restricting the time the benefit would be available (Press 17.7.82). Ironically this suggestion paid no heed to the problems women would have in re-entering the paid workforce, as does the latest move on unemployment benefits. Now the government recognises the problems the over-55 years (males) encounter in regaining employment, and have adjusted the benefit structure accordingly.

Although all welfare beneficiaries are subject to stigmatisation and are blamed for being bludgers, because welfare is provided reluctantly, none come in for as much contempt and ill-will from the general public as does the husband-free mother. Aside from the fact that welfare is antithetical to a capitalist economy, which ignites the resentment of

taxpayers who have to support people not in paid employment, the harassment of selected groups in our society goes deeper than a monetary resentment. We must ask what it is about the family unit of mother and children that necessitates government and public policing, while the separated father is free from such state intervention.

One classic justification for intervention is that women on welfare have problems raising their children. Another is that they need assistance with budgetary matters. This is true to a point, because of the low level of income, yet other low income beneficiaries do not have their personal lives policed to such an extent. Students are free to spend their government bursary as they wish. Old age pensioners are free to live "de facto" if they wish. Rather this policing of women outside the "norm" is a hangover from the days when deserted wives had to be of good moral character to maintain their right to monetary assistance. Women were, and still are being, punished for being deserted by their husbands, or by choosing not to have one.

Society is making two statements here. Women without men are, or become, incompetent financially and as childrears, and women without husbands lose their right to privacy - that is their rights as citizens are worth less than before. These women in receipt of public welfare must tolerate societal acrimony, because they only have "equal rights" so long as they have a male benefactor. For some obscure reason

this "proclaimed incompetence" of women-alone connects to their sexuality, hence this needs to be monitored. In reality the morality and sexuality is more closely monitored than the financial and child-rearing capabilities, so we must assume this is the real reason for state intervention in private lives. It is how society views mothers-alone that kindles the flames of stigmatisation. Under the guise of humane welfare mothers-alone can be controlled, simply because they are financially dependent on state aid. Just as employers can use the threat of dismissal to prevent militancy among employees, welfare is used as a means of social control (Wilson, 1977).

Carol Smart argues persuasively (Smart, 1981) that taken together, the provision of welfare benefits for mothers-alone plus the easing of divorce laws, indicate the true intentions of governments. Marriage and family must be reinforced, even if it means a temporary payout to women outside marriage, to ease their transition to a new marriage. I concur with Smart. Welfare benefits are at odds with capitalism, which accounts for some of the hostility fired at all beneficiaries. More covertly though, by making the life of husband-free women a restricted, controlled, dehumanising and unhappy struggle, the sooner will most women seek remarriage. Bear also in mind another reason for pressuring women into conformity: government is now unable to reward those conforming child-less couples because the pool of adoptive babies has dried up.

Government acts on behalf of the people by making divorce and remarriage easier, while the people act for government by nudging those deviant mothers alone back into conformist marriages. How much "happier" mother will be back under the protection of a male. The patriarchal social relations of the family are deliberately reinforced by making welfare, for those outside a patriarchal family unit, punitive. □

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Chicken Breasts Cordon Bleu	\$7.00

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Glazed whole pears; Steamed Pudding with Brandy Sauce; Fresh Fruit Crepes; Fresh Fruit Salad; Cheeseboard with Fresh Fruit.

All meals are served with a selection of freshly cooked vegetables or, if you prefer, a salad. Come up and see what we've got tonight. The portions are major and the prices, well you can see for yourself, we cater for all of you with great pleasure.

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12.30pm – 2.30pm

◀ DALKON SHIELD DISASTER from page 22.

that there is no impairment in fertility after removal of an IUD but a recent report from Taiwan suggests that overall fertility may be slightly lowered."

This is the standard information women will receive if they ask doctors for advice. What this means is that women who stopped using an IUD because they wanted to conceive found their fertility impaired no more than women who stopped using the pill. Of course the women who had severe PID, ectopic pregnancies, septic miscarriages or a perforation had already stopped using the IUD. They are never counted into the "subsequent fertility" figures at all. There can be no doubt that the IUD is the contraceptive that threatens women's fertility most, but I have never heard a doctor come out and say so - it might frighten women who are after all well known to be frightened by mice and facts.

Not only should women know the risks if they accept an IUD but they should know how to minimise them. In particular they should be informed about responding to the early signs of infection, and about the risks if they become pregnant. Early recognition of infection and ectopic pregnancy may well save their fertility. Unfortunately many women who return to their doctors will get reassurance rather than the examination on which early diagnosis depends. At the Post Graduate School's training seminar this year Professor Bonham, New Zealand's chief Ob/Gob said:

"I do not treat pelvic pain with antibiotics unless the E.S.R. is raised and/or there is very convincing clinical tenderness. Remember the possibility of an ectopic pregnancy and the difficult alternative diagnosis of psychophysiological pelvic pain."

Professor Bonham does test to see if there is infection, but what many doctors apparently learn is that pelvic pain is likely to be psychophysiological. The woman has to prove she is "really" sick to override this assumption. She has to demonstrate very convincing pain to override the assumption that the problem is probably in her head. Unfortunately early PID which is still curable often does not have such obvious discomfort. C's doctor had this sanguine attitude and was not alert to the possibility of PID despite the fact that he had inserted a shield himself.

One reason why the experience has not led to greater caution is that the doctors who do the insertion frequently do not see the long term results. They simply do not connect the woman they give an IUD at the clinic today, with the emergency admission in three years' time. The results of their actions are somebody else's department.

Does it matter that New Zealand doctors have not learnt a more cautious attitude in response to experience with the Dalkon Shield? Mr. Jones argues that it is not worth taking any action now because it was all "a long time ago". Ob/Gob Wendy Savage tried to trace women recorded as having a shield fitted at the London Hospital. It is the nearest thing we have to a long term follow up study. She was able to trace approximately half the women. Nine percent were still wearing the shield. The majority of women had had them removed because of medical problems. Sixteen percent of them had conceived, another 16% had had PID, a number had other fertility problems. What the tragic study clearly showed is that even if most studies stop after two years the problems for women do not. □

If you have had a bad experience with a Dalkon Shield and would like to share your experience or get more information you can contact: Coalition for Fertility Action, PO Box 5043, Wellington.

If you would like to speak to Phillida personally you can call her at home after 3pm most days at Wellington 764-091.



WHAT'S NEW?

MEETINGS

Dunedin...Dunedin

Women's Resource Centre, The Octagon, Regent Chambers—2nd floor, Rooms G and 10. Open every Wednesday (except school holidays) 2–5 pm. We provide information and books, pamphlets to borrow, friendly atmosphere. We feel it is important that women have access to information so they can make choices that will be good for them and their children. We are happy to advise on referral services about the home, employment, leisure, all aspects of relationships, health and age, legal services in the community, the courts and the family court, legal aid and lawyers. Strictest confidence assured. All women please feel free to see us, or write to PO Box 5424.

Dunedin Rape Crisis Phone 741-592: Counsellors on duty 8–10pm. Answering service will take messages rest of time. Room 6, 2nd floor, Regent Chambers, The Octagon.

Lesbian Contacts: Lesbian Line phone 778-765 every Monday night 7.30–10pm. **Lesbian Drop-in** every first Monday of the month 8pm onward Room 10, 2nd floor, Regent Chambers, The Octagon. Lesbian Contact woman, Marian 777-367, Yoka 773-627.

Lesbian Mother's Defence Fund (LMDF) Information regarding custody battles in court or outside it, advice pamphlet and booklist (extensive, up-to-date and positive) available \$1, PO Box 11009, Dunedin.

Women Against Pornography and Sexist Advertising (WAPSA), meet most Wednesdays, 7.30pm, Dunedin Women's Resource Centre. (See address above). Would like to hear from any similar groups in NZ. Invite local membership. Contact phone Sue, 772-864 or Jan, 43-951.

Auckland...Auckland...

Lesbian Alcohol and Drug Abuse Support Group has been set up at the Women's Health Centre, 63 Ponsonby Road, Mondays 5.20–

7 pm. There may be opportunity for small groups to meet at other times. The support group can be additional to other clinics you may be attending. For users who wish to cut down as well as users who wish to stop completely. Non-judgemental, confidential, all lesbian, with shared facilitating. Assistance will be available from the Lesbian Psychologists Group.

Lesbian Mother's Gatherings, for details phone Frankie 268-239 or Jan 498-527. Childcare can be arranged by phoning Claire or Michelle, 863-133.

Gay/Lesbian Welfare Group Telephone counselling and information service, ph 33-584. Coffee evenings held weekly.

Patients Rights Groups at Women's Health Centre, 63 Ponsonby Road, every second Thursday, 3.30 pm. All interested women welcome.

Anorexia "Slimmer's disease" and **Bulimia** "Binge/purge" self-help support group for sufferers every Tuesday at 7.30pm, 63 Ponsonby Road. Contact: Glenys Johnston phone 687-414. Also family support group for parents and others close to those with anorexia and bulimia. For help and information contact Patricia Hallett 8177-576, Phyl Mullane 8367-953, Anne Lumb 678-493, Kath Brophy 5348-387.

Christchurch...Christchurch...

Robin Morgan, Wednesday 19 September, an evening to hear and meet this well known American feminist author. For tickets and venue information contact Kate Sheppard Bookshop, 202A High Street, phone 790-784 or THAW, Peterborough Centre, phone 796-970. Profits will go to the Health Alternatives for women.

PUBLICATIONS

Lesbian Bibliography: Miriam Saphira has compiled a bibliography of over 300 books with main lesbian characters which are in Auckland Public Library. The list is partially annotated and is based on Barbara Grier's *The Lesbian in Literature*, third edition. \$2 from Broadsheet or from Paper Inc, PO Box 47-398, Ponsonby, Auckland.

Earthlink, a monthly newsletter, is available for price of postage from Dale Loucareas, Waitaka Press, 100 King High Avenue, North York, Ontario, Canada, M3H 3B1. Canada and USA \$5, overseas \$8.

TELEVISION

A six part series on Women Artists, compiled by Kathy Findlay,

will be shown on the "Kaleidoscope" programme starting Friday 14 September. Parts 1 and 2 will concentrate on issues concerning women artists; part 3 on the work of feminist artists and collaborative art; parts 4 & 5 on Emily Pace and Jacqueline Fahey; and part 6 on New Women Artists as exhibited at Govett-Brewster.

RALLY AND CAMP

10 million women for 10 days at Greenham Common 20, – 30 1984. Greenham women are asking 10 million women "to claim this time to make themselves visible". Write to Greenham Women's Peace Camp at Yellow Gate, USAF Greenham Common, Newbury, Berkshire, UK. During August NZ women were trying to raise money to send a contingent to the Camp. Also planned, a one day rally at Tangimoana on 23 September and a camp to be set up at Auckland Airport. Ring Ruth and Susan at Waiheke 72823 and Kathryn at Auckland 728-288.

COURSES

WEA Auckland, 21 Princes Street, phone 732-030.

Feminism – part of the "isms" series on political philosophies. Wednesday 5 September, 7.30–9.30 pm. \$4 waged, \$2 unwaged.

Making Changes – Self Esteem For Women – 8-week course designed to develop self-confidence and assertion in women. Underlying theme is to clarify and understand women's oppression in society and to act in a positive way to combat it. Starts Monday 17 September, 7.30–9.30pm. \$20 waged, \$11 unwaged. Course limit 12 women.

Pacifism – part of the "isms" series – the political and spiritual ideas that are involved in this philosophy. Wednesday 26 September, 7.30–9.30pm, \$4 waged, \$2 unwaged.

SOCIAL

Shadows – Two floors up from main cafeteria, Student Union complex, 34 Princes Street, Auckland, every Monday – women only – 4pm onwards. good music, food, dancing, all women welcome. Further details from Phillipa 30-789 txe 810.

WHAT'S NEW IN YOUR AREA?

Send details to Renee by 7 September for the *October* issue, 5 October for *November*, 2 November for *December* issue and 30 November for the *January/February Broadsheet*.

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DRAWING DOWN THE MOON

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THE POLITICS OF REALITY: Essays in Feminist Theory

Marilyn Frye
Essays on Oppression, Sexism, The Problem That Has No Name, In And Out Of Harm's Way: Arrogance And Love are some of the titles. The Crossing Press, \$13.95

NICE JEWISH GIRLS

Evelyn Torton Beck (ed)
A lesbian anthology and a proud affirmation of Jewish identity. Persephone Press, \$15.75

LESBIAN IMAGES

Jane Rule
A statement of Jane Rule's attitudes towards lesbian experience as measured against images made by other women writers. The Crossing Press, \$12.25

DESIRE

Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell, Sharon Thomspon (eds)
The Politics of Sexuality - a fascinating anthology from writers like Deidre English, Adrienne Rich, Sharon Olds, Alix Kates Shulman, and many others. Virago, \$19.95

SHADOW ON A TIGHT-ROPE

Lisa Schoenfelder and Barb Wieser (eds)
Writings by women on fat oppression. Aunt Lute Book Company, \$15.75



Evelyn Torton Beck.



Miriam Saphira.

AMAZON MOTHERS

Miriam Saphira
Giving affirmation and visibility to lesbian mothers. Papers Inc, \$8.25



Margaret Cruikshank.

LESBIAN STUDIES: Present and Future

Margaret Cruikshank (ed)
A challenge to established institutions to recognise the contribution of lesbians to all areas of learning. The Feminist Press, \$13.95

SEX AND DESTINY

Germaine Greer
The politics of human fertility from the author of *The Female Eunich* and *The Obstacle Race*. Secker and Warburg, \$19.95

HEALTH

CARING FOR OURSELVES

Vanessa Griffin
A health handbook for Pacific women. Reviewed in April '84 *Broadsheet*. University of the South Pacific, \$18.50

THE BASIC BACK BOOK

Anne Kent Rush
The complete manual of back care. Moon Books/Summit Books, \$15.95

HUMOUR

OFF THE WALL

Compiled by Rachel Bartlett
A collection of feminist graffiti. Proteus Books, \$10.95

MA, CAN I BE A FEMINIST AND STILL LIKE MEN? MERCY, ITS THE REVOLUTION AND I'M STILL IN MY BATHROBE and SYLVIA ON SUNDAYS

Nicole Hollander
Who is Sylvia? Read these and find out. St Martins Press, \$9.25 each

HEAVY PERIODS

Fanny Tribble
A cartoonist's wry look at women's experience. Sheba Feminist Publishers, \$5.25



Fanny Tribble.

PULLING OUR OWN STRINGS

Gloria Kaufman and Mary Kay Blakely (eds)
Feminist humour and satire from Gloria Steinem, Claire Bretecher, Rita Mae Brown, and many others. Indiana University Press, \$15.75

A MOUTHFUL OF BREATH MINTS AND NO-ONE TO KISS

Cathy Guisewite
Cartoons that are "for everyone whose life revolves around food, love, mother, and career, the four basic guilt groups". Andrews and McNeel, \$10.50

FICTION

SATURDAY NIGHT IN THE PRIME OF LIFE

Dodici Azpadu
After 26 years balancing a carefully constructed world of their choosing, two women face a new hurdle. Aunt Lute Book Company, \$11.95

CUENTOS: Stories by Latinas

Alma Gomez, Cherrie Moraga, Mariana Romo-Carmona (eds)
The varied experiences of Hispanic women; anger, love, compassion, humour and pathos. Kitchen Table Women of Colour Press, \$13.95

GORILLA, MY LOVE

Tony Cade Bambara
15 Superb stories in Bambara's magical "straight up" style. Vintage Books, \$6.95



Jane Rule.

AGAINST THE SEASON

Jane Rule
An old woman finds her dead sister's diaries. Dina Pyros, used furniture dealer and town butch is courted by Rosemary Hopwood, social worker, and an elderly couple court in the face of public ridicule. Naiad Press, \$13.95

CONTRACT WITH THE WORLD

Jane Rule
Joseph, Mike, Alma, Roxanne, Allen and Carlotta live out their contract. Naiad Press, \$13.95

NIGHTS IN THE UNDERGROUND

Marie-Claire Blais
As intense as *The Well of Loneliness* or *Portrait of a Marriage*. New Press Canadian Classics, \$7.95

LETTERS FROM A FAINTHEARTED FEMINIST

Jill Tweedie
A collection of letters from Martha to Mary first published in the *Guardian*. Picador, \$6.95

DEBORAH

Esther Kreitman
The double oppression of being a woman and Jew. Virago Modern Classics, \$12.95.



Esther Kreitman.

Alice Walker

A black and white portrait of a woman with dark, curly hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark, high-necked top. The background is light and slightly textured.

Alix Kates Shulman

LIGHT A PENNY CANDLE

Maeve Bincy

MRS PALFREY AT THE CLAREMONT and THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

Elizabeth Taylor

A black and white portrait of a woman with dark, wavy hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark, patterned garment. The photo is positioned to the left of her name.

Valerie Miner

THE UNEXAMINED WIFE

Sherril Jaffe

**SPECIALLY
RECOMMENDED**

ONCE

Poems by Alice Walker

ABENG

Michelle Cliff

A black and white portrait of a woman, likely the author, resting her head on her hand. She is looking upwards and to the right. The image is grainy and has a high-contrast, artistic feel.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Winifred Holtby

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE

Janet Frame

A black and white portrait of an elderly woman with short, curly hair. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. Her right hand is resting on her chin. She is wearing a light-colored, patterned blouse. The background is dark and out of focus.

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I would also like a \$24 subscription for myself ☐, for my friend ☐, to sustain Broadsheet (\$35) ☐, other rates on the Contents page: . . .

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Broadsheet, September 1984. 39

PATIENTS RIGHTS GROUP

Dear Broadsheet,

This is let you know that a Patients Rights Group has been started here in Auckland.

At the moment we are a very small group based at the Women's Centre in Ponsonby. We are becoming involved with other groups, such as the Health Committee of the Auckland District Council of Social Services.

We are aiming at getting broad community support in an effort to bring about some tangible changes in the area of Patients Rights, and would eventually like to see more groups around Auckland and other districts.

Below are some guidelines that we are going to start out following (thanks to Christchurch Patients Rights) but these will no doubt change and extend as time goes by.

1. To act as a support group for those wanting to make a specific complaint by: providing information on procedures for letters of complaint; accompanying people on visits to health professionals as appropriate.
2. To act as a support group for people wishing to share their experiences in the health system.
3. To meet with members of the health professions (nurses, doctors etc) over issues relating to patient care in general.
4. To correspond with and open up channels of communication between our hospital board, medical association etc, regarding policy, procedures, complaints and so forth.
5. To deal with specific questions relating to patient's individual rights e.g. what documents and records the patient has a right to see etc.
6. To prepare information pamphlets for patients on the use of the medical system, to help patients make optimal use of the doctor/patient relationship.

If you have any research, pamphlets, or information that could be of use to us we would love to see whatever you have.

Trisha Mellor

Patients Rights Group, 63 Ponsonby Road, Auckland 1, P.O. Box 47090, Ph 764-506.

INFERTILITY

Dear Broadsheet,

Phillida Bunkle in her article "Manufacturing Motherhood", *Broadsheet* April 1984, asks "Does this technology (IVF & AID) serve the interest of infertile women?" We are a group of infertile

women and men and wish to reply to this question and comment on other points raised in the article.

"Radical Feminists conceived of liberation from childbearing." We have not been able to conceive or bear the children we want, but we do not feel liberated. The reason for this is not that we feel inadequate, unfulfilled misfits in a patriarchal society, but because we have been denied the right to choose whether we shall bear children or not. Our bodies do not function as we anticipated or logically believed they would. The technologies of IVF and AID practice do not offer a cure to our infertility, but they do offer us a choice to be able to conceive and bear children. We have lost control of our bodies but these techniques give it back to us.

We would agree that little has been done in the past to prevent and treat infertility. The reasons for this, we believe, are complex and may have to do with the fact that health care is very closely linked with the broader framework of inequalities in advanced industrial societies.

Infertility continues to be incorrectly associated only with women and this too may be a significant factor in the politics of funding infertility research; it is a hidden disease and until recently the numbers of people experiencing it were not known.

Those who argue that attending to the prevention of pelvic infections will prevent infertility do a disservice to women by emphasising the myth that infertility is a woman's disease and that pelvic infection is the cause of all infertility. A male factor is present in at least 40% of infertility and damage to fallopian tubes through infection is the cause of only a small proportion of infertility.

The technology of IVF & AID not only provide some of us for whom this treatment is appropriate with the choice of conceiving and bearing children but also go a long way to finding the causes of all infertility. This, of course, must come before the problems of prevention and treatment can be tackled. In addition these procedures may give us, as individuals, answers for our infertility. When we know why our bodies do not function as expected and we know why we cannot give birth to the children we long to bring into the world we feel better able to attend to the grief of the infertility experience and can attempt to become liberated from the bereavement of lack of choice.

We are aware that the techniques (like other medical practices) raise moral and ethical

issues not only for feminists but for all of society now and in the future. We do not believe that this should mean that their use be discontinued. Rather, that they should be considered with other medical treatments in a health system where the sociological and political factors of who controls them and who gets the benefits from them and what "hype" the media prints about them and should be examined in total.

We would also comment on the illustration which accompanied the article. This kind of totally inaccurate, emotive pictorial misrepresentation is parallel to those illustrations used by anti-abortion organisations attempting to shock, and to stop abortion. We deplore the use of those tactics in the anti-abortion debate and wonder why *Broadsheet* would resort to those methods.

Deirdre Stewart

Secretary, Auckland Infertility Society, P.O. Box 68428, Auckland.

EDUCATION

Dear Broadsheet,

I am a High School student who is taking typing as a School Certificate subject. Throughout the year I have had to put up with sexist stereotyping in the text books. These include statements like, a secretary should always keep HER typewriter clean as HER boss will have had to spend a lot of money on it. Throughout the year I have had to change Chairman to Chairperson, Man to Humans... and have just about been brainwashed into believing only women are secretaries, women who take typing want to be secretaries, men are our bosses.

I have been told that if I change Man to Humans etc in an exam I will lose marks. While typing old Pitmans exams I found the following passage:

"The numbers 40-35-34 may conjure up visions of an attractive female figure, but to the officials of one of the leading commercial banks in Jersey they represent the national cheque Sorting Code Number. This piece of factual information will probably be of not the slightest value to you, even if you are on holiday in the Channel Isles, but if you should be thinking of a present for a female friend or relative, you may find the following..."

Many students sit these exams. I refused to do the question and had it been the exam paper for this year I would have lost 20 marks for not doing it. I intend to write a letter to them.

I also take History, and while studying Palestine the text books

showed photographs of "girl" soldiers, "girl" doctors, and an "Arab mother".

When a teacher referred to a woman as being a "bird" I objected and told him I didn't think he should talk like that as it offended me. He then told me that he would say anything he wanted and that I had no rights to tell him what he could say, that he was a teacher and if I didn't like it it was too bad.

How can I expect to get an equal education when I am still taught by rules made up by white, middle-class men?

Dani Frost (Ms)

Auckland

GOODBYE PRINCE CHARMING

Dear Broadsheet,

Have come to a few good decisions and resolutions and realizations today. No more hoping for the "knight in shining armour" and trying to make the most unlikely people into Prince Charming and getting very hurt and disappointed when I realise he's not. Neither am I a lady, I'm a woman. It's odd when the realization hits you that the illusion of romance and "true love" colour even those of us who pride ourselves on our liberatedness. I am not talking in a derisory way about real love at all. What I am saying is so often we fool ourselves with the illusions of true love. Love whenever it happens is very very special. It's something that is not always your choice. But in my 28 years I have rarely witnessed true love or experienced it either. Although often deluded myself I was experiencing it.

There is no Mr Wonderful. I have a feeling now that I have properly assimilated that I will breathe a lot easier in my involvements with men. Also to realise that all relationships don't necessarily involve sex. That in being a woman "relatedness" is much more important to me. And sex doesn't always involve relatedness at all. I have had many excellent friendships based on relatedness and will continue to do so. But a sexual involvement often has its essential element as physical attraction culminating in sexual involvement. I may sound very dull and boring in my old age but I really expect a lot more out of life. And quite often it demands changing a perspective.

This has just been a very personal rave. I would be interested in hearing other women's views about their attitudes to relationships and relatedness.

Karen Smith

Auckland

HOGWASH



Send your contributions to "Hogwash"

Broadsheet
Box 5799
Auckland.



For men only.

Are you man enough for this machine?

AM/FM sound in an interior so sexy there's probably a law against it. And she goes like the clappers. We've got one only at Fairhall Motors Kaikohe, L.M.V.D. Wimps need not apply.

Auckland's prostitutes are being raped and beaten

Police believe a series of innercity rapes and beatings may be attributed to the assailant, described as a pot-bellied businessman.

One police source told the "Star" they feared the man would mistakenly take an innocent woman as his next victim and kill her.

'Evening Post' 27/7/84
sent by Sara Frost.

WHAT DOES ONE DO WITH THIS DARLING?

Don't panic Folks, she's only the office girl. Meet David and Jackie Lundt who have opened their own Automotive repair workshop in Saltash St, (off Carrington Rd) New Plymouth, on July 2nd

David was born in New Plymouth, served his time and received his A Grade Certificate while working with his father John Lundt at Merriland Motors, and is therefore used to all aspects of Automotive repairs.

Jackie, she won't be touching the cars! At 3½ months pregnant, will be confined to the office.

Thank Goodness!

For your booking phone 36778 bus or 511-298 private.

'Daily News'

7/7/84 sent by S.O'Shea
Jane Collins
Lesley Smith
Yand J. Lilburn

Postcard from "the Chateau"
sent by
Miranda Welch.

An excellent live-in position for a married couple without ties. Wife can run the hostel while husband follows his own profession.

Written applications close on August 6th, 1984.

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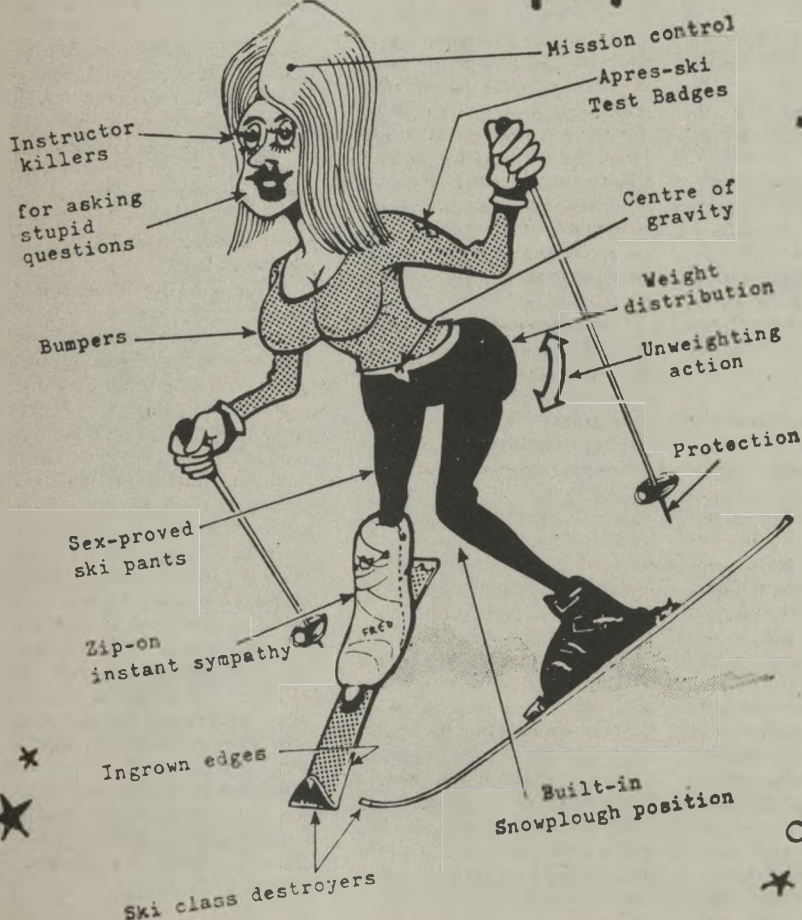
C/- P.O. BOX 13-207, CHRISTCHURCH.

'Christchurch Star'

25/7/84
sent by Nicola Bunz.

Our thanks to all contributors.

the Compleat Ski School Pupil



STROKES AND ART ATTACKS

NARRATIVES OF WOMEN The Auckland Film Festival

If I owned a television I'd get videos of **On Guard** and **Born in Flames** and play them for myself when I was feeling low about the world or about feminism. Feminist escapism. Fantasy-fulfilling adventures to make you cheer. As audiences did when the two films played at the Auckland Film Festival. Not for the protagonists of these films the anguished armchair discussion of means and ends, political correctness or being accountable to the movement. They act first, working their politics out on the run, taking initiatives, leadership, buying dynamite and guns. Acting first, postmortemering not at all. Heady stuff.

In the Australian-made **On Guard** four feminists set out to sabotage the plans of a multinational firm engaged in reproductive engineering. They plot to penetrate deep into the research headquarters of Utero (a brilliant name that), and set off explosive devices to destroy the records. Along the way the film sets out the horrifying possibilities contained in being able to manufacture foetuses by male order, but the main narrative is a straightforward girl detective story with a science fiction twist.

How they did it was clever and daring and great fun for the audience as each audacious part of the plan fell into place. Their earlier bickering and bungling had brought me to the faithless expectation that they would get caught, or at least muck it up. It was a surprise, but a happy one to see the final credits roll onto the screen as our four heroines drive off against the fiery ball of Utero going up.

Filmmaker Susan Lambert cleverly builds the tension by making the saboteurs readily recognisable as ordinary old feminists. They looked like, lived like, loved like the people I know. And had conversations I've heard before. Amelia (Liddy Clark) and Diana (Jan Cornwall) ending a swim at the local pool by sourly bickering about who was most overloaded with work had a familiar tone for a feminist viewer.

These terrorists were no Hollywood glamour girls with high heels and guns in the handbag, nor Bader-Meinhof copies with defiant faces. Like real feminists, they worked at ordinary jobs and

raced home from demonstrations to put on the kids' tea. In bed, two naked lovers short-circuited voyeuristic cinema conventions by talking politics not love.

Because we believe the world Lambert creates, her narrative is convincing and compelling. The film's street movie style, all rush and jumble with disregard for pretty camera angles, was a clever way of turning a tight budget to artistic advantage.

Born in Flames too makes lack of money work for it. It uses the structure of the political documentary, to make us believe in the struggles of a Women's Army which takes on the task of achieving a revolution for women ten years after "the most peaceful revolution the world has ever known" has turned into yet more of the same. The film cuts from event to event, from person to place at a furious pace, accumulating images that bounce off each other. Especially unexpected, then amusing, was the shot of two female hands rolling a condom on an erect penis as one of a staccato sequence of shots of women's hands at work. These hands slipped the rubber on as briskly and efficiently as the previous hands had wrapped chicken legs in plastic film. Women's work? Why not!

Well **Born in Flames** was like that. Politically wise, with a real wicked wit.

The revolution had failed to bring about full employment: for women and blacks it still meant special work programmes, food stamps and garbage in the streets. Women are raped and hassled but asked to put aside their concerns for the good of the revolution. Because this post-revolutionary future is so indistinguishable from the present, the film has things to say about feminist politics right now. The women seem to flounder as much as feminists now do. Theirs is an anarchistic resistance, relying on scattered zap actions. A woman attacked by two street hoods is saved in the nick of time by a cavalry-like charge of whistle-blowing women on bicycles. The city is agog and alarmed by this Women's Army. Like contemporary feminists their aim seems to be psychological confrontation and change, but does this lead to real changes in who holds power and an improvement in the material conditions for women? **Born in Flames** doesn't answer that.

Rebel, rebel, rebel, exhort the Women's radio stations Radio

Regazza and Radio Phoenix. But how? And to what end? As the radio announcers become more political and supportive of the Women's Army they increasingly lapse into the same kind of rhetoric, the leaders of the "revolution" preach to the nation on television. Adelaide Norris, a Women's Army leader ahead of her time, sees the need for real guns and makes links with North African rebels. With her assassination the Women's Army becomes even more scattered, turgid and hit and miss. "If you opened a door to your enemy would you rather see a lion or 100 mice coming through?" asks Flo Kennedy who plays Zella Wylie, a Women's Army leader in the film. 100 mice she concludes and that seems to the director Lizzie Borden's theme song. Myself, I think he'd walk over the 100 mice. A lion would look him the eye.

If **Born in Flames** is deficient as a model for action, it provides models for feminist co-operation and unity that enters fantasy-land. (Well, this whole film is, remember, fantasy land). Leaders of the Women's Army are black, but they work side by friction-free side with white women, heterosexuals links arms with lesbians, even the socialist women who initially regard the Women's army as revisionist join ranks in the end. Dream on.

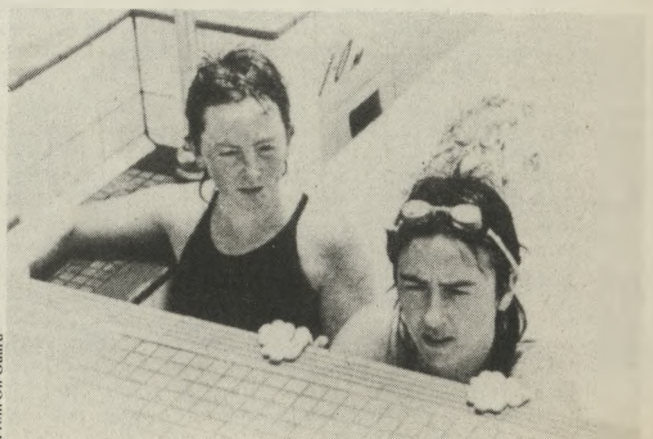
Born in Flames is a feminist dreaming at a level where we can believe it. It takes what we know one step further. Just 10 years ahead. It's a grab bag of people and happenings held together by a bold music track and visually by the sequences in the radio stations. I liked it a lot. I wouldn't want to be part of such a women's revolution, but I suspect if one comes, that's what it will be like. □

Sandra Coney

□

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of this year's Film Festival was the presence of two films about lesbians made by men. If the Auckland Film Festival had continued along its path of recent years this would not have been surprising, and they would have been soft-core exploitation films shown on Friday nights and at late sessions. But Auckland's Film Festival is this year under new management and had substantially the same programme as the Wellington Film Festival. All that lingered of the old festival was the still for Karoly Makk's **Another Way**: a nude woman being embraced on a bed was the first picture to meet the eye when you opened Auckland's brochure, whereas the same film was illustrated by a head-and-shoulders picture of one of the protagonists in Wellington's programme.

Neither **Another Way** nor John Sayles **Lianna** could be classed as exploitation films however, but careful, thoughtful films about the "problem" of lesbianism. As any readers of or about the lesbian trashy novel will know, the first requirement of any narrative of a lesbian affair is that it must end unhappily. Particularly, it must end unhappily for the fluffy-haired ostensibly straight married woman who has been seduced by the close-cropped dyke. She will be doing a man's job in a man's world and be threatening to male characters. Both these films complied, I suspect unwittingly, in that I am sure each director congratulated himself on his sensitivity. (Indeed, in an interview published in the **Monthly Film Bulletin** Sayles is at pains to point out what a good reception he got from gay America and is clearly puzzled by "the really hostile response we



From *On Guard*

got from a few people at the London Film Festival").

Another Way is set in Hungary in the years immediately following the 1956 uprising. It tells the story of Eva, a journalist who has been out of work for two years as a result of her part in events; in a lift Eva eyes blond bombshell Livia, and when she is given a job on the newspaper which the building houses who should she be sharing an office with but Livia. Livia is present at editorial meetings, and Makk shows her growing interest in Eva by making her use the mirror of her powder-compact for covert glances at Eva. In these meetings the short-haired Eva is aggressive, chain-smokes, and is uncompromising in saying that the newspaper must report truth, not party uplift. Livia's husband, an army officer, is conveniently away for much of the film, and the women fall into each others arms in a cafe, where excess of alcohol could easily excuse Livia.

The editor rejects a story of Eva's because it is too critical; in the process of socialist reconstruction it is better to let some sleeping dogs lie. Eva resigns and goes home to her mother. At this point Livia follows her and the two women finally become lovers. (Perhaps the companionable rather than erotic lovemaking is a point where the director might congratulate himself on his sensitivity). When Livia returns to Budapest and tells her husband she wants to leave him he shoots her. Eva visits Livia in hospital, only to be rejected once more. Unable to bear this, she heads for the border and certain death. The film ends where it began, for the finding of the body opens the film, which is told in straight flashback after a sequence showing the hysterical, paralysed Livia wailing that she will never be able to have a child, who will want her now?

The moral is clear: if you are a woman, you can't win. If you are a dyke, you will be hounded out of your job, your country, out of life itself. And if you take up with a dyke, denying men what is rightfully theirs, you will suffer the consequences and deny yourself the only thing that is rightfully yours: children. Lesbianism is used as a metaphor for rejection of socialism although when the party cadre refers to Eva as "that lesbian bitch" we are not sure whether it is her politics or her sexuality that infuriates him more. **Another Way** has been hailed as a very courageous film to come out of Eastern Europe (unlike Wajda's **Danton** which used the French revolution as a symbol for current Poland); the lesbian element in the film has been used I

feel to give some human interest to a political tale, even to allow the political tale to be told because the focus of the film seemed to be on a suitably doomed love story.

Although the screenplay for **Another Way** was by the woman who wrote the original novel, Erzsébet Galgóczi, there is one gaffe it did not escape: when the police officer who interrogates Eva about her relationship with Livia asks her the stock question, Eva, in exasperation, finally replies "we put our fingers up!"

No such gaffe mars **Lianna**: although the furious abandoned husband does ask, his wife replies that "she touches me where you do". **Lianna** comes across like a textbook, a filmed *After you're out or Positively gay* (indeed, the word "lesbians" is never used, except when Lianna's 13-year-old son comes up with it, but his father says he mustn't call his mother that). Lianna, married to a lecturer at a small college, dropped out of university to marry him because it would have been awkward for him to be married to one of his students. There are more ways than the obvious one for male lecturers to oppress female students, and Sayles' politics are aware of feminist issues in a way that Makk's are not. Lianna and her best friend Sandy, another faculty wife, enrol in a night class in child psychology taught by Ruth, blond, close-cropped, a successful career woman, a professor with tenure, on loan from another university. The contrast: Lianna's husband Dick, whose failure to gain tenure rankles with him throughout the film. After one of the quickest seduction scenes I've ever witnessed, Ruth and Lianna fall in love. Here again the absence of the husband, allowing this to happen, is crucial: Dick is at the Toronto Film Festival. When Lianna asks for a separation she is playing right into the faithless Dick's hands (implied: would she have turned to women if Dick had been a loving husband and not the male chauvinist who expects his wife to do research for him?). Dick throws her out, but Ruth too has her position to think of and can't risk Lianna moving in with her. Lianna gets a grotty flat and a job as a supermarket cashier, her children are alienated and finally Ruth leaves to go home to her old love Jan. Not before some classic coming-out scenes: the visit to the lesbian bar ("what if anyone sees me!"), the alienation of normal friends, represented by Sandy, and the affirmation of gay identity, in a charming sequence where the now-trousered Lianna walks along the street and looks at women who



look at her with that I-know-that-you-know smile of secret understanding. This was the one sequence which didn't seem to be an outsider's view like the rest. Finally Lianna has lost everything, if on a more bourgeois, domestic scale than Livia or Eva, but she is able to renew her friendship with Sandy, who comforts her when Ruth leaves. The women can now say "I love you", but only in the context of platonic friendship. At a humanistic level the reaffirmation of friendship rounded off the tale in a satisfying way; relations between women are more complex than the aristotelian division into lovers and not-lovers.

The sheer intensity of relations between women has been Margarethe von Trotta's theme in her last three films, of which we saw the most recent, **Heller Wahn (Labour of Love)**. This is an intensity which rises above lesbian or not-lesbian male vision which can only see women in terms of unqualified sexual preference. Trotta's film is made from a definite feminist standpoint, whereas Sayles is the informed and sympathetic observer, like his objective camera. **Labour of Love** concerns Olga (the successful professor again, lecturing from a feminist stance on the Germanic romantic poet Karoline von Gunderode); although a short-haired blond, Olga is not the predatory dyke but a mother, separated from her nervy theatrical-producer husband and living with an out-of-work Russian pianist Alexej and her teenage son. Already the relationships are less schematic, and Olga is bound by ties of affection and dependence to many people. Her relationships do not come to an end, she cannot like Livia, declare "you don't interest me any more"; she goes to watch her husband's rehearsal when he needs her emotional support, and with him visits his brother in the south of France. There she meets Ruth, the shy

▲The Topp Twins whose latest show, presented at Mercury 2, Auckland, for a short season, once again proved that their exuberant comic talent can be used to focus on serious issues as well as making us laugh. If you get the chance to see them, take it. (Photograph by Gil Hanly). □
Renee

wife of one of her colleagues, Franz, a lecturer in peace studies, and she saves Ruth from suicide. This creates an emotional bond between the two women, as shown in the frequent flashback to the scene where Olga comes upon Ruth in the darkened cellar, heightened only by the use of background music. Ruth paints, but she is only able to do imitations of the masters in black-and-white, as eloquent an image for woman artists as the recurring references to Gunderode's suicide. Franz encourages their friendship, and Ruth begins to come out of her shell, to the point where she and Franz throw a party which has a wonderful sequence in which Olga sings "Will you still love me tomorrow", leaning over the upright piano gazing at Alexej, thus prompting her husband's furious expression. She is joined by Ruth so starts singing to Ruth, whereupon it is Franz' face which is distorted by jealousy, and then Alexej looks up from the keyboard and sees the two women's intense gaze at each other, whereupon his complacent expression is abruptly removed also. Very much foreground music, narrative without words, a narrative told by human expressions.

Olga finally arranges a show of Ruth's coloured paintings, abstracts which she keeps hidden in a cellar. Franz however refuses to let Ruth have this show, saying that it was after her brother's first show that he committed suicide, thus precipitating Ruth's mental unbalance. Franz fears for Ruth's sanity; he would rather have a dependent black-and-white woman than a free woman using all the

possibilities of the spectrum. So he tells Ruth that arrangements have fallen through, and that Olga has shown an interest in Ruth only because he asked her to. Ruth does attempt suicide. As a get-well present a somewhat remorseful Franz (a human, not a total ogre like Sayles's Dick) allows her to go to Egypt with Olga, and it is there that Ruth really comes into her own, telling Egyptian girls about German women artists with all Olga's aplomb. On their way home again at the farmhouse in the south of France there is an ugly scene in which Franz accuses Olga of alienating his wife, and Olga retorts with some home truths (you're afraid because she's more talented than you), and even Olga's fluffy sister-in-law Erika joins battle on the side of the women. Returning to Berlin Olga discovers Alexej has left her because he feels smothered, and Ruth shoots Franz. At her trial all she says is that Olga is her friend and she thanks her for her help, and Olga both looks somewhat alarmed, and yet smiles just slightly.

The film is rich in symbols: Ruth's recurrent visions in black-and-white of her secret self, her cellar-studio (another cellar) and her body swinging from a rope. This contrasts with the simple narrative style of the other two films. Sayles eschews even flashback, except for one sequence in which Lianna observes a (heterosexual) erotic dance which is intercut with her memories of being in bed with Ruth. Jill Forbes wrote in the *Monthly Film Bulletin* that both Olga and Franz are "narcissists feeding off the insecurities of the creative artists they keep as pets"; this fails to distinguish between Franz' (loving) suffocation of Ruth and Olga's making room for Alexej: his grand piano is not relegated to the cellar, and when he asks if he and his noisy Russian friends can rehearse in her flat there is only the shortest hesitation before she says "of course". It is the temperament of the male that cannot take the support Olga can give because of the superiority of her social role: when the roles dependent-protector are reversed men cannot live with it.

We do not either win or lose; in all situations we both win and lose. In losing, Ruth was winning in that she, like many "mad" women, was keeping her personality intact as best she knew how. In shooting her husband, Ruth is still winning, though she loses both him and her freedom. She affirms her friendship for Olga publicly in court where it cannot be denied or negated (the whole truth and nothing but?); the feel-

ing at the end of the film is one of the most optimistic of any of Trotta's films, because a woman has acted for herself.

I don't know if there is a feminist aesthetic in narrative film: it may be simply Trotta's direction of actors that imparts the peculiarly rich emotional colour to her films. Where this film says more to me about relationships between women than either of the films made by men is that Trotta knows the difference between power and strength, and she knows from the inside that women live in a web of emotional interactions and that relating is neither simple nor dialectical – she loves me/she loves me not. As to whether there is a genuine lesbian aesthetic in film, we will just have to wait until Barbara Hammer gets here in September to find out. □

Fiona Mc Alpine.

PAINTING/ CONSTRUCTION by Shona Boys

Shona Boys' current display of eleven painting/constructions at Birkenhead Public Library held in conjunction with Mother's Day shares a focus with an important strand of art in the Women's Movement. The artists "mother" or "mother-type" (not her own) is shown in the roles available to a certain type of middle-class suburban middle-aged-to-elderly woman: domestic "duties", the outings to church, theatre and bowls. These are small works made up of an often curious and lively combination of painted image with miniaturized objects. Initially the works struck me as a kind of series of wittily kitsch feminist folk art icons, particularly those where the woman gazes directly out at the viewer. They have aroused a great deal of interest within the library setting. Children especially love the tiny objects in the works and regularly choose their "favourite mother" – or feel free to criticise the "unfriendly" or the "lazy" mother (in the one image in which she is depicted sunbathing!)

In a text accompanying the display the artist says: "I have made these pictures for you (her mother) for Mother's Day. I am sorry they are so battered and second-hand looking but like you they have seen many-troubled times... I just want to say a thank you for all the washing, cooking, ironing, dusting, sewing, knitting, sweeping, dishes, scrubbing, carrying, picking-up, shopping and now of course all the baby sitting!"

Teaming up the sentiment in the text with the effect of the

works was a little difficult: there was a discrepancy between the text's straight-forward gratitude and the criticism inherent in rigidly limited images. This was conveyed by aspects of the works like the set expression on her face, the predictably narrow range of activities, her taste in clothes and ornaments. In a conversation with Shona Boys I was interested to learn that her "mother" was an amalgam of two "matriarchal" figures from her childhood, women who were rigidly opinionated in a very negative and destructive sense. The caring concerns, the everyday domestic realities of such a person are indeed shown, but revealed also is what *can* be the inhibiting inflexibility of this type of person.

This ambiguity is an important and engaging aspect of these works. The artist obviously enjoys sliding in and out of illusionism, realism and the use of mock-up and real objects. The doll-house effect of many of the works reminded me of a seminal work from the early days of the Women's Art Movement in America: Miriam Schapiro and Sherry Brody's "Doll-House" in the Los Angeles "Womanhouse", a work which also functioned partly as a critique of the constraints of domesticity.

From a purely aesthetic viewpoint the most effective works for me in Boys' display were those where she experimented more subtly with visual ambiguity. Her seated knitting woman for instance had the armchair as a flat cut-out shape glued to the real wallpaper background, the woman's head and hair painted,

her hands in 3-D, her legs of cut-out and painted card, extending forward into space and her "attribute" – fluffy slippers – fluffing out over the frame and into the viewer's space. In this piece the woman wears a real crocheted shawl, an indication, with details like the real patchwork quilt in the woman-in-bed scene, of Shona Boys' concern, shared with other feminist artists, of reclaiming and re-evaluating women's traditional arts. The artist has obviously had great fun with these works, cheekily substituting nails for needles in the knitting scene, giving her woman-in-bed real cotton wool rollers, including a butterfly ornament on the parasol in the sunbathing scene, where the woman is painted with illusionistic daubs of sunblock on her nose and shoulder.

These works were strong in content as a series, if their style, their construction was a little uneven. But it wasn't until speaking with Shona Boys that her reference to the "battered and second-hand" aspect of the works took on more ominous connotations. The set of works, she said, and the text of a book they were originally intended to accompany (*The Scene Strike*) were partly destroyed by her husband. Two works were totally ruined. Apparently the husband felt extreme anger at her involvement with "that silly woman", denounced her choice of topic as "trivial" and "a waste of time". Boys subsequently left her husband and reconstituted as many as possible of the works. I was reminded of New Zealand artist Edith Collier, whose paintings of nudes were burnt by her father



Artwork by Shona Boys.

in 1921. Ghastly that there were seen to be restrictions on subject-matter thought proper for women artists then; totally horrifying that in 1984 the chosen subject-matter of a woman artist can still extract such destructive rage from a man.

The only positive fact to be gleaned from this incident (apart from Shona Boys' own courage and determination and that many of the works have survived) is surely that our emerging visual language, our new woman-cent content in images is vitally significant, that whatever level of stylistic sophistication or cultural intervention these works operate at they can be not only challenging but extremely subversive and threatening to a male-defined society. □ Elizabeth Eastmond

**AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE,
Janet Frame,
Hutchinsons 1984,
\$24.95***

"The future accumulates like a weight upon the past." Thus begins Frame's second volume of auto-biography which follows *To The Is-land*, an exposition of the beauties and terrors of her childhood.

An Angel at my Table deals with her life during the forties and fifties as a young adult – sensitive, insecure and "cruelly innocent" to the ways of the world. As a student at Otago University and Teacher's Training College she revels in the intellectual life but is intensely shy. This deepens her sense of isolation, of being an outsider trying to "learn the language" of normal social discourse.

She allies herself with the poets. "After learning Shelley . . . I announced to myself and to anyone who might be interested that I 'believed' in 'free love' and 'polygamy' – I, grasping the abundance when I was not even in sight of the pittance!"

In 1945, during her probationary year teaching, Frame simply walks out of the classroom when the school inspector arrives. Nearly 21, she is unable to reconcile the grimy (but essential) details of earning a living and doing her writing. She attempts suicide by aspro: it doesn't work. Advised then, (by herself) to give up teaching she spends the next eight years in and out of mental hospitals; suffering not from the disease of mental illness but from the inhuman treatment for it.

Frame writes that she has covered this period of her life in more detail in her book *Faces in the Water*. She claims she was never insane, never even examined, and yet was given electric shock treatment over two



Janet Frame (courtesy Wanganui Newspapers).

hundred times "each the equivalent, in degree of fear, to an execution, and in the process having my memory shredded . . . subjected to proposals to have myself changed by a physical operation, into a more acceptable, amenable, normal person . . ." Winning the Hubert Church Award for best prose for her book of stories *The Lagoon* is all that prevented her from undergoing a leucotomy.

Her friend Nola was not so lucky. "The legacy of her dehumanising change remains no doubt with all those who knew her; I have it with me always."

Frame's struggle to own her Self makes her aware of the losses sustained by others. Her perception of how women especially are separated from their imaginations by domesticity gives the book a feminist sensibility. "I seemed to be a 'born' servant. The knowledge frightened me: I was behaving as my mother had done all the years I had known her, and I was enjoying my role: I could erase myself completely and live only through the feelings of others."

One of the most moving aspects of the book is the account of her relationship with her mother – "For the first time . . . I saw her as a person. . . . What had we done to her, each of us, day after day, year after year, that we had washed away her evidence of self, all the furniture from her own room . . ."

Finally discharged from hospital the author goes to Auckland to

stay with her sister June and family. There she meets Frank Sargeson who invites her to stay in his army hut to work at her writing. It is a rewarding friendship which gives Frame the space to write *Owls Do Cry*; published in 1957, the first book to gain her international attention. Her portrait of Sargeson is revealing and affectionate. However, she "felt constantly hurt by his implied negation of a woman's body". His dislike of "feminine fripperies" "reminded me of my father and his. 'What do you want clothes for? You've got a perfectly good school uniform'."

With Sargeson's support she gains a grant from the Literary Fund to travel overseas to gain "experience". Once more she submits passively to the plans of others. Another journey, a new "destination".

The book is concerned with a series of journeys factual and figurative. As a circle is completed it is taken up again in another form. Lives end and life goes on. A difficult book to write especially when some memories have been shattered by shock treatment. Not a book that produces confidence in mental health experts.

There is nothing obscure about the writing; this gifted author is very clear about the connections and disconnections between her life and her work. Brilliant, sensitive and perceptive it reads as a kind of triumph of timidity and talent.

"Even Prospero . . . had suffered shipwreck and selfwreck; his island was unreachable except through the storm." □

Helen Courtney

**THE PRICE OF SALT,
Claire Morgan,
Naia Press 1984,
\$13.95***

I had to keep reminding myself while I was reading this book that it was published as long ago as 1952. Far from the butch-femme roles of the time, characterised in literature by lesbians with masculine names doomed to a life tragedy, *The Price of Salt* covers many themes strongly relevant to lesbians today. Differences of class and age between lovers, non-monogamy and lesbian mothers are only some of the subjects.

On the whole it works, mainly because of Claire Morgan's skilful writing style. For example, Therese's description of working at the department store articulates the drudgery many women experience:

"It was the waste actions, the meaningless chores that seemed to keep her from doing what she wanted to do, might have done . . . It reminded her of conversations at tables, on sofas, with people whose words seemed to hover over dead, unstirrable things, who never touched a string that played." (page 5)

The Price of Salt appeals to the romantic (in the positive sense of the word) in every lesbian without falling into the trap of building a sugary utopia for dykes where we're all supposed to live in perfect and unending harmony.

" . . . If she simply asked, she thought, Carol would let her sleep tonight in the same bed with her. She wanted more than that, to kiss her, to feel their bodies next to each other's. Therese thought of the two girls she had seen in the Palermo bar. They did that she knew, and more. And would Carol suddenly thrust her way in disgust, if she merely wanted to hold her in her arms? And would whatever affection Carol now had for her vanish in that instant? A vision of Carol's cold rebuff swept her courage clean away. It crept back humbly in the question, couldn't she ask simply to sleep in the same bed with her?

"Carol, would you mind –"

"Tomorrow we'll go to the stockyards," Carol said at the same time, and Therese burst out laughing." (page 177)

Therese and Carol have faults and their relationship goes through a succession of ups and downs. At times both women's actions could only be described as

stupid by the reader removed from the situation but the success of this book is that like in a good film you want to tell the characters not to do this or that because you care about them.

I won't ruin the suspense by describing the ending; it's enough to say that at various stages it's tempting to flick to the back page! The afterword from the author is also very interesting as it places the novel in the context of its time.

I found this book enjoyable for lots of reasons. It's worth having your own copy if only for herstorical interest and the numerous passages worth quoting.

The movie rights for **The Price of Salt** were sold but the film was never made. Perhaps its not too late?□

Chris Atmore.



Katherine Forrest (by Tee Corinne)

DAUGHTERS OF A CORAL DAWN, science fiction by Katherine V. Forrest. Naiad Press 1984, \$13.95*

One of the things I remember very clearly that Miriam Saphira used to exclaim about was the woeful lack of positive books for lesbians, about lesbians. Well, Miriam, here is another one! Not only is it positive, it is also instructive – both in exploring in an easy-to-understand manner the formation of a totally female society, and being reasonably explicit sexually.

Katherine V. Forrest is the lesbian author of this book, which is her second, and press release from Naiad says that it was so popular in America that their first printing of 8,000 was sold out in under three months, and the second printing of 8,000 sold out almost as rapidly. What that says to me is that Miriam is right (astute woman that she is) and that many lesbians are starved for books that they can identify with and feel comfortable in reading.

Daughters of a Coral Dawn begins with our introduction to Mother, who "looked like one of the Sirens of Earth legend. Glossy dark silken hair reached to her voluptuous hips and covered can-

taloupe-sized breasts." Mother is a Vernan, an "inexperienced child of 45," and is smuggled to Earth by father, where she promptly gets pregnant because she wouldn't take the pill "that hasn't been able to be perfected in all these three hundred years."

Since "Vernans do not require an interminable nine months for gestation" because "mother gives birth in her fifth month – to nine girls; Father disappears into a black hole when they are 16, but they're not unduly upset, since he hasn't really been part of their parenting anyway.

All nine of them turn out to be scholastically and professionally excellent, and Mother opts to educate them at home rather than run the risk of nosy questions about her girls. Their livelihood is accounted for by the investment counselling Daughter Isis gives to Mother; with trepidation, the by now young women go out into the world, worrying about hiding their gifts. But they don't have to worry, they're scarcely noticed. "...we had one overwhelming advantage; we were women," says Minerva, the daughter who is the historian who documents this saga.

The daughters, and Mother, embark on a plan of causing a female population explosion. They're successful at that, but not at breaking the stranglehold of the patriarchy. So they literally opt out – their space ship Amelia Earhart is secretly built, and takes about 4000 women into space to find a world of their own. Which they do. And that's really where the story begins. **Daughters of a Coral Dawn** is clearly written by a woman who is sympathetic to her environment, who knows that "girls can do anything" and who takes some delight in saying so. Recommended for a good light lesbian read.□

Sandi Hall

THE CLEVER PRINCESS Diana Coles, Sheba 1983, \$7.95*

This is a book for children aged about 8-12 yrs. It is unusual because it has a feminist viewpoint. I found that the female characters were presented more strongly than the male characters.

Arete (a daughter of a rich king) is brought up by a kind woman and she becomes very clever. When she is married off to an evil magician and locked up in a cellar, she is given three wishes by a woman. Arete uses the wishes and stops the magician from killing her. I enjoyed reading this book a lot.

It is like a fairy tale except that

the Princess does what she wants and not what anyone else wants unless it is the law.□

Nicola Jackson.

DESIRE: The politics of Sexuality, Editors:

Ann Snitow,

Christine Stansell

Sharon Thompson,

Virago 1983, \$19.95*

"As we create masculinity and femininity, so we make love. Sexuality is a construct."

There is great diversity in the contributions in this volume; it is divided into six sections with each piece loosely based around its section's heading: Current Controversies; The Capitalist Paradox: Expanding and Contracting Pleasures; Sexual Revolutions; The Institution of Heterosexuality; Domination, Submission and the Unconscious; On Sexual Openness. The writings range from poetry to discursive prose to personal reflections. Their link is a commitment to discovering "the complexities of motive, the interrelation of private and public experience, the unconscious attitudes we all have".

I see three major strengths. First, the creative passages which touch a raw nerve, trigger a switch of recognition. "A girl and her dog," (Alix Kates Schulman) offers a delightful glimpse into the sexual uncoverings of a young girl. "They're always curious" (Irena Klepfisz), sums up the poignancy and humour of living alone in a world of couples. "Movie" (Nancy Harrison) is an awesome, chilling account of the dark side of a daughter's vision of her father.

Second, the historical perspectives help make the links between personal (chosen?) sexual life clear. "Charity Girls and City Pleasures: Historical Notes on Working Class Sexuality 1880-1920," (Kathy Peiss), shows clearly the middle class nature of research material available to mainstream feminist publicity. "Feminism, Men and Modern Love: Greenwich Village 1900-1925" (Ellen

Kay Trimmerger), examines the failure of three couples to enact a new relation between the sexes. "Capitalism and Gay Identity," (John D'Emilio) is an eloquent, convincing treatise on the twentieth century visibility of the gay community. "Hearts of Darkness" (Barbara Omolade) explores the impact of white prejudice on black sexuality.

Third, the writing which deals with sexual issues confronting the movement now after two decades of public posturing, debate, theorising and pain asks to what extent female sexuality has been lost, or at best hidden, amidst the politicization of passion and sexual choice. "Is the Gaze Male" (E Ann Kaplin) is a provocative discussion of the erotic nature of violence and pornography. "What we're rolling around in bed with: Sexual silences in Feminism" by Amber Hollibaugh and Cherríe Moraga frames questions about and opens for discussion the sexual impulses of the authors, lesbian lovers, and in so doing touches on aspects of domination-submission. In "The New Feminism of Yin and Yang" Alice Echols looks at the simplicity of some arguments about feminist morality and examines fantasy, repression and sexual choice.

The pivot of the book for me is Adrienne Rich's "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence". In her persuasive prose she establishes for both heterosexual and lesbian women a social frame of reference, affirming the fluidity of female sexuality through history. Above all, she recognises the absence of choice in women's lives as the greatest oppressor of sexuality and therefore of life. Her vision is sweeping and her analysis encompasses the complexity of the tasks faced by individuals who wish to end "the power men everywhere wield over women".

The editors offer no answers to questions posed by this collection. They hope by offering the chance to examine desire in as many forms as possible "to move the dialectic one step forward". Readers of this volume should be left with this question: to what extent has my sexuality been determined by the social, emotional and intellectual patterns of patriarchy and paternalism? I am left asking a further question: where is the material that examines the sexual nature of the mother/baby or mother/child bond? I found much material on the new life given to sexual life by the advent of contraception and legal abortion. Can we not now, with the maturity of this freedom of choice at our disposal, reexamine the sexual im-



Diana Coles.

pulse of reproduction? Nonetheless, this is a valuable book and for those of us who believe ourselves to have a suitable personal solution to the feminist dilemmas discussed in it, Adrienne Rich wryly reminds us "that heterosexuality, like motherhood, needs to be recognised as a political institution – even or especially, by those individuals who feel they are, in their personal experience, the precursors of a new social relation between the sexes". □

Lexie Byrt

* available from Broadsheet.

**THE SEXUAL DYNAMICS
OF HISTORY, Men's
Power, Women's
Resistance, London
Feminist History Group,
Pluto 1983, \$14.95***

Here is the product of collective thinking and action by a group of eleven "feminist historians rather than students of women's history" aiming to write a useful book "for all women interested in feminism and our past, not just academics". A preface provides helpful hints for the do-it-yourself historian, and a postscript suggests how to start a feminist history group. The overall style is straightforward although some articles are more riveting and informative than others, and I thought some trimming, shaping and colouring were needed in all of Part three: "Women and public life" and in the first piece on rape in Part one: "Sexual Violence". (Parts two and four are: "Fitted for her place" – ie, domesticity – and "Sexuality" respectively). But I liked the way several authors painstakingly explained how they came to their particular area of study: "I'm an historian by default rather than by intention," says Blunden.

The authors emphasise and try to clarify the connections between past and present feminist struggles. Jeffreys' "Sex reform and anti-feminism in the 1920s" is a brilliant exposition of the anxiety of the "progressives" to hymn the praises of the ecstasies of heterosexual intercourse and motherhood, thus eliminating both the "prudes" and earlier feminist critiques of male sexual behaviour. She comments on the politically "very strange bedfellows" among the reformers "including Alexandra Kollantai and Sylvia Pankhurst along with the high Tories".

We can apply this excellent analysis to the history of some of the more unlikely fellows in SPUC's bed, and to understanding why Jeffreys says: "... it is necessary to question whether

sexual response within the power relationship that is the heterosexual unit, can be positive and liberating for women".

This book of readings lacks the high-gloss finish that may be reasonably (but not inevitably) expected from salaried academics with back-up resources, because the contributors consisted of women marginal to, or right outside academia. I'm not qualified to comment on whether theirs is "good" or "bad" history, but as a feminist sociologist I'm fascinated by the successful collective process of editing, writing and discussion which requires so much commitment and patience. **Broadsheet** has proved for over a decade that group decision-making is productive and influential, whether or not all the painful and time-consuming differences are ever completely resolved.

To a careful reader, the careful introduction to **Sexual Dynamics** echoes unfinished (and familiar) debate: "... the pivotal social conflict ... (is) ... between women and men" / "... patriarchy ... (is) ... a force equal to and intertwined with capitalism". However, the group writes: "... we are all trying to provide feminist answers to feminist questions", adding that as feminist historians they "... challenge the exclusive concentration on class ... dominant(ing) much British social history".

Now, let us take care here. New Zealand concepts of class are, for the most part, rudimentary and unproblematic. As yet, we can't really challenge anything, except the lack of our own social history (and indeed other social science research) and shaky assumptions about our particular class structure.

Actually, NZ women are rapidly correcting these deficiencies – eg the **Herstory** diaries. A welcome contribution in this book is Macdonald's "must-read" discussion of women migrants intrepidly leaving poverty and dreary domestic work for a new world here – featuring patriarchy, poverty and dreary domesticity.

Incidentally, I do wonder if our two bold sisters on the fetching cover illustration are going to tie that offensive joker to a tree. □

Margot Roth.

**TOP GIRLS, by Caryl
Churchill, directed by
Sarah Pierse at Theatre
Corporate, June 1984.**

Marlene has been promoted managing director of a glossy employment agency. Celebrating in an opening scene reminiscent of Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party", her

fantasy guests are women from history or legend who've played male roles – travellers, a soldier of Christian morality, even a Pope – and got away with it, at least for a while. But most of them have been deprived of or given up their children; and the last guest to arrive is the patriarchal archetype Patient Griselda, who promised to obey her husband in everything, and lovingly forgave his sadistic "test" of telling her her children are dead and then returning them to her years later. Throughout this very funny, painful, superbly timed and controlled scene the brittle and laconic Marlene is the only one who doesn't burst out with her own story. There's a focus on the character of Isabella Bird, the Victorian English traveller, whose warmest relationship is with her stay-at-home sister.

The colours in this opening scene are cold perspex black, grey, purple, hard yellow. The agency set is again cold black, brightened but not enlivened with red. This range of generally hard or aggressive colours and sterile surfaces is used for most of the play.

Top Girls is full of women who want change; they're achievers or beginners, competent executives, ambitious liars, bewildered or male-identifying adolescents. The only path available to any of them is mapped out by and crowded with men: competitive, exploitative, money-oriented, anti-female. Nothing's changed in 2,000 years. Really Isabella Bird had about the best of it. Feminists are carving another path entirely, but the play's characters are mostly without female solidarity and pride.

Marlene's central relationship is with her stay-at-home sister Joyce and adolescent daughter Angie, whom Joyce has brought up as her own. We first meet Angie as a lonely, hostile, confused, "retarded" 16-year-old who wants to kill her mother. We wonder if it's fantasy when she claims that her successful auntie in London is her real mother.

When Angie runs off to Marlene we understand who it is she wants to kill. Angie, too, wants a different life, but Marlene's telling final line of this scene is "she's a bit funny, she's a bit thick – she's not going to make it." Angie is at the bottom of the female heap. The play, though not its characters, questions why we are pushed into a heap, with some "top girls" (or birds, or ladies – never women) and some suffocated. Marlene admires Margaret Thatcher – "I'd give her a job", "I believe in the individual". She despises those who are "lazy, stupid,



Caryl Churchill.

frightened". But Joyce knows these terms describe Angie, and asks, what about her? These two are the victims of Marlene's "success".

When the final flashback scene opens, relations between Angie and her two mothers are warm and sweet. Marlene is visiting home after 9 years. The kitchen is colourful and messy. Marlene wears a warm beige. Joyce resents Marlene's escape from their depressed rural background; she's resigned – "How could I have left?" – but not accepting. Angie, half-drunk on a swallow of whisky, overhears that Marlene is her birth mother. Blundering into the kitchen, she has the play's final line: "Frightening – frightening." The lights are a cold mauve before the final blackout.

Renée's Setting the Table has awakened us to the symbolic power of the table as a focus for women's lives. Tables are a central image in **Top Girls** too: dinner table for feasting; kitchen table, centre of richly chaotic living; desks, at which women chat, confide, grab snacks, assert power, desks which act as a barrier between women; and Angie's cave-like refuge from the pressure of her secret parentage is an upturned table.

Working with some admirable performers, first-time director Sarah Pierse has achieved a real triumph. The final scene especially, between Marlene (Bridget Armstrong) and Joyce (Sylvia Rands) is very exciting theatre indeed.

Feminists have been angered that once again this women's play has been relegated to the studio space; however, theatre director Roger McGill says a return season of "Top Girls" is possible later this year, and is likely to play in the main theatre. □

Margaret Blay

Contact Broadsheet for the list of players and production workers. *Top Girls* is \$10.95 (Methuen)

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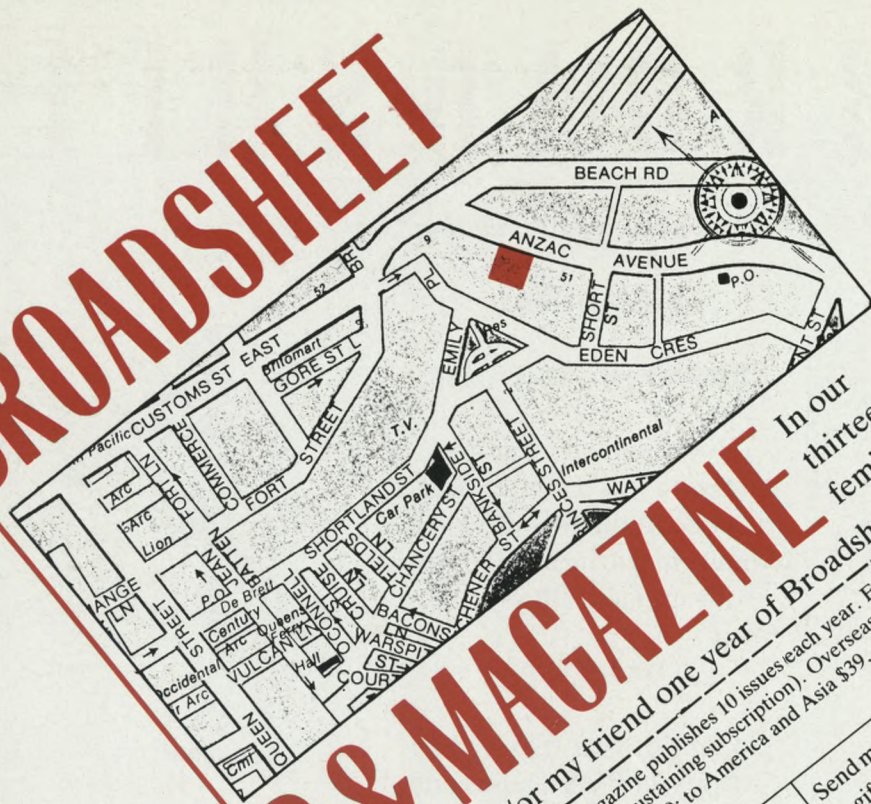
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