

DOCTOR WHO KILLED HIS WIFE IS BACK IN THE SURGERY

301.41205

BRO

BROADSHEET

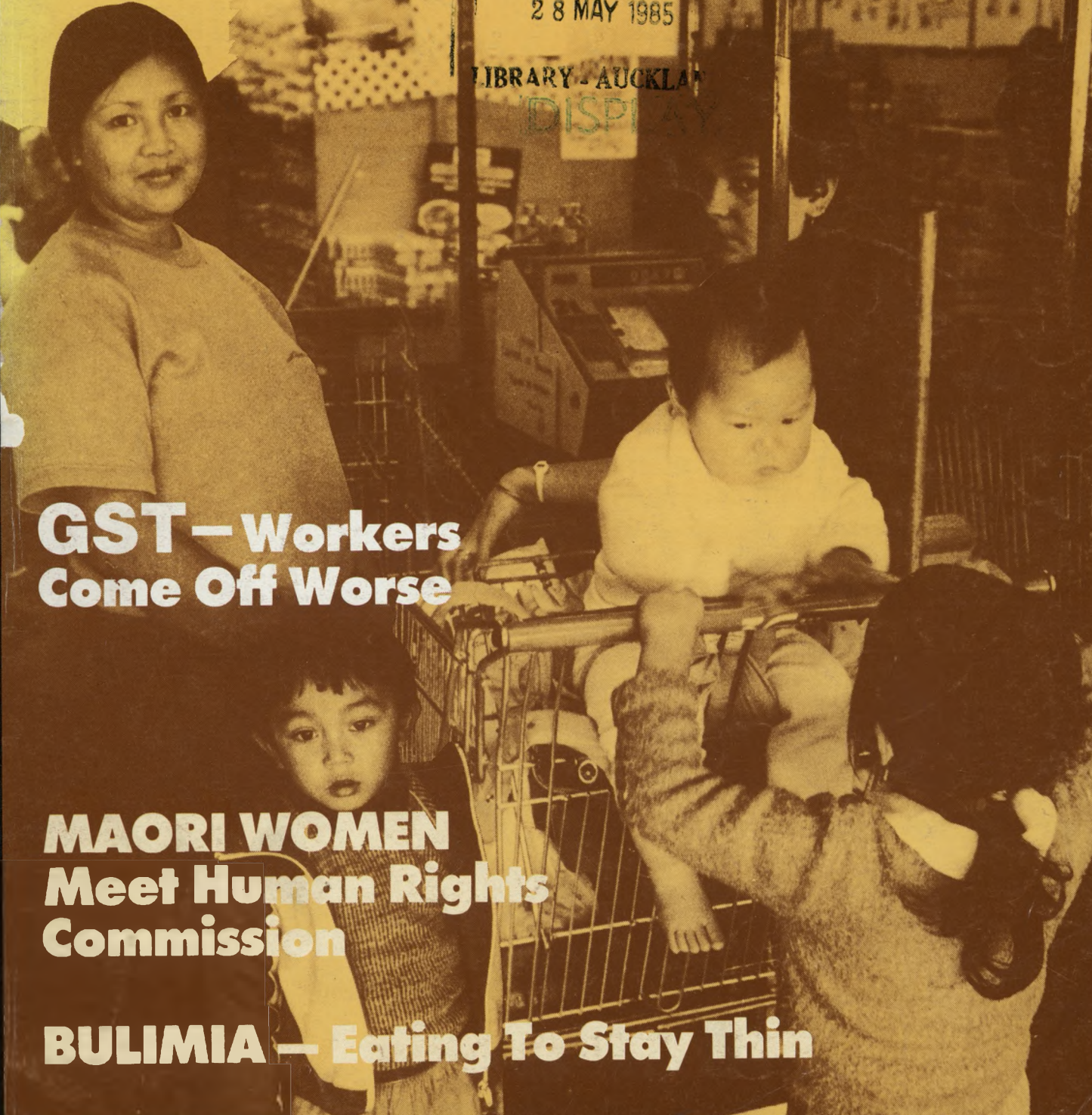
NEW ZEALAND'S FEMINIST MAGAZINE
THIRTEENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION
JUNE 1985 ISSUE 130 \$2.50

TEACHERS COLLEGES

28 MAY 1985

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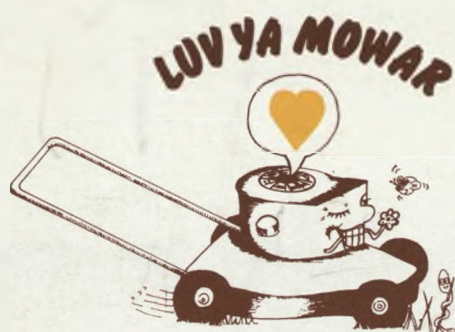
DISPLAY

A black and white photograph of a woman standing next to a shopping cart. Inside the cart, a baby is sitting, and a young child is standing. The woman is looking towards the camera. The background shows a library or bookstore setting with shelves and a sign.

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BROADSHEET

FORM ON PAGE 48



*A telecommunications student adjusts an automatic telephone exchange.
Photo from Tribune.*

CONTENTS

FEATURES

GOODS & SERVICES TAX	13
BULIMIA	26
LESBIANS OUTSIDE THE LAWS	30
A DISAGREEABLE FEMINIST — DALE SPENDER	32
THE GREAT HUMAN RIGHTS SHOE SALE	38

POETRY

To Whichever Man It May Be	25
----------------------------	----

ARTS

REVIEWS Earthquake Town/Ground Work/Lesbians: As We See Ourselves/From Menstruation to Broadcasting/Wanjiku/Waxing Moon	44
---	----

REGULARS

LETTERS and FRONTING UP	2
HIT LIST	3
BEHIND THE NEWS Small Maternity Units/Gay Rally/PPTA/245-T	6
ON THE SHELF	36
WHAT'S NEW	41
DIRECTORY	42
CLASSIFIED	48

COVER Photo by Gil Hanly

BROADSHEET COLLECTIVE Sandra Coney, Lyn Crossley, Sandi Hall, Heather McLeish, Claire-Louise McCurdy, Athina Reay, Trish Taylor, Jenny Rankine, Judith Ammon.

THESE WOMEN WORKED ON THIS ISSUE Leonie Child, Jess Hawk Oakenstar, Catherine Lee, Diana Nicholson, Erollyn, Kim Grant, Alisha Popevis, Gay Stanton, Pat Rosler, Sharon Alston.

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ZIONISM

Dear Sisters,
In an effort to assist Rebecca Judd (*Broadsheet*, April) define 1) Zionism 2) Palestinian propaganda, I write, hoping to clear any previously held misconceptions. Beirut 1982, courtesy of the Israeli Defence Forces, is the best example to take.

Zionism is the "ideology" which states that by incinerating women and children with phosphorous bombs; destroying hospitals; withholding food and water from a besieged city and murdering 25,000 Semitic people – the Arabs in Lebanon – peace will come to Galilee.

Palestinian propaganda comprises the films, photos and personal accounts given by American, French, British and other foreign journalists who were brave enough to stay in Beirut during the summer of 1982 in order to witness Zionism in its purest form and substance.

Two things need to be said to complete Rebecca's letter. The first is that the atrocities of the Israeli Defence Forces have done away with the need for Palestinian "propaganda"; and the second is that after killing 25,000 Semites, I don't think the Israelis can call others anti-Semitic, if they still know the meaning of having a conscience.

And lastly I wish to congratulate *Broadsheet* on allowing a platform for all opinions. After all we are sisters, are we not, Rebecca?

Leila Khalil
Auckland

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Rebecca Judd writes (*Broad-
GAY RALLY*

LETTERS ...

sheet, April 1985) "Since Hitler and the holocaust it is no longer acceptable to attack Jews covertly". So true. Any criticism of Jews and/or Israel can be construed to be anti-semitic, thus effectively nullifying the criticism, however factual it may be. I think of the human rights of the Palestinian people and more recently, Lebanese, in this regard.

I felt J. Taylor (*Broadsheet*, January 1985) was justified in comparing the oppression of NZ Jewish feminists with Palestinian Arabs in Israel, not because she was seeking to "arouse hostility against Jews" quote R. Judd, but because she was exposing some of the injustices that exist in Israel, and which have also been worrying Amnesty International and the International Court of Jurists lately. Jewish feminists and NZ feminists should be joining those within Israel who are seeking a more just society free from the oppression of one race by another and alerting readers to the plight of the Palestinians who have been subjected to mass expulsion from their land and subjugation of those who remained.

By the way I am happy to sustain my subscription to *Broadsheet*, without suggestions on whose letters you choose to print.

Janfrie Wakim
Auckland

Gil Hanly

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Rebecca Judd's letter (April 85) contained many myths. It is not and never has been PLO policy to "drive the Jews into the sea". At one time the PLO talked of a democratic state where the Jews already in Palestine/Israel would live as equals with the Moslems and Christians. The PLO now advocates a two state solution; a Palestinian state alongside pre-1967 Israel.

In 1985 Member of Parliament Rabbi Meir Kahane is openly calling for the mass expulsion of the entire Palestinian population from Israel. It appears the desire to "drive the Arabs out" is not uncommon among the Jewish public in Israel. The Dahaf opinion poll institute did a survey in July 1984 which showed that 15% (fifteen) of those questioned said that "the Palestinians must be expelled" and 43.5 percent said that "the Palestinians should be allowed to stay in Israel but without any rights including the right to vote". It would appear from this survey (reported in the Israeli Davar newspaper 3/8/84) that 60 percent of the urban Jewish population believe that the best solution to the "Palestinian problem" is either expulsion or apartheid. The irony of the Zionist claim that "they are being threatened with expulsion by the PLO" will not be lost on those who recall that the Israelis have already expelled the vast majority of the indigenous Palestinians.

Donna Jansen
Auckland

DEBENDOX

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Thanks for the excellent article on Debendox. I have been interested in the abuses of the drug companies for some time. Despite this interest I must admit that prior to seeing your article I erred on the side of believing the propaganda of the establishment that Debendox was suitable and safe as a drug for treating nausea of

pregnancy, although I have never prescribed it. I would appreciate it greatly if you could send me a reference list for the article as I am interested in pursuing the issue further.

Dr Ben Gray
Waitara

Ed note: The reference list used by Christine Bird in writing the article on Debendox in the May issue is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to *Broadsheet*, P.O. Box 5799, Auckland.

RACIST RUGBY

Dear *Broadsheet*,
I urge a girlcott for all those organisations that withdraw their support or patronage from the NZRFU and rugby clubs.

We should be supporting the organisations that oppose apartheid and buying their products or using their services – watch for press statements.

Judy Pickard
Hamilton

FROM THE FAR SOUTH

Dear Collective,
I see from the End of Decade Grants List that *Broadsheet* have a \$1,000 Project Grant for a commemorative issue. Congratulations! The Herstory Exhibition got one too, I trust you will have noticed. We here in Dunedin feel it is essential that the Exhibition be evaluated, mentioned and photographed as it is a particularly effective and early uncovering of NZ Herstory. It involved a lot of extremely intensive and time consuming work in 1975 (research, make-up, photo-enlarging and mounting etc. etc.). As you know many of the Dunedin Collective for Woman members who worked on the exhibition have now moved into their own sphere-of-interest-prominence. Jocelyn Harris, still a tireless anti-sexism in universities fighter and super role model as lecturer at English Department, University of Otago. Pauline Neale whose creative hand is behind many non-sexist childrens books – and non-racist! She is now in Wellington. Adrienne Martyn, as a feminist and artist whose special field is still photography is often all over New Zealand. Fern Mercie whose drive kept the project going and whose



feminist enthusiasm made it into an outstanding womens resource. I could go on — Cathy Fitzgerald, Andrea Levesque Olsen who alone would require a page on her fantastic achievements, but it would take too long.

Dunedin actually has a tremendous herstory — first exploration of sexism in school readers, first public enquiry into attitudes to abortion, first feminist bookshop, first and second *Herstory Diary* — which was a direct result of the Herstory Exhibition, also a flourishing lesbian community in 1973! This Dunedin contribution does tend to get overlooked as "below the Karangahape Road," (as a staunch Auckland woman once described it) and thus not too relevant. If this turns me into a chauvinist, all the better! That kind of woman-oriented chauvinism, I will always verbally support.

So as a loyal Dunedin Collective for Woman member since late 1972 (the collective started in 1971) I would be grateful if *Broadsheet* would review the exhibition.

Yoka Neuman
Dunedin

STAG PARTY

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Your correspondents Josephine Mazire-McLean and Jill Snoswell are to be commended for the vigour and commitment of their attack upon myself in your March 1985 issue.

Although their English is a little confused, they appear to

be attacking my right to have written the screenplay for *Heart of the Stag*, the recent New Zealand feature film on the taboo subject of incest.

Alas, the two ladies concerned are not to be commended for the accuracy of their research. Had they taken the trouble to telephone me (I'm in the book) or even to check with your own magazine, they would have discovered that the very first thing I did upon receiving the commission for this screenplay was (are they ready for this?) to visit *Broadsheet* magazine, where I obtained permission to research in your excellent files on incest, spent a considerable amount of money on books about incest recommended to myself by *Broadsheet*, and finally spent several hours talking with the magazine's resident expert on the subject, Miriam Saphiro.

I must add that the information so obtained was central to my construction of the characters and situations portrayed in the film in a sincere attempt to throw a hard and accurate light upon an appalling problem which is, alas, all too prevalent in New Zealand. And I am happy to say that reviewers throughout the world and in New Zealand, including your own Sandra Coney, have been kind enough to praise the film for its power and honesty of intention.

Fortunately, I cannot claim to have written from first-hand experience.

May I congratulate your two lady correspondents upon the sobriquet "Soft Porn Prince" which they awarded me; and

seek their permission to reproduce it upon my letterhead and as a one-off bumper-sticker.

But woe and alas; once more the ladies concerned are somewhat awry in their accuracy. A careful reading of the piece concerned — actually a chapter from an unpublished novel written in 1969 — will reveal that, notwithstanding their assertion to the contrary, there is absolutely no reference anywhere in it to the male's cock being like a war veteran or a pneumatic drill. Indeed, had they been in touch with me, I would have been delighted to have told them that I am an implacable foe of the whole RSA-veteran power push in this country and would never use such a simile, on principle.

Finally, may I suggest to the ladies concerned that the piece of writing they object to strenuously was actually pro-feminist and somewhat ahead of its time for 1969 in that the lady concerned was on top in the dominant position for both of the acts of sexual communion therein described.

I trust that in the interests of fairness and accuracy you will see fit to publish this letter.

Yours sincerely,
Neil Illingworth

Copies to:
Metro Magazine
The New Zealand Herald
The New Zealand Press Council
The New Zealand Writer's Guild (Northern Branch)
The Sunday News
And sundry influential journalists in the supposedly male dominated Media, including

the feminist-dominated Listener magazine.

Ed Note: In the interests of accuracy though not the edification of our readers, the "pneumatic drill" image appears on page 63 of *Men's Journal* in the short story "Hot Peak of Summer" by Neil Illingworth: "Put up or shut up, because he's going up and down today like a bloody pneumatic drill and he doesn't know where he's at".

We can find no direct reference in the article directly calling the "hero's" penis a "war veteran", however, we can find a number of military similes: "a twenty one gun salute"... "fire both barrels" and "hard as a rock and reporting for duty."

Mr Illingworth did confirm that in 1970 he was editor of two issues of *His*, a short-lived forerunner of *Men's Journal*. He rang later to make sure we recorded that he was "nominal editor" only, responsible for the feature pages. The publisher, he said, was responsible for the "tits and bums".

We would also like to make plain that using our research files, or buying books from our bookshop, or talking with feminists does not constitute a feminist seal of approval.

And last, Sandra Coney does not want to go out to lunch with you.

Copies to:
Women Against Pornography,
Ministry of Women's Affairs,
Self Defence Teachers Network,
Women's Appointment File,
RSA,
Six Angry Women

FRONTING UP

WHERE WE ARE

Our bookshop is now situated at 485-7 Karangahape Road, Auckland. We will be open from 10am — 5.30pm. Late night Thursday till 9pm and Leonie will open the shop from 10am — 1pm Saturday. The phone number for the bookshop is 398-895. *Broadsheet* magazine will continue to operate temporarily from the first floor of the Gane Building, 43 Anzac Ave, Auckland. Phone 794-751. Our PO Box number remains the

same, 5799, Wellesley Street, Auckland, NZ.

DEADLINES

Deadline for September is 10 July.

STUFFING

Stuffing of the next issue will be on Saturday 25th May at 43 Anzac Ave. We would appreciate more help with stuffing from anyone who can spare some time.

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bring a selection of books to your school by request. We also offer 10% discount to students and beneficiaries. Please phone Trish 766-204 or Athina 796-397.

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timetre, quarter page \$70, half page \$140, third page \$97 and a full page \$260. Inside covers \$360 and outside back covers \$720. We offer generous discounts for contract ads of 5 months or more. Contact Trish.

APOLOGY

To Aorewa McLeod who wrote about The Lure of Romantic Novels in our May issue. Through a series of oversights, her name was left off the article.

AIDS Support Network
Auckland office Ph. 33124

COMMENT

WOMEN AND FEAR: PROFESSIONALS AND THE ABUSE OF WOMEN



Leigh Minnitt;
killed by her doctor husband on May 15th, 1980.

NZ women are learning that professional organisations with the power to register (allow to work through a practising certificate) their members are not going to protect women from violent and abusive men. Both the medical and the legal professions have recently allowed men with convictions for extreme and violent behaviour to continue to work.

The *NZ Herald* 3.5.85 reports that David Minnitt, who killed his wife in 1980, is to be "given another chance" and allowed to practice as a doctor again. The same edition reports that Dr Eugene Sherry, convicted of the gang rape of a nurse, is also to have his application for a practising certificate considered.

Bruce Grierson was convicted in 1983 of assault, threatening to kill and burglary. He had attacked his 84-year-old mother-in-law

and his daughter after bursting through the glass door of their home. Grierson conducted his own defence and insisted that it was a case of mistaken identity, although he admitted he had been there earlier. The consultant psychiatrist called by the defence, Dr Roger Culpan, said Grierson was suffering from "intermittent explosive disorder, coupled with partial amnesia." People with Grierson's disorder were prone to outburst in response to "quite trivial provocation". This was held to be the truth of the matter.

In 1984 Grierson was brought before the NZ Law Society and was fined but not disbarred from practice.

Minnitt was actually charged with murdering his wife. He was convicted of the lesser charge of manslaughter. Manslaughter in this instance was the intentional kil-

ling of another in circumstances which would constitute murder apart from the presence of mitigating circumstances such as provocation. Minnitt's conviction on manslaughter rather than murder caused much controversy at the time.

A man who shot his wife at point blank range is now to be reinstated into a position of trust in our society, a position which will involve him in dealing with the medical and emotional problems of women. Women in our society have a right to be protected from men such as David Minnitt.

Some women in the community are going to be forced to deal with these men. Some of their clients may have been raped, raped within marriage, sexually abused, assaulted or attacked. Women cannot expect help from men whose attitudes have been so clearly expressed in violence against women.

These men are getting a "second chance". None of them received severe sentences for their crimes. Minnitt got four years for manslaughter and actually served two years seven months. Sherry served six months and Grierson got a large fine and periodic detention. Contrast this with the "second chance" of their victims: dead, emotionally damaged for life, serving their own life sentence.

Women who commit crimes of violence, whatever the provocation, are not likely to get such lenient treatment, they do not get a "second chance". Women who injure or kill their children do not get them back. The Maw sisters in the UK who killed their violent and abusive father after he

tried to kill one of them got lengthy sentences. No allowance was made for the terrible treatment their father had given them and their mother was also "blamed" for not leaving him.

The original sentences given these men demonstrates the attitudes of the legal system to violence against women; it doesn't matter. The decision by the NZ Medical Council and the NZ Law Society is further example of the misogyny of the system. Clearly the registration system is designed to protect the professions and not the clients. Doctors who fiddle the benefit system and lawyers who take trust money can expect much harsher treatment.

Maori, Polynesian, working class men don't get second chances in our system. The victims don't get a second chance, but professional men do. Women who want to protest can write to the Medical Council, Box 156 Wellington, The NZ Law Society, Box 5041, Wellington. □

by Sarah Calvert and
Fiona Bolwell

Ed Note: The trial of David Minnitt for the killing of his wife was covered in the *Broadsheet* of November 1980. In her article Anne Else discussed how the legal concept of "provocation" works in men's favour and why Minnitt received only a four year sentence for his crime. In the March 1984 issue of *Broadsheet*, Stephanie Knight discussed the Grierson case in her article: Murder — The Ultimate Discrimination. Both these issues of *Broadsheet* are still available from PO Box 5799 Auckland.

HIT LIST

DIVE MAGAZINE'S DISGRACEFUL CALENDAR

In our November Hit List, we targetted *Dive* magazine's 1985 underwater calendar which featured this sadistic and misogynist image on its cover.

In *Dive*'s November issue letters were published from a Hamilton and an Auckland woman protesting at the advert for the calendar which they described as "offensive", "boorish" and "sexist".

Dive editor, Rob Lahood's response, published on the magazine's letters page, explained that "Most of our readers will realise that our calendar advertisement is intended to be humorous...." though he was sorry to have upset any readers.

Curiously, or provocatively, in this issue Lahood ran the ad opposite the women's letters. When I spoke to him recently, he explained he ran the ad in that position "to explain what it was all about."

The ad appeared again in *Dive*'s January and March issues because, Lahood said, the magazine had a "commercial commitment" to pursue sales of the calendar as it represented "a huge financial outlay". In the March issue there were yet more protesting letters from Hamilton, and one with 28 signatures from Wellington.

Lahood's response to all these objections illustrates the perniciousness of the male liberal standpoint. The women, he says, have "got a point", he "respects their view" so is quite happy to publish their letters (though he hasn't published all letters received on this subject), but he will not stop publishing the ad, or selling the calendar, or give any commitment that he wouldn't do a similar thing in the future, because he doesn't agree with the women's opinions. He still contends that the ad is "funny" and that what makes it "funny" is that "no one expects people to be treated like that."

He says this style of "humour" follows an English model where "humour is based on someone else's misfortune". He says that there were two responses to the

calendar, the first that the cover misrepresented what was inside the calendar which was straight underwater shots; the second, that all the pages of the calendar should have been like the cover.

Fifty percent of skuba divers are women and they're serious about their sport. In early April diver Rosemary Keating made front page news when she survived 18 hours adrift in Cook Strait after she was separated from her fellow diver. Level-headed Rosemary used the diving distress signal, holding her knife up to catch the sun, in an

attempt to attract the attention of ferries and passing boats. She kept her buoyancy compensator fully inflated for support, tried to keep her hands and feet in the water for warmth, and eventually kicked her way back to Lyall Bay.

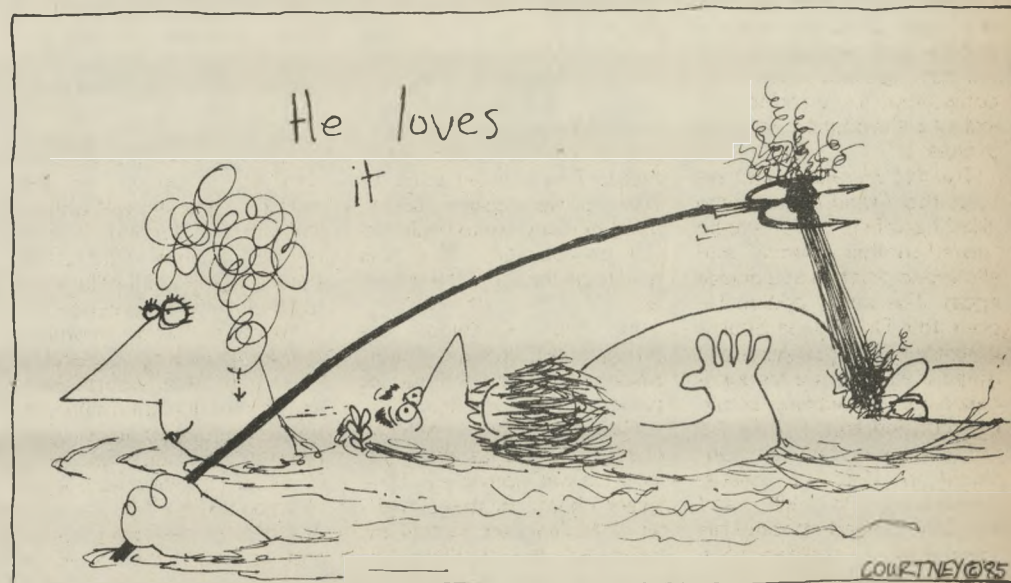
Such female resourcefulness makes *Dive* magazine's victimised, anguished diver even more insulting.

Unfortunately the Human Rights Commission can do nothing about sexist advertising of this type. While the Race Relations Act's Section 9a does

allow complaints for ads which would incite racial hatred of a group, the human Rights Commission Act has no parallel clause. The commission suggests women address complaints about insulting advertising to the advertiser, the manufacturer of the product and the editor of the publication. In this case, these three are all the same person — Rob Lahood — and he's doing nothing.

So, this one's for you Ron. We hope you split your sides.

Sandra Coney



BEHIND THE NEWS

REPRIEVE FOR SMALL MATERNITY UNITS

When *Broadsheet* published in its October issue the contents of a "leaked" report showing small maternity units are safe, groups fighting to save the units from extinction were given important ammunition. JUDY LARKIN outlines a success story.

Auckland's small maternity hospitals are staying open. How did it happen? The Auckland Hospital Board's chairperson, Dr Frank Rutter, has said that he has "recently become aware of the social and community costs of closing them". The Save The Midwives Association has worked in close co-operation with other groups in Auckland over the last six months to inform both the board and the public of the strength of support for the city's small hospitals.

When the Auckland Hospital Board released its Strategic Plan in mid '84, Save The Midwives prepared a submission that criticised the plan point-by-point and outlined safe, realistic

and less costly alternatives. Over 90 substantial submissions were received by the board, many of them prepared by parenting and women's organisations. These same groups held public meetings in their areas; at Papakura and Helensville there were hundreds of supporters.

In July the Rosenblatt report was leaked to *Broadsheet*. This piece of research showed that birth was as safe, if not safer, in cottage hospitals than in the large high-tech units that the board proposed should be used by ALL women in Auckland. Here at last we had well-researched evidence that New Zealand's small maternity hos-

pitals were doing an excellent job. Moreover the "safety" argument against small hospitals used by the Strategic Plan had been scotched.

Interest in Rosenblatt's research, plus opposition to the Strategic Plan, led the major women's and parenting groups in the city to form a coalition. We called it MA — Maternity Action. In early March our coalition was formalised; organisations had joined, the common thread being the wish to retain the small maternity hospitals. We began to approach, both in person and by letter, the elected members of the Auckland Hospital Board, some of whom themselves disagreed with the

maternity provisions of the Strategic Plan. It was up to the elected members of the Board to accept or reject the plan, and because we had been attending Board meetings since September '84, we had a fairly clear idea of when their decision would be made.

Back in '84, a copy of Save The Midwives submission had been sent to Margaret Wilson. She made the suggestion that we approach the Labour women's caucus for assistance. Part of the government's women's affairs policy is to "ensure that the provision of maternity care is in the best interests of the woman and her baby". The Labour women's caucus was extremely supportive, and put our point of view to the Minister of Health, who makes the final decision on whether or not a hospital is closed. Judy Keall, MP for Glenfield, agreed to act as our liaison person with the Labour women's caucus. We will in future be keeping each other informed on maternity care issues.

While the Strategic Plan catered largely for the needs of specialists — four maternity



On Monday 29 April chief pilot Liz Needham (left) and pilot Sarah Caldwell made aviation history by being the first all-woman crew on a scheduled passenger flight in New Zealand.

The Southern Cross flight was on a commuter run from Mangere airport to Whangarei. The plane, a six-seater Cessna Golden Eagle.

Southern Cross is owned by Liz Needham and partner Peter Roe. They purchased the Ardmore Flying School seven years ago and began

Southern Cross Airways under its umbrella. The airline owns five aircraft and employs four pilots, but the April 29 flight was the first time the two women had been rostered together. Liz and Sarah went to school together, began flying lessons at the same time and got their solo licenses within a week of each other. The flight, they said, "is the highlight of both our careers". They hope young women will be inspired to take up commercial aviation as a career. □

DIOXIN DANGERS SPOTLIGHTED

RENATE KROESA is in New Zealand to publicize the dangers of 245T.
DOREEN SUDDENS talked to her about her work.



Renate Kroesa, Photo: Sunday news

Since November 1984 Renate Kroesa has been campaigning against the chemical manufacturing company Ivon Watkins-Dow. The New Plymouth company is the last producer world-wide of the herbicide 245T. This herbicide is extensively sprayed over New Zealand farm-lands in an effort to eradicate gorse. 245T has for many years been suspected of being responsible for many forms of cancer, miscarriages, and of birth deformities such as club feet and spina bifida.

Renate is an industrial chemist from Germany working with Greenpeace, the international environmental group. She came to New Zealand to investigate the production of 245T here and to spread information about the dangers of the herbicide.

As Renate explains, "The problem with 245T is not so much the compound itself but its by-product dioxin, which is always going to be in the herbicide in small amounts. Dioxin in very, very minute amounts can be a health hazard. It is the most toxic man-made chemical we have. It is a proven carcinogenic compound, which means it can cause cancer, and it is also a proven teratogenic compound and this means it causes birth defects.

"But some people, especially in the chemical industry, are trying to say it has yet to be proven that dioxin causes human birth defects. It definitely causes birth defects in animals and I wonder where they get the right from to say you can't transfer these birth defects in animals over to hu-

mans. Pharmaceutical drugs are always tested on animals and if a drug is teratogenic or carcinogenic you would never get a licence for it. But 245T is being sold over the counter in a lot of countries.

"Dioxin also attacks the immune system and makes the body vulnerable to any other source of poisoning. And dioxin once released into the environment either through the production, the disposal of waste, or by spraying is very persistent and goes into the food chain. It accumulates from link to link until finally it is found again in breast milk. Then with the feeding of babies, who are very vulnerable because they are growing organisms, there are all sorts of effects again.

"But the Health Department, for example, does not follow this up and it's a mystery if your baby dies from a cot death or just has a lot of diseases.

The Health Department is also saying that the contamination of 245T with dioxin is so low that there is no harm – still there are clusters of birth defects after spraying has gone on".

Renate would like to see the last producer of 245T, Ivon Watkins-Dow, replace their production of it with a safe alternative. Boehringer, the German manufacturer of 245T, closed down its production of the herbicide in 1983. This company was the first 245T producer to be attacked by Greenpeace. The group once climbed the company's chimneys to draw attention to the dangers of 245T.

Since Renate has been here I.W.D. has refused to meet her. She wanted to talk to them to clarify aspects of their disposal of 245T waste. "I have no idea of how the waste until 1975 was disposed of; they started producing 245T around 1962. And until 1975 when the first incinerator started running there was no official waste disposal. One dumpsite was created which was later dug up and another dumpsite, which is leaking today, officially does not contain any dioxin. So where is all the waste?

"From 1975 to 1979 they had one incinerator running. This incinerator had a very small capacity so there is no way that all of the waste of the former years could have been incinerated.

"This incinerator was definitely spreading dioxins over New Plymouth. I.W.D. today states that it was about one or two grams per year. Well, that's the lower limit and the way the monitoring was done of the exhaust fumes should also be looked into. It is very hard to monitor the dioxin content from an exhaust because when an incinerator is run over 24 hours there are drops in the temperature. And the incinerator was only running at about 1000 degrees so as soon as the temperature dropped the dioxin would not have been destroyed.

"I have talked to women in New Plymouth who during those years experienced miscarriages and babies with malformations.

"Since 1979 I.W.D. have had a new phenoxy herbicide plant built at which they said they would not produce anymore waste. But it is now coming out that there is waste which has to be disposed of. So there is going to be a new burn-off".

Renate believes that over a year five grams of dioxin are spread over New Zealand via 245T, and that the population has a very high cancer rate. "It seems that even these five

grams of dioxin have an impact. New Zealand is an agricultural country, there is not much industry here. And you say you have clear water, you say you have clear air and yet there is a lot of cancer in the areas which are right next to the coast. There is no pollution coming from overseas – so where is this cancer coming from? But New Zealand is the country with the highest use of 245T per hectare.

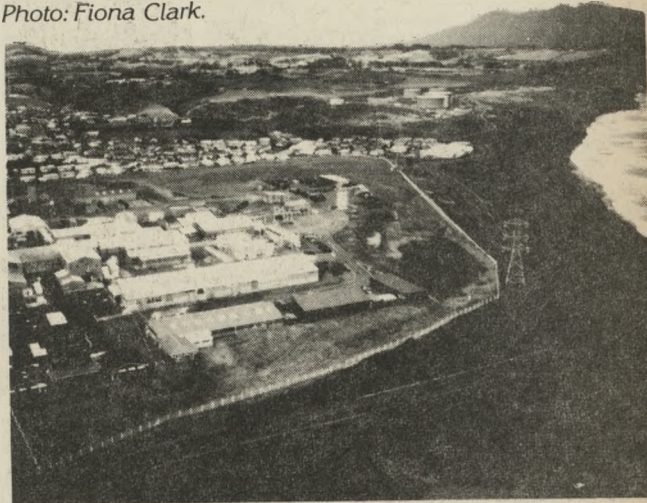
"Just looking in general at the use of chemicals in New Zealand I'm really horrified about how much they are used. That would not be found in Europe or Canada. I think New Zealand should look into the use of chemicals. This country has a very good stand on the nuclear issue – but it is very easy to take a stand on that if you don't have any nuclear power stations. But New Zealand is totally blind with the other eye – the chemical eye. Chemicals are even sprayed in National Parks and you wouldn't find that elsewhere either.

"I really wonder why people here don't wake up and ask themselves why there is so much cancer and birth deformities in this country. "Although if I.W.D. had to stop their production of 245T here, very soon a 245T plant would pop up in the Third World, and nothing is solved.

"There has to be a world-wide ban on the use of 245T".

□

Ivon Watkins Dow's New Plymouth plant, Photo: Fiona Clark.



TEACHERS TALK

Over Easter the Post Primary Teachers' Association held a conference on Women and Education at Hamilton. Around 280 women, teacher and non-teachers, discussed everything from unions to corporal punishment. JANE RITCHIE, a non-PPTA member but co-author of the book *Spare the Rod* took a workshop on the latter subject; she gives a retrospective view of the event.

As an outsider at the conference, one of only a handful of non-PPTA members, my experiences will have been very different from those of secondary teacher members of the organisation. But in some ways, of course, I was very much an insider at the conference, since it was held at my own university, a complex clearly not designed with non-hierarchical feminist gatherings in mind.

The conference opened with an abbreviated powhiri. The Maori women teachers involved in the conference were responsible for this and required male speakers, so PPTA President Tony Steele was imported from Wellington for that purpose. This highlights a source of conflict between Maoritanga and feminism, one not easily resolved, since many feminists are unwilling to have their ideology of equality overruled by what they see as a male dominated aspect of Maori kawa. Feminists are also uncomfortable with the Maori emphasis on Christianity and thus the necessity for prayers to open sessions, grace before meals, a hymn at the closing session and so on. I personally find Maori religious input much more acceptable when it is conducted in the Maori language, as it mostly was at this conference. But ultimately, this issue means that if feminists are genuine in their desire for more input from Maori women, they will have to be prepared to compromise their feminist beliefs in respect of Maori ritual.

But there was no compromise of feminist beliefs in Helen Watson's entertaining and well researched paper on the history of women's education in New Zealand. As a fourth former at Wellington Girls' College in 1950, I was certainly unaware that my headmistress, Esme North, had been active in campaigning for better conditions for

women teachers. I am very glad to learn this now and will have to revise my fourth former's view of her as a rather dour, distant and fuddy duddy school mistress.

The 6th form drama group at Epsom Girls' College then echoed and reinforced all the points in Helen Watson's talk with their play, "Not Only for School But for Life". This was written by Shona Hearn, Frances Salt and Helen Watson, and it was performed with enthusiasm and commitment.

Saturday began with a plenary address by Sonja Davies. Her theme, that of the impossible burden carried by women who work both outside and inside the home, would have been equally appropriate at any women's conference, but her talk, with her sharing of her own experiences as a frequently lone woman in male-dominated environments, was one to which the conference participants could personally relate.

The second session on Saturday was the first of three

workshop sessions. Workshop choices offered were Girls in Schools, Women and Management, Unions, and Feminist Theory. A total of five and three quarter hours was allocated to the workshop of choice, and though this amount of time was provided so that topics could be covered in depth, I myself would have preferred less time in my own workshop area and more opportunity to find out what was being said in other areas.

Saturday night's entertainment was pleasant and low key - a string group, Margaret Blay performing her songs and poetry, and songs and poems from Hinewirangi and Carol Kohu. The strong Maori women's influence, in spiritual force if not in numbers, led to an impromptu thanks and a song for some rather surprised cooks, who reciprocated the greeting. Their speech was delivered by the only male staff member, the boss.

Sunday morning confronted women with an in-

teresting array of seminar choices - assertiveness, co-education or single sex schools for girls, women teachers in rural schools, Maori women and girls, sex abuse, pornography, drama, support for beginning teachers, the personal is professional is political, success-oriented learning, career development, non sexist teaching and sexual harassment.

I did not have to make a choice, since I was offering a seminar on corporal punishment. Few women came to my session. Corporal punishment is not a burning issue for women teachers since most oppose it. But it was interesting to learn of the widely varying practices and attitudes in schools in different parts of the country. It appeared that Russell Marshall's initiatives to phase out corporal punishment have not received much publicity in Invercargill!

Maiki Marks then chaired a panel of Maori Women teachers, tatou tatou, who spoke personally and movingly of their efforts to educate themselves in the Pakeha system and then of their efforts to change that same Pakeha system to make a place for Maori perspectives. Though few in number, their presence at the conference certainly had an impact and there can be no doubt of the sympathy of the conference participants for what they represented. But sympathy of course, is not enough.



Lesley Harwood

Two hours, not nearly enough, was allowed for workshop reports and remits on Monday morning. The session was briskly and efficiently chaired, but it was a little disappointing that a great many remits had to be sent on to the Sex Equality Committee of PPTA without having been endorsed by the full conference. And some who attended grumbled that too little time was allowed for adequate discussion of those remits which were put before the plenary session.

As for the remits, I had a distinct feeling of *deja vu*. There's a thesis in there for someone, to go back, through the United Women's Conventions, to the 1975 Education and the Equality of the Sexes Conference sponsored by the Department of Education in International Women's Year, to look at the remits that have been passed over the years and assess their outcomes. Though the detail may have changed over the years, the concerns are still the same - concerns about women's lack of seniority in co-educational schools, about sexist curricula and teaching resources, about women as role models, about subject choices and careers.

Charmaine Pountney's summary and farewell was eloquent and moving. Tribute was then paid to Shirley Smith and the Hamilton organising committee for their hard work and efficient organisation.

Hamilton turned on perfect Easter weather and the news media, with little hard news to occupy them, and a blessedly low road toll which offered little distraction, obliged with massive newspaper coverage. I noticed that the reporters were all women and was pleased that the local newspaper had not acted in the same provocative and insensitive manner as it did for the Women's Forum, when it sent a male reporter.

All in all, I enjoyed my Easter weekend, even though I spent it in my own working environment. I now know a lot more about the inner workings of the PPTA, and a good deal more about the lives, struggles and concerns of women secondary teachers. I thank the conference organisers and PPTA for opening the conference to non-PPTA members.

□
Left: Women listen to Helen Watson's opening address.



DIANE MCCARTHY is a Christchurch PPTA field officer. She reports on the conference from her viewpoint.

Three hundred women, from first year teachers through to experienced women principals and education department inspectors, forsook a well needed break in a lengthy 15 week first term to gather together and gain strength from one another. The energy inspired and released by the conference so impressed the teacher union's elected executive that they decided to affirm the major recommendation of the conference resolving at their April meeting to establish a women's officer.

As in the burnt chop syndrome, women often have to wait until other changes are beginning to take place before taking steps to meet their own needs. The PPTA union women are no different. During the past ten years that the Sex Equality Advisory Committee of PPTA has been in existence, the PPTA itself has been engaged in major struggles on behalf of teachers in general and the young people in the secondary education system as a whole. Thwarted by an inappropriate assessment system, the "lottery approach" of external exams, School Certificate, and then University Entrance have been

the target of grassroots campaigns, masterminded by PPTA activists among whom Auckland Executive member Shona Hearn has played a major role. Staffing has been a predominant concern too. The contribution made by Otago Executive member Ruth Chapman to develop a staffing policy which reflects a school's individual needs, rather than the present crude method of staffing according to roll numbers, indicates her

Left: Diane McCarthy, Sonja Davies and Helen Watson.
Bottom: Maori teachers present their concerns to the conference.

determination to work alongside her male executive colleagues to bring long overdue change. Labour's predicted budget financing of these reforms in the June budget is the result of a decade of lobbying effort. To many PPTA members, there's now little to do.

But the women attending the PPTA women's conference know better. Inspired first by Helen Watson's eloquent and well researched address on the historical development of women and education in New Zealand, and secondly by Sonja Davies' bleak picture of the present status of women workers in the paid workforce and in the unions, women went into the four theme workshops with a resolve to look at problems they experienced as teachers.

Many became angry. The position of part-time teachers was discussed. Often married, these teachers have no job security, cannot count service towards promotion if they are not registered, encounter difficulties over sick leave and day relief, and are often not taken seriously as people with career potential by senior administration. While their position is so marginal, they are also encouraged to feel grateful that they are employed at all.

The position of Maori women was emphasised by the dilemma presented at the powhiri. Men spoke in welcome and reply at the confer-





Lesley Harwood

Sunday dinner with Susan Battye on the guitar

ence opening. In workshops, experiences related by Maori teachers served to underline how stretched their energy is to meet the constant demands exerted by their colleagues in schools, parents, students, principals, and the community.

An absent voice was that of the consumer, young women themselves. Apart from younger teachers, there was no youth forum to enable students to describe their concerns about their education.

Conference participants

were deluged with paper - research describing how female students receive less attention than male students, how to use sexist literature in a liberating way, how to construct a curriculum vitae and prepare for interviews. Still others were shocked by the content of more intimate workshops. Uninitiated teachers were distressed by coming face to face with lesbianism. Their prejudices remained unresolved.

Role models of successful principals were presented by women such as Hagley's Roz

Heinz and Green Bay's Karen Sewell. They took time to discuss career path plans with women hesitantly taking the first steps, or resolving boldly to begin to apply for senior positions, having successfully managed to run subject areas.

But apart from the structured conference of speeches, workshops, and remit plenary sessions, the rhetoric and the lobbying, there was another dimension to the conference.

Women renewed friendships, shared experiences, listened to each other, and affirmed their commitment to their personal styles and vision of what education could be. The strength gained from such focussing and intimacy is reflected in what has happened since the women's conference.

The isolation of feminist teachers at branch level is being broken down, and women who attended the conference are sharing their experiences through PPTA women's meetings in their region. Regional networks are forming in Nelson, West Coast and Canterbury, and are being

strengthened in regions where PPTA activism among women is already high such as Otago, Southland, Wellington and Auckland. Women are attending PPTA regional meetings in more representative numbers. A year ago, there were often only a few present.

New ways of thinking about conditions of service are emerging. Sexual harassment of women teachers is being openly discussed, and the need to provide justice for women in sexist schools is being recognised. Backing policy with the necessary authority of changes in regulations is seen as essential. Instead of justifying improvements in working conditions in terms of what it will provide for students, women are seeking parity with their male colleagues.

These issues will surface again at the PPTA annual conference in August when delegates discuss the role of the women's officer. She will have a lot of work to do, but will be greatly assisted by the energy and commitment of PPTA women. □

New Zealander Heien Star sent this photo taken on a Nuclear Disarmament Peace Rally she took part in soon after she arrived in Melbourne in late March. She joined 120,000 protesters who marched, listened to speeches and enjoyed a concert afterwards. "A theatre group marched in a large group with figures dressed and masked as impersonations of Reagan, Thatcher, Lange and other world leaders. Bordering this spectacular was a line of young people, their clothing and bodies burned with weeping sores and burns. Their cries and moans gave a sense of reality and as I looked at other faces realised it not only touched me but hundreds of others." Helen reports she also took part in a "Womins Walk Against War" held on Anzac Day.

Helen has kindly deposited at Broadsheet a list of feminist and lesbian women's centres, shops, women's pubs and clubs in Melbourne so anyone visiting from New Zealand can meet like-minded women. □



hospitals instead of nine means obstetric specialists can consolidate their power base and slowly squeeze out the remaining 36% of births done by general practitioners — Maternity Action represents the needs of women and babies. To this end we worked with the media, and we were pleased to receive the support of midwives and GPs who themselves practise family centred care, and were prepared to say why.

Twenty-five representatives of the coalition attended the board's meeting on April 29 when the decision was made to

keep the small maternity hospitals open. The Auckland Hospital Board made a decision that is supported by thousands of families in Auckland; it is to be hoped that other hospital boards will follow suit.

Maternity Action will remain active, continuing to function as a network of women whose major concern is to promote the right of women to make decisions on how, where, and with whom they will give birth. □

Maternity Action can be contacted at 24 Ashton Rd, Mt Eden, Auckland.

LESBIANS FIGHT FOR OUR RIGHTS

Jenny Rankine looks at the action lesbian and gay men are taking in support of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill.

Lesbians around Aotearoa are fighting for their human rights by putting their weight behind the Homosexual Law Reform bill. In Wellington lesbians and gay men have been meeting weekly since the bill was introduced. They have organised pickets (including one of a Dr Delaney who advocated medical treatment for gayness), press statements, written letters to newspaper editors, and spoken about their submissions to the parliamentary Statutes Revision Committee.

One hundred people attended a ceremony they organised in early May commemorating the lesbians and gays killed in the Nazi death camps. Gay men and lesbians staffed a stall at a trade fair for a week. Lesbian and gay access radio (783 khz) broadcast planned actions in support of the bill each weekend. Lesbian lobbyists are visiting church and women's groups to get their support for the bill. Leaflets have been printed explaining the issues behind the bill for lesbians and for the general public. A march was held on May 24 for supporters of the bill. Supporters in the Wellington area can contact the Gay Task Force, in the basement, 6 Boulcott St, ph 720-116, or the Women's Place bookshop, 289 Cuba St, ph 851-802.

In Auckland, lesbian coalition and Gay Task force meetings are being held regularly, and a week of lesbian visibility activities was held in May. This culminated with a rally at the Town Hall on May 24, with lesbian and gay performers and speakers. Stalls are being staffed in Queen St during lunch hour and late night shopping, and leaflets and badges are being produced. Supporters in the Auckland region can contact the Snapdragon bookshop, 26 Jervois Rd, Herne Bay, ph 768-978, or the Broadsheet bookshop, 485 Karangahape Rd, ph 398-895.

In Nelson a new group called ACCEPT has formed to promote human rights for lesbians and gay men. They are countering an orchestrated campaign by the Concerned Christians group. They will be bringing speakers on the legal, theological and social issues about homosexuality to Nelson. Supporters can contact ACCEPT at PO Box 1975, Nelson.

It is imperative that feminist and women's groups work for the passing of this bill. The right to a choice in our sexuality has been one of the major feminist demands in Aotearoa since the early 1970's. While all the pressures on women are to be heterosexual, and lesbianism is shown as either sick or sinful, there is no possibility of freely choosing our sexuality.

Arguments against human rights or equal treatment for lesbians are often used against defacto heterosexual couples as well. Heterosexual women flating to-

gether can be tossed out on suspicion of being lesbian. Any women who show affection for each other in public can be abused and discriminated against in the same way as lesbians are.

If the right wing manage to amend the bill or prevent it from passing, this will increase their attack on other hard-won choices for women. Abortion, sex education in schools, non-sexist books and resources, married womens' right to work, and non-nuclear families are all being attacked by right wing groups at the moment.

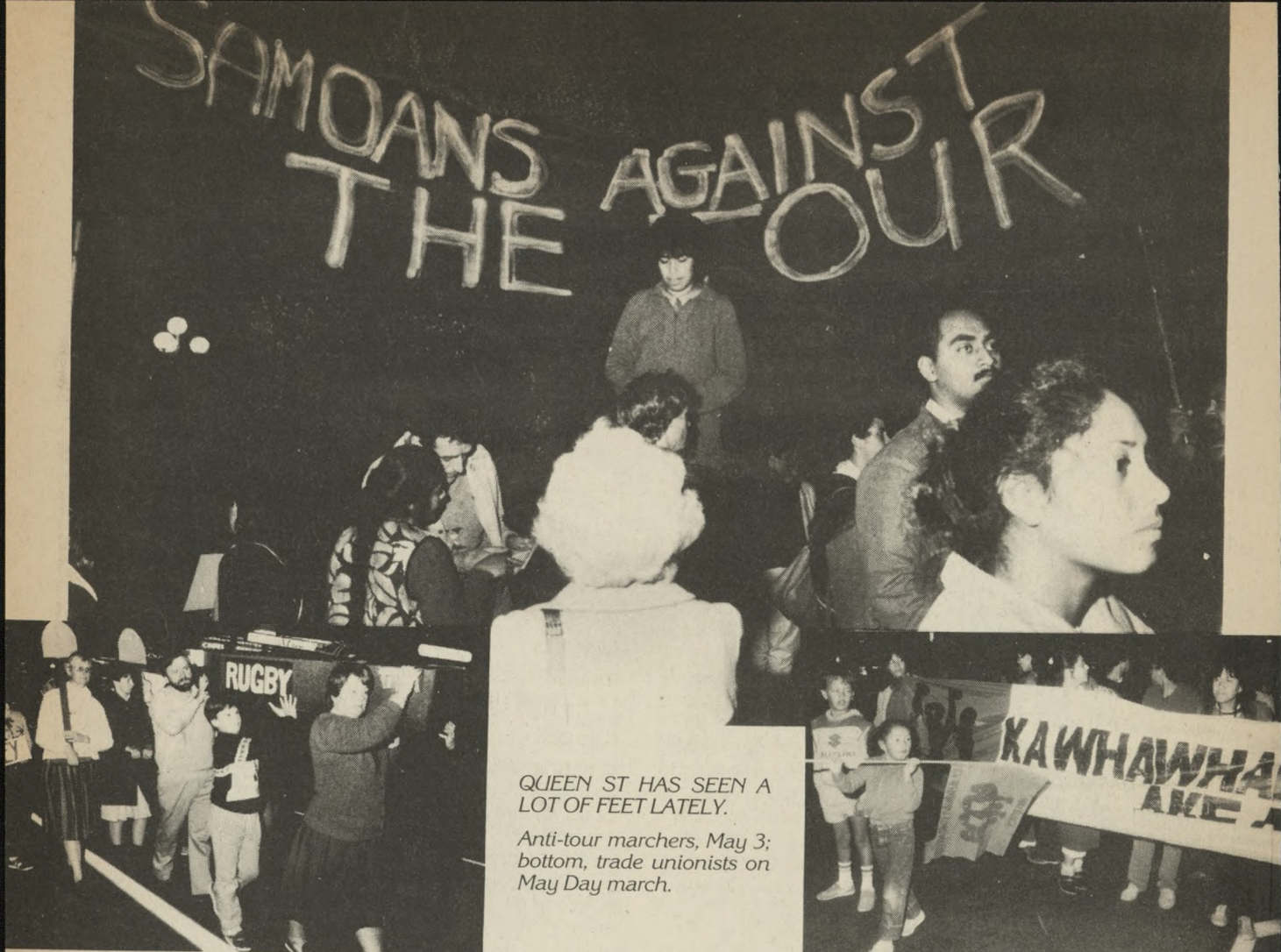
Feminist and women's groups can lobby their MPs, especially those who haven't clearly made up their minds, issue a press statement in favour of the bill from their group, write to newspapers with the truth about lesbianism, attend rallies and marches in favour of the bill, and donate money to lesbian and gay men's groups organising for the bill.

More than 400 submissions were made to the Statutes Revision Committee, and many of the writers want to be heard in person. The hearings are held in the old parliament buildings and are open to the public. The bill is now unlikely to be debated in parliament until September. This will give right wing forces more time to organise against the bill. School students, workers, church goers and shoppers in supermarkets regularly report harassment and pressure to sign the petition against the bill. Anyone who has been forced to sign the petition by peer pressure or threat of being forced out of the closet can write to the Petitions Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, and ask that their signature be withdrawn.

One Auckland lesbian took a full page of the petition from the caller at her door, flushed her toilet and told him it was in the sewer where it belonged. She then went round to her neighbours who had signed and talked to them about how that made her feel as lesbian. Some knew very little English and hadn't known clearly what they were signing.

Opponents of the bill continue to talk about making lesbianism illegal. If the gay men's age of consent is amended to 18 with the passing of the bill, a similar age of consent for lesbians may be introduced when the Crimes Act is revised. Fear and hatred of lesbians and gay men is more obvious now than it has been for a long time, making it both harder and more important for us to show our pride in being lesbian and for heterosexuals to support our rights. People in smaller centres wanting to support the bill can contact their local lesbian or gay men's group. Fran Wilde, Parliament Buildings, Wellington, has a list of these groups and will reply to letters sent without a stamp. □

SAMOANS AGAINST THE TOUR



QUEEN ST HAS SEEN A LOT OF FEET LATELY.

Anti-tour marchers, May 3;
bottom, trade unionists on
May Day march.

Photos: Gil Hanly





STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY IS 'BURNING AN ILLUSION' AROUND AOTEAROA.
A TRAVELLING FILM AND VIDEO SHOW - FILMS ON MENOPAUSE, WOMEN
AND WORK, RAPE, VIDEOS ON LESBIANISM AND MUSIC - AND MORE.

WATCH OUT FOR IT AT THE FOLLOWING CENTRES:

NELSON - JUNE THURS. 20, CHRISTCHURCH - FRI. 21 & SAT. 22,
DUNEDIN - MON. 23 & TUES. 24, WELLINGTON - FRI. 28 & SAT 29,
PALMERSTON NORTH - SUN. 30, HAMILTON - JULY TUES. 2, AUCKLAND -
FRI. 5 & SAT. 6, WAIHEKE IS. - SUN. 7, WHANGAREI - WED. 10.

VENUES TO BE ARRANGED.

SPONSORED BY THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS



SPONSORED BY THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

VIEWERS TO BE ARRANGED

FRI. 2.2.78. 8.00 PM. 1.00 PM. 1.00 PM.

PREMIER NEWTON - JUN. 20. HAMILTON - 10.00 PM. 1.00 PM.

DUNEDIN - MON. 22. 1.00 PM. 1.00 PM. 1.00 PM.

WELLINGTON - FRI. 24. 8.00 PM. 1.00 PM.

WATCH OUT FOR IT AT THE FOLLOWING CENTRES:

AND WOMEN, HAVE VIDEOS ON LEGISLATION AND MORE.

IT FRAYING FILM AND VIDEO SHOW - FILM ON WOMEN, WOMEN

WOMEN'S COMMUNITY IS RUNNING IN ALL CITIES, WHICH IS A GOOD



Finance Minister Roger Douglas is determined that New Zealand will have a tax on spending, the Goods and Services Tax, from April 1 1986. The Labour government has so far successfully manipulated New Zealanders into seeing the GST as inevitable. Most submissions on the GST to an advisory panel set up by the government, have not taken issue with the imposition of the GST but have argued about the nuts and bolts. Failure to oppose GST in total is seen as tacit support for it by the government.

As we worked with the women who have made comments on GST for this feature, we were told over and over again that there wasn't enough information about the tax to really see how it would affect them. Despite that, in only ten months time, Douglas proposes to make charities, trusts, cooperatives, sports and other clubs, local authorities, government

departments, state corporations and small businesses pay and collect GST.

Workers will pay the tax on everything from a loaf of bread and a bus ride to rates or house alterations or a second hand car. The only exempt areas are domestic rents, land sales, exports, and overseas travel.

Everyone who tells the truth accepts that the burden of this tax will fall most heavily on low and middle income earners, whose wages are still strictly controlled by the government.

Meanwhile, we learnt that salaries for top executives have leapt between 20 and 30 percent since the end of the wage freeze bringing average families to over \$100,000.

Doreen Suddens and Sandra Coney compiled this feature. Mary Slater of the Wellington Social group, starts by outlining the proposed GST.

WHAT IS IT?

The Goods and Services Tax is a method of collecting revenue for the government. It is called an indirect tax, because it is a tax you can pay as you spend money, rather than a tax you pay as you earn. That is, every item that you buy, and every service that you pay for, will include in the price you pay an amount of money that will go directly to government as tax.

The level of the tax has not been set yet; but if it was set at 10%, your basket of groceries at the supermarket which now costs \$75.00 will cost, including GST, \$82.50 (\$75.00 + \$7.50 GST).

WHAT KIND OF TAX IS IT?

There are three kinds of tax systems — progressive, proportional, and regressive. Our income tax system is progressive, our company tax system is proportional and the GST is regressive.

A progressive tax system is one where the richer you are, the higher proportion of your money you pay in tax.

For example, if you earn \$10,000, your basic income tax is \$2533 — approximately 25% of your income is paid

in tax. If you earn \$40,000, your basic tax is \$15,596 — approximately 39% of your income is paid in tax.

Because our tradition in New Zealand is egalitarian, we have collected most of our tax in this way. This kind of tax is seen as fair, since it redistributes income most effectively from the wealthy to those with low incomes.

A proportional tax system is one where regardless of how much the income is you pay the same percentage in tax.

In New Zealand a company with a taxable profit of \$10,000 will pay tax of \$4000 — 40%.

A company with a taxable profit of \$100,000 will pay tax of \$40,000 — still 40%. (NOTE: this is the theoretical tax. Tax exemptions, such as export incentives, alter the actual tax paid.)

A regressive tax system is one where the higher your income, the lower the proportion of your income you pay in tax.

For example, take a person whose income is \$200 per week. She spends \$150 on groceries, clothing, etc. A 10% GST will mean that she pays \$15 in GST. That is, her tax



Mary Slater

rate is 7.5% of her income.

Take another person, whose income is \$400 per week. She spends \$250 on groceries, clothing, etc. A 10% GST will mean that she pays \$25 in GST.

That is, her tax rate is 6.25% of her income.

That is, even though the second woman spends more, and pays more dollars into the GST kitty, she is contributing a lower proportion of her income towards Government revenue.

Furthermore, our first woman only has \$50 of her income free of GST; the second has \$150 of her income free of GST.

DOES GST HAVE TO BE REGRESSIVE?

NO. The reason the proposed tax is regressive is because it is a tax on everything you buy (except housing) from binoculars to bread, from jewellery to jeans. And the lower your income is, the more likely it is that you'll spend all your money and spend it on essentials.

An indirect tax which is selective in its application and only paid on discretionary/luxury items rather than essentials, would more effectively "target" the well-off in their spending.

In fact, we already have such a tax, known as sales tax, which last year brought in about \$1.3 billion.

It is proposed to abolish most of this tax when GST is introduced.

This system has been working since 1933. It certainly needs overhaul, but if modernised could remain an effective and fair method of gathering revenue.

WHY IS GST BEING INTRODUCED?

The government's stated reasons for introducing the tax are:

- to lower income tax

- to help reduce tax evasion and
- to fund improved social welfare benefits

All very sound reasons, but is GST the best way to do it?

Lowering Income Tax

Lowering income tax is an attractive slogan. It is superficially attractive to those who see tax as wasted money — that the government takes money from us for which we get no return. To challenge this idea, we must be able to argue coherently for the retention of government provided services, provided from taxation, which improved GMS (GMS = General Medical Services) benefits which subsidise visits to the GP, and really free education services (including universal pre-school services) cannot be funded by reducing income taxes, unless money can be obtained from enhancing revenue from another tax base.

The Goods & Services Tax is not tapping another tax base. Quite simply, it is a tax working people pay when we shop, rather than when we earn. The tax base is the same.

If we want improved services the tax base would be extended further into company profits, capital gains, etc. In other words, tax based on corporate rather than individual income and assets.

Our income tax rates are also said to stifle initiative — that people sit on their hands or go to Australia; rather than work harder, or longer hours to earn more money because the tax rates are too heavy.

There is no evidence for either of these — when pressed, GST supporters say the evidence is "anecdotal". In other words "everyone knows someone who..." In fact, tax rates in Australia are higher. But wages are higher too and some industries have 40 hours pay for 38 hours work.

Reducing Tax Evasion

Our income tax rates are too high, the argument goes, and encourage evasion. People find ways round paying tax on that portion of their income that attracts high tax rates. But it is exactly that portion of their income which they do not spend on GST. Let's take an example. Queen Street lawyer G.R. Eedy has an income of \$100,000 from his practice. He avoids paying income tax on \$50,000 of his income by investing it in a loss-producing Kiwifruit export farm at Te Puke.

Since GST as it's proposed is not payable

- (a) On investments and
- (b) On exports

that \$50,000 he avoids paying tax on is still safe.

Farmer P.L. Ough goes even further. He writes off most of his domestic purchases against his tax obligations as farm expenses. He's moving out of avoidance (legal) into evasion (illegal).

Certainly his activities should be curtailed. But why introduce a whole new tax system simply to catch P.L. Ough and his mates. Why not police evasion more toughly — in 1982 the McCaw Task Force on tax reform reported that every \$1 spent on tax evasion brought in \$8 in unpaid tax. 800% return is a good investment (certainly a lot better than the Department of Social Welfare Field Enquiry Units, who can only glean \$1 per every \$1 spent).

And the GST does not touch income that's currently legally free of tax. Just before Labour's 1984 Budget Doug Myers of Lion Breweries received \$2.3 million in tax free capital gainst dividends from Lion Breweries legally.



Dental Nurses march on Parliament, 1974. Photo from Socialist Action

Improved Social Welfare Benefits

Nothing wrong with this, you'd think. But what kind of Social Welfare benefits? Spending more money on Unemployment/Sickness/Domestic Purposes Benefit/Accommodation Benefit feels fair to me.

But the government has already cut National Superannuation and Accommodation Benefit (to beneficiaries) since it's been in office.

These cuts have been used to fund wage subsidies in the form of Family Care, and accommodation benefit for low income working people.

This seems to me the clue to the real, unspoken agenda for the revenue generated by GST.

GST — THE KEY TO LOWER WAGES?

The government's economic policies are based on giving companies, whether marketing at home or for export, a freer rein in the marketplace. Enabling them to set prices according to the market place (without price controls and consumer subsidies for example, on essentials such as bread and milk), in the belief that such freedom will produce healthier and more profitable enterprise. And that their profits will "trickle down" to working people in the form of more jobs and improved wages.

But in the export field, our goods are going to be competing on the world market against goods produced in low wage economies, and/or economies where the sheer size of the domestic market allows economy of scale in factory production lines etc.

To assist exporters, the government needs to help them control controllable costs — most obviously wages. Hence the Family Care package introduced in the last Budget, explicitly targetted to "moderate" i.e. lower wage demands in the ensuing wage round.

Now Family Care didn't work very well. The take up rate was lower than expected (about 190,000 wage earners claimed it instead of the predicted 225,000). And union members and their leadership found it relatively easy to brush aside when advancing their claims.

Its established cost was about \$2 1/4 million. GST is es-

timated to net \$800-1 £000 million. If that kind of money, in various packages such as reduced income tax, accommodation benefit, family care, etc is spread around just prior to the wage round (in the September Budget, for example) it is more likely to have the weakening and divisive effect on union wage claims that Family Care was aiming for.

WHY NOT SUBSIDISE WAGES?

Firstly, and most importantly, working people should have the right to a good standard of living from wages based on the work they do, the wealth they help to create.

And the right to negotiate with their employers (albeit with a government intervention based on the overall needs of the whole population, as distinct from the currently working population) on a regular basis, to ensure that working people retain their fair share of the wealth that is produced.

Government maintenance of Social Welfare Benefits, in terms of their purchasing power, is notoriously fickle. Family Benefit, for example, was last increased in 1978. A population of wage workers dependent on wage subsidies is a population who are relatively powerless.

Finally, and most revealing, there is no evidence that employers who are able to improve their profitability will necessarily create jobs, and improve wages. They might — but they might use the money to introduce "labour-saving" technology, to buy other companies, or to pay out dividends to shareholders.

Indeed, in 1984 the *New Zealand Herald* published a survey of 50 industrial companies reporting for the year ended 31/3/85. This survey showed that for every dollar extra profit earned in that financial year, 89 cents was distributed to shareholders, and only 11 cents was retained in the companies. This 11 cents would only just cover capital depreciation costs. This level of retained profits could not create new jobs.

And two New Zealand giants Fletcher Challenge and Watties, have both reported increased profits, and announced plans to reduce their New Zealand workforce.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Organised opposition to the GST can have an effect. Already the government no longer says that GST will be used to reduce the deficit, which is in contrast with the government's original plans at Budget 1984. There is some suggestion that they will also drop their plan to reduce income tax for those with high incomes.

Opposition in Australia to a similar indirect tax scheme looks like creating an about face by the Hawke government.

While I am prepared to believe that the government's plans to introduce GST are well meant, I hope I have shown that there is no evidence that the outcome will be the one they want. Informed opposition from the Labour government's constituency can have an effect.□

Mary Slater is a member of the Wellington Social Wage group. This is an ad hoc group of Wellington unionists from both the public and private sectors, learning about and publicising the social wage, which is "that part of our standard of living provided by public services" and "the method of funding those services."



Joce Brown is a Marxist feminist; she writes on "The Roger Douglas Credits".

The Labour Party has lost any concept of the meaning of the welfare state, with Roger Douglas effecting the transition to the right. Certain philosophical beliefs that were part of the history of the Labour Party's growth and development have very quietly disappeared. There once was a belief that means tests were demeaning to human dignity. Accordingly benefits were made available to all people, as of right - education, health care, family allowance, pensions. But not all people were equally able to pay, so those on higher incomes paid more tax.

Unfortunately those with financial privilege have other benefits as well; the knowledge of how to avoid paying, the ability to make their voices heard, and also the political votes to change a government. The Labour Party before the last election promised to overhaul the tax system and to lower the marginal rate of tax for those on higher incomes. This required a different method of gathering the funds needed for government

to carry out its social policy. The reasoning is that if we can't tax the rich more we can tax everything equally. And since the rich spend more money than the poor they will effectively be paying more tax.

"But this may mean that certain of the poor will end up worse off," you say.

"That's easy, we'll make money available for them through the social welfare system. They only have to show that they are suffering hardship," comes the reply.

It's this return to the bad old days of Christian charity that marks the end of the Welfare State. The Labour Government is instituting a beneficiaries system that will act to sop up any obvious cases of hardship, and with it the discordant edge to the labour/capital relationship. The amazing part is that these benefits are available to those who are working. They are in effect a subsidy to the employer so that the pressure for wage demands will be softened. In essence it is to reduce the comparative cost of labour internationally. New Zealand is to become a cheap labour country. And Labour continues as the party of capitalism.

But the cost of these benefits has to be met out of the government income which is where the GST comes in. Roger Douglas and the Treasury have managed to sell the idea to the rest of cabinet that this will be a more palatable way of making the rich pay. But the opposition that is occurring appears across all sectors. The business community obviously is angry that it will apply right across the board and there aren't any easy ways of getting around it. Those who are concerned for consumers see GST increasing the cost of goods.

But it is not very useful arguing about the detail of the GST scheme. There is a more fundamental set of questions that have to be asked constantly of the Labour Party. Why do they accept the necessity of a market run economy? What do they see as the role of New Zealand in the world economy? What happened to the belief in full employment? It is just not good enough to say that those days have passed. If this system cannot deliver then we had better set about forming a movement that wants a better system. And to hell with the Labour Party. What we really want is a radical restructuring of this country in its entirety from the top down. □

Gill Hardy

Maire Dwyer is a member of the Wellington Social Wage group.

Feminists do not always identify taxation as a key issue for women. Yet the ways in which a government chooses to levy tax can either reinforce or lessen the disadvantaged position of women in the economy and the degree of their dependency on men.

The existing system of personal income tax reinforces women's disadvantaged position. As an example, not all low income earners qualify for low income rebates - only single people and the "principal income earner" of a married or de facto couple. The partner in a couple who earns least, almost always the woman - misses out. The proposed Goods and Services Tax will also aggravate the disadvantage of at least some, but probably many, women if it is introduced.

The GST is a flat rate tax which will be levied on all goods and services consumed in New Zealand. Every bit of money that you spend here will be hit by GST. Prices will rise significantly. Allowing for the reduction in the Wholesale Sales Tax that will accompany the introduction of GST, it is estimated that a 10% GST will lead to a 6.5% increase in prices.

As a tax on consumption, the GST is regressive, that is a heavier burden on the poor than the rich. People on low incomes spend a greater proportion of their income than do those on high incomes and therefore a flat rate tax on consumption will collect a larger proportion of their income. Women, as we know, are mostly low paid or unpaid. The people who will be least affected will be those who save or invest a substantial part of their income - that is, the wealthy - dare I say it, mostly men.

The GST will be offset by lower income tax - bigger pay packets for those lucky enough to have them!

The people who are likely to suffer the most from the introduction of GST are people without incomes or wealth. Beneficiaries and students will probably be compensated - but what about women doing unpaid work at home? Will their husbands necessarily hand over the extra bit in their paypacket to cover the increased prices? Women in this situation will be more dependent on men.

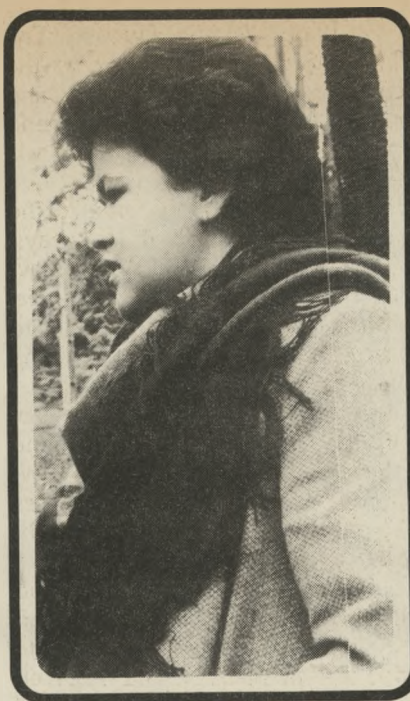
The government argues that it will

compensate low income groups for the effects of GST through the tax and welfare systems. We need to be wary of promises to assist "groups" rather than individuals - there may not be much in it for women with husbands. Over recent years there has been a notable tendency for income assistance to be targeted to low income families. The incomes of both partners are added together to determine their eligibility for family care or the family tax rebate. Although family care is usually paid to the woman (the child carer), the family rebate goes to the principal income earner - usually the man. Both these benefits can be reduced or lost altogether if either partner's income increases. If compensation for the higher prices that result from GST is given as a reduction in tax to the principal income earner (like an extension of the current family rebate or personal income earner rebate for those without children) few women with husbands will get any extra money at all! Women with husbands on low incomes, with children and little or no income themselves could get some compensation for GST if the government decides to increase family care. Women with husbands on high incomes, without dependent children, or who are the second earner in the family, are unlikely to get any relief.

The tax will also create an extra burden for self employed women and women who work in voluntary agencies. Overseas experience with similar taxes has shown that this form of tax places a particularly large workload on small businesses. While few women run businesses, those that do are heavily concentrated in the small business sector.

Women form the bulk of workers in voluntary or non-profit groups. Very often they work as volunteers or for minimal pay. Only the smallest groups (with an annual turnover of less than \$2500) will be exempt from GST. All the others will have an extra work load, having to keep precise records of their income and spending as well as filing a return with the Department of Inland Revenue every two months. There isn't even any indication that services, such as a film evening or a fair that have a fund raising purpose will be exempt from the tax!

□



Ripeka Evans is an executive officer for the Maori Economic Development Commission.

Low and middle income earners will bear the cost of GST and the bulk of low paid workers are Maori families. The effect of GST on Maori families will be quite devastating especially by mid-1986 when it will compound the effects of changes in the benefit system. It will especially hit Maori families who have no capacity to produce extra income. The tax isn't aimed at luxury items but at staples like food and clothing. These things are absolutely basic for any family.

The effect of the urban shift means there's a decrease in Maori families growing or looking for their own food. When you look at clothing - Maori families are overall larger than Pakeha families, so the cost of clothing and school uniforms will be great. Any rent increases will particularly affect Maori families as 50% of Maori families are in rental accommodation.

It's being argued that GST will produce more revenue and that that will be redistributed to lower income families. I don't believe it will. The revenue will largely go to service overseas debt and to encourage local export enterprises and for foreign companies to invest here.

The GST will also affect Marae communities. They rely on koha and donations, but most would have a turnover over \$2500 per year. They already struggle now to keep up. GST will make it even more difficult, especially the smaller rural marae. Urban marae can make money through things like flea markets, but rural marae are more restricted in how they can sustain themselves. □

Ripeka Evans was interviewed by Sandra Coney.

Marie Hull Brown is Administrative Director of Auckland YWCA. Yvonne Hughes is a community advisor.

Marie Hull Brown has had first-hand experience of a tax on spending. She worked for a small UK publisher when VAT was brought in and there were many headaches. It's the paperwork for small businesses and community organisations that make this system such a difficult one. Many won't have been paying tax at all previously. In the firm Marie worked for, three days a month were spent on the necessary documentation.

Yvonne Hughes believes that GST will have a very detrimental effect on small groups. The GST White Paper says that charitable trusts will be treated the same as businesses. Trusts, Yvonne says, cover everything from large concerns like the Southern Cross medical Care Society and a big landowner like the Anglican St Johns Trust to tiny community-based trusts providing creches and community houses. Small groups like these already have great trouble finding someone with the skills to be treasurer. And if they find someone who can deal with simple book keeping, like how much stationary and loo paper's been bought, they often have trouble with demands made on them by agencies like the Accident Compensation Commission. GST, says Yvonne, will "psyche them out."

Groups will need to find more money. Most fund-raise now to break even. "Do they have to bake more cakes? Will they have to apply to the Lottery Board for funds? It's ridiculous to put organisations who now need no outside help, but survive on donations, fund-raising and bequests, into a situation where they

have to apply to the government for funds."

The government could decide to make more funds available for community work, but what will be required of such groups to make a successful application? "Will they have to come up with financial statements and references? Will they have to prove they're effective in what they're doing?" Applications for funding from government and non-government agencies already take up an enormous amount of time for small groups; GST will create even more of a drain.

The government has talked about an exemption for businesses with a turnover of less than \$2500 per year (\$50 a week!). They could increase this exemption and extend it to charitable groups. Marie Hull Brown points out though, that getting exemption from putting in returns, won't make a group exempt at the point of buying. The Y is worried about the effect on its self defence and teacher training schemes, the Nearly New and Opportunity shops. The Y also works with Apprenticeship Training Schemes where women look after apprentices who are in the city for training at the technical institutes. These women make very little now, with increased costs for food they'll have to charge the apprentices more. Marie can see that women who are the only paid worker for an organisation will be even more poorly compensated for their work that they are now. It is not unusual for a group to employ a woman for say \$5,000-10,000 for 20 hours work a week. In reality she works much longer hours than this; after GST her administrative workload will increase, but the group will have less funds because it is taxed on spending. The Y finds that a administrator needs about the same as her salary for expenses. So a group paying \$10,000 for a worker will need to find another \$1000 after GST for increases on the level of spending.

Small businesses will be hit in similar ways. The amount of accounting they'll have to do will escalate. There'll be double the number of invoices; new invoices will be needed with registered numbers; every step in the taxing process will have to be documented. "The White Paper says that all the records produced must be

in the English language, although an exemption from that can be applied for the Commissioner. Polynesian shop keepers will crumble under this. They'll need to get their work translated or try and apply for an exemption."

If a business is late putting in a claim, there's a 10 percent surcharge. "Imagine the case of a small owner run business. If the woman is sick for a few days, she'll get her return in late because there's no one else to do it, and incur the penalty."

Yvonne explains that small businesses will have cash flow problems too. They will pay GST when buying, but will not immediately recoup it on their sales as invoices will be paid by the 20th of the following month (or later by bad debtors).

She is especially concerned about people, often women, who do "alternative work". Such people often do not have great business management and marketing skills; they operate at a subsistence level. "Unlike a plumber who charges out at \$20 an hour, a woman knitting for Masco's gets 50 cents a skein. Any extra charges will push these women under."

Big businesses will not have hassles with the tax. "they just fire the information into their giant computers".

The rationale behind the GST is that it will net all spenders, even illeble income will be caught by a tax. A boss can say he's bought a fridge for his business, when in fact it was for his home." Yvonne is doubtful about low paid workers receiving the benefits of redistributed revenue. "There's no guarantee of that. Maybe in the beginning there will be help, but sending a percentage of the revenue to people at the bottom."

In the UK, says Marie, administrative costs and education of employers in how the tax worked, ate up approximately 90 percent of the tax for the first two years. "They'll have to pay all that before they start giving the the poorly paid". □

Sandra Coney talked to Marie and Yvonne.



Chrissey Duggen & Lydia Wells

Council for the Single Mother and Her Child.

Quilla Dale and Chrissie Duggen of the Council For the Single Mother and her Child agreed that the GST will hit single mothers. But they said that ignorance of benefits and special allowances available to single mothers is already a major hurdle among lower income groups. Many single mothers do not know they are eligible for an incentive allowance for tertiary and retraining schemes, travel concessions, medical fees, accommodation benefits, to name just a few.

Basic commodities such as food, electricity, and clothing - all essential items - already are a problem. Even a few extra dollars per week can't be found. The two women agreed that as many as 80% of solo parents rely on second hand goods and appliances which will also be included in the new tax "reform". Chrissie Duggen felt that people in higher income groups will not be penalised as heavily by an extra few dollars each week on essential commodities.

"It will widen the gap, the rich will get richer, because they can find cheap access to goods," she says.

"Many of the phone calls we get, relate to budget problems. There is fear about extra dollars which people can't meet," said Quilla Dale, "....and I'm not so sure that the money will be put

back into helping low income groups".

The CSMC received a letter from Roger Douglas, proposing to arrange a meeting to solve any misgivings about the GST. The council was keen to arrange a meeting, however after returning correspondence, they heard nothing more.

"You can air your views, tell him what you want, but it makes no difference", said Quilla.

Chrissie Duggen explains that she has had little help from the Department of Social Welfare concerning the new tax laws. In a letter from the office of the Minister of Social Welfare it said that the effect of the GST on beneficiaries will be specifically discussed by the Budget '85 Task Force, but to date recommendations have not yet been made to government.

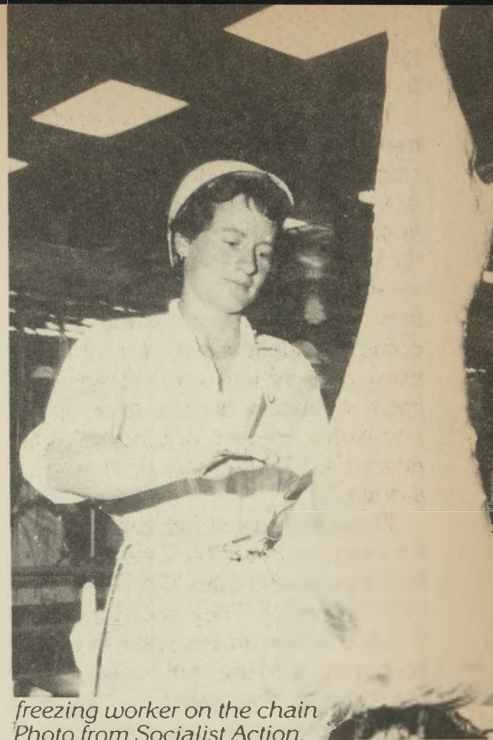
Single mothers receiving maintenance from the father of their child are not likely to be given an increase

in allowance to compensate for the GST, however both the CSMC and the spokesperson for the office of the Minister of Social Welfare agreed that it is up to the parents or at worst, the courts to renegotiate maintenance allowances. The two CSMC spokeswomen felt that the problem went beyond the impact of the GST.

"The Government is tacking reforms onto legislation that doesn't work anyway", says Chrissie. She considered the present wages to be three years behind the economic situation.

"Each wage round is negotiating for a projected budget. We should base wages on the present economic situation". Ideally she would like to see the minimum wage raised and the allowable income for beneficiaries to be at least \$100 per week. □

Interview done by Lesley Campbell.



freezing worker on the chain
Photo from Socialist Action.



Isobel Thomson is an executive committee member of the Auckland Combined Beneficiaries Union.

Since the lifting of the prices and rent freeze, the requests for advice and help from beneficiaries and other low income people have substantially increased in the Auckland Combined Beneficiaries Union office. These requests are proving conclusively that the cost of living is becoming beyond the reach of many people.

Any further increases which undoubtedly will flow on from a GST would spell disaster for people with families. An example would be the price of bread, butter and milk. At present it can cost \$1 to buy a loaf of bread. A 10 percent GST (which is the figure being suggested) would mean that loaf would cost \$1.10, and such an increase when applied to other food requirements would become a real hardship.

At our annual general meeting it was pointed out that beneficiaries and other low income citizens are the ones who spend all their income on basic living requirements and any notional benefit to be obtained by them from a GST would require a massive distribution from that source in their direction.

We cannot see this happening, there are too many contradictory statements and figures coming from the various ministers.

CBU thinks that if GST does become law in 1986, prior to its introduction there will be an epidemic of price increases from manufacturers, retailers and service industries to defray any extra costs that they might incur in the gathering of the tax on behalf of the government.

So again the consuming public will be the victim. CBU is already concerned that elderly beneficiaries such

as single superannuitants, whose current basic benefit is \$105.00 weekly are going without vital food requirements. And that with winter coming on they will not be able to afford heating to keep them warm. What will happen to them if GST comes in is too serious to contemplate.

We know of families, particularly Pacific Island families, who can no longer afford to buy fish which is an essential part of their diet. With schnapper at \$11.50 a kilo, this is not hard to understand.

When the Minister of Industries and Commerce was asked by the CBU secretary on a recent television programme if the government would reinstate price and rent controls in the light of the flood of crippling increases he would not commit the government to do this.

So it is the opinion of CBU that unless the government does at least two things, if and when GST is to become law, the economic and social consequences to beneficiaries and other low income people will mean additional hardship.

1. Immediate restoration of some form of price and rent control.
2. Food and clothing to be exempt from GST to all those below a certain income. □



Jan Farr is editor of the Socialist Unity Party newspaper, NZ Tribune.

Last August brought fixed income earners a change from a government which was openly hostile towards them to one which is not.

Labour's progressive anti-nuclear policy, its opposition to South Africa's merchants of death, its willingness to consult and its sympathy for the unqualified preference clause, have been welcomed by us in the Socialist Unity Party.

Its economic direction has not.

This doesn't mean we want to get rid of the Labour government. It means that through open debate we want the people to force the government to change its economic direction.

We see GST as part of the free-market policies of the present caucus.

These policies are at least 200 years old. They have never worked for those on fixed incomes. The "trickle down" theory is an ancient con trick.

GST is part of an economic package which has freed up interest rates, removed rent controls and allowed prices to soar, while allowing

workers a wage rise of only 7% after three years of frozen wages.

This tax is not being imposed on a work-force which is holding its head above water. Many low paid workers are already feeling the waves closing over their heads. GST is a regressive tax which, because it taxes basics, will drive many low paid workers onto a benefit with the dependent insecurity and lack of dignity which accompany it.

In addition, their taxes will be used to pay their own benefits. In other words to make up the shortfall between the amount the employer pays and the amount needed for a worker to live.

Traditionally employers have paid enough to ensure their workers' survival and reproduction. This used to be in the employer's interest. Now things are changing. The unplanned use of technology has reduced the need for workers. Employers, many of them announcing huge profits, are being permitted by governments to pay many people less than it takes to live with dignity and reproduce.

The GST does nothing to halt this process. It is vague. How much income tax will be removed and how much GST added is open to change. It will be a kind of press for squeezing blood from fixed income earners. The quantity will be specified by employers.

Our aim, socialism, will only happen when enough people are convinced of its superiority as a social and economic system. In the meantime we want to see socialist policies introduced.

Taxes must pay for a social wage which gives free medical care, child care and education, cheaper housing and power and a richer and affordable cultural life.

We want companies to pay more tax and fixed income earners to pay less. We want an end to the rebate system which allows some large monopoly companies to pay low taxes or none at all.

We want a minimum, untaxed, living wage to be fixed. We want tax loopholes for businesses closed off, a capital gains and wealth tax imposed and all tax laws policed.

We don't want GST!

We're interested in a life of dignity for all people - not just for a few. □

Barbara Goodman is on the board of Odyssey House drug rehabilitation programme.

Odyssey House runs a long term residential treatment and rehabilitation programme for drug addicts. In common with other non-profit making charitable trusts it will be effected by the Goods and Services Tax.

Currently we have 50-60 people in the programme. Our principal source of income comes from the extended Social Welfare benefit of \$150.32 weekly which each person assigns to the trust. This does not meet the full costs so we endeavour to meet the rest by applying to Social Welfare, Lottery Board, philanthropic trusts and similar for one-off donations. We are currently running at a monthly deficit of approximately \$5,000.

We also fund-raise and have Odyssey Enterprises. This consists of small teams of residents who, under the supervision of a senior person, clear up gardens, do factory maintenance and similar work. They earn approximately \$12,000 annually.

Like everyone else we will be paying GST on food and supplies. These average \$20,000 per month. Even if the GST was 10% - and some say it could be up to 15% it will add another \$24,000 annually to our expenses.

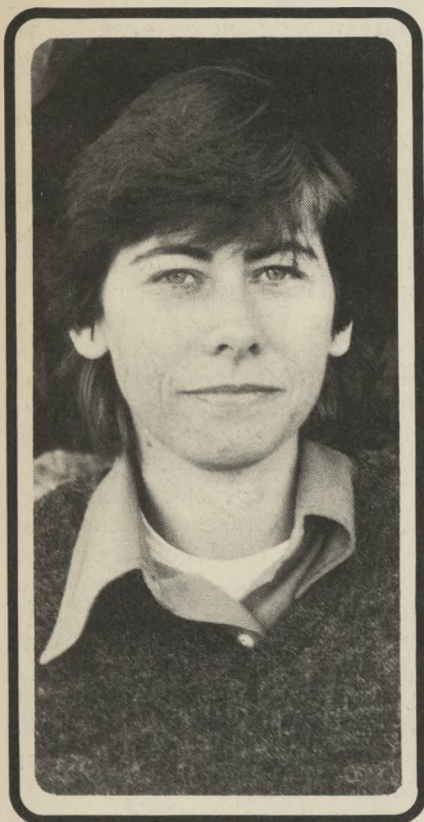
It is said that benefits will go up accordingly to meet the extra tax. Whether this will actually happen remains to be seen; will the benefits automatically start on 1 April 1986; will they be automatically adjusted whenever there is a change in GST? It has also been said that Government grants will be increased to include the GST that we will pay on these grants. Donations are not taxable.

Any work done by Odyssey Enterprise will have to show the tax on the invoice and every two months we would be expected to account for this to the Inland Revenue Department. Credits and debits of tax can be balanced against each other.

As I understand the White Paper, supplies such as stationery used by Odyssey House could have the tax refunded - that used by Odyssey Enterprises would not be. Odyssey Enterprises charges would therefore have to go up to cover the costs on tools and equipment, petrol etc. as well as

acting as tax collector. Up until now any bookwork required has been done by residents. It is likely that after GST we will have to employ someone to do this. If the suggestion to exempt turnover below a certain figure (current suggestions range from \$2,500 to \$45,000) then Odyssey Enterprises could well be included in this.

The ideal situation would be for all registered charities to be zero rates. In the White Paper only exports carry this rating. Strong representation will be made to the government by various charities and the Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations to extend this category to include non-profit making organisations. □



Doreen Suddens is Vice-President of the Auckland Unemployed Workers Union.

The unemployed have been blinded by science. The science of economic theories.

Roger Douglas, the Minister of Finance, recently sprung a whole new economic package on the unemployed and employed workers of New Zealand. Included in this package is the Goods and Services Tax.

Any money saved by workers through a promised cut in personal income tax will be lost again, and maybe even more so, because of higher prices. Unemployed workers are in for an uncertain time. At present there is no tax on the unemployment benefit paid to married people with children - so how will they be compensated for the rise in prices because of GST? And the present direct tax on the single benefit, and the benefit for married people without children, if cut or dropped altogether, would not compensate for steeply rising prices.

The supposed answer to this anomaly is to be found in the booklet GST put out by the office of the GST Launch Co-ordinator. Page 19 states under the heading Beneficiaries; "Benefits will be increased early in 1986 by an appropriate amount to protect your standard of living". Does that mean the government will protect unemployed workers present state of poverty? The government should be spelling our right now to beneficiaries what the GST percentage will be and the amount benefits will increase.

Another effect of GST could be more unemployment. As prices rise, people will buy less, sales will drop off and production will go down, then out the window go the workers.

But business companies would do well out of GST if the information put out by the Social Wage Group is correct. In January 1985 this group of Wellington unionists, put out a document about GST which said, "there are plans to exempt equipment purchased for business purposes and export products". This exemption, along with the fact that no capital gains or wealth tax is going to be introduced, means that the biggest tax take will be yet again from the workers of New Zealand.

It seems that businesses may not be taxed for their equipment but workers will be taxed for their food.

Is this a fair and equitable system?

Margaret Jones is a superannuitant and housekeeper

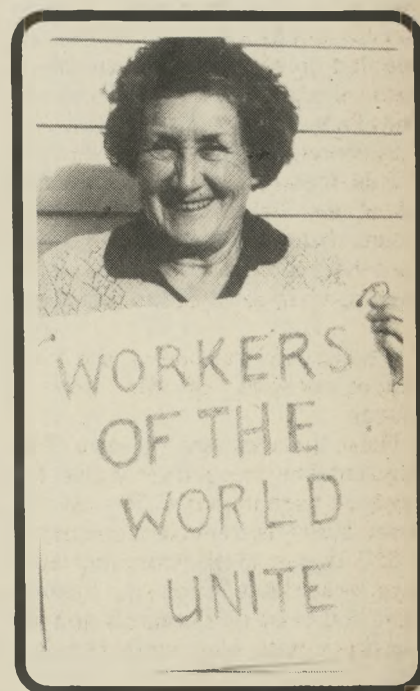
Looking at tables produced by the government strongly confirms the opinion that lower income people (many of these superannuitants) are forced to spend more of their availa-

ble money on necessities, and have less financial "freeboard" to cope with price increases. According to one government publication: "The lowest spending 10% of two-adult equivalent household is committing nearly 29% of its total weekly spending to food."

It will be extremely important to ensure that lower income people are compensated by other means for the rise in food prices. The only mention of how GST will affect superannuitants comes in the booklet GST: the key to lower income tax: "The normal adjustments to national superannuation early in 1986 will include a special element to take account of price increases which will come about when GST is introduced. Changes to income tax will also alter benefit levels, through the way the rate of superannuation is calculated."

Having studied the two papers issued on GST, I find the information rather vague and hope that more precise details will be available before April 1st, 1986. At the moment it is not easy to say whether superannuitants will benefit and by how much.

I personally believe that no tax system under capitalism (however well intentioned) will improve the lot of the working class, be they unemployed, beneficiaries, superannuitants etc. So long as goods are made for profit and not use, there must be iniquities and it is always the workers who suffer. □





Athina Reay is office administrator at *Broadsheet* magazine and bookshop. She looks at how GST might affect *Broadsheet*

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) to be introduced by the Lange Government as from 1 April 1986 will have wide ranging implications for *Broadsheet* (bookshop and magazine) as well as for all the women who support us. The whole subject of GST is shrouded in mystery, not just because the government wants to keep us ignorant until it is too late; the government themselves are still in the throes of drawing up GST legislation and there are certain areas (plus finer points) that have yet to be sorted out. The government White Paper on GST simply outlines discussion proposals. However, out of this White Paper we can discover some of the ways GST will affect *Broadsheet*, our magazine buyers and bookshop customers.

The way GST will affect books is complicated. From my understanding of it, the wholesaler will charge us (the retailer) GST, and we, in turn, will charge the customer GST. However, *Broadsheet* will be able to deduct all the GST it pays to the wholesaler (where it relates to operating costs) from the total GST we collect from our customers, and forward the balance to the Government. This will



probably not be calculated on a book-by-book basis, but on turnover for a particular period (ie two months). For example, if *Broadsheet* pays \$1500 for books over the set time period we will be charged approx. \$150 GST by the wholesaler which brings the cost of the books to \$1650. Our mark up will have to be calculated on the \$1500. We then sell these books for \$2200 which includes \$200 GST paid by the consumer. *Broadsheet* can deduct the \$150 we have paid to the wholesaler, from the \$200 we have collected, and forward the balance of \$50 to the taxation department. What it amounts to is that *Broadsheet* will not be paying the GST; the customer will have to bear the cost of the wholesaler's and re-

tailer's GST. The price of books will definitely go up as books have not previously been subject to tax.

The effect on bookshop sales is obvious. Book buying has already become a luxury, and our sales have declined because larger book outlets (like Whitcoulls) now stock many women's books - they have finally caught on that women's books do sell. *Broadsheet* will feel the effect of falling book sales. The bookshop subsidises the magazine and is used to offset increasing magazine costs, but its ability to do so in future will be diminished.

The other way it will affect us is by the greater amount of extra work it will create. *Broadsheet* will become a tax collector for the government and this



will entail a great deal of extra labour and time. Our records will have to be spotless, and GST inspectors will call annually to check the books. All this will add to the ever increasing workload of the *Broadsheet* collective. Big firms can afford to hire more staff to absorb the extra work, but *Broadsheet* struggles with little money and an overworked (albeit dedicated) collective.

The story is much the same with regard to the magazine. Again we will be charged GST by the typesetter, the printer etc. The cost of this GST will be passed on to the magazine buyer - plus the GST we will be required to add on at the retail end. The price of the magazine will go up and once again it will be you, the consumer, who will be paying. *Broadsheet* will see a fall in subscriptions as more people will find that they can no longer afford the magazine - especially when the price of essentials begins to rise.

The whole area of donations, which *Broadsheet* relies on, is still unresolved. Submissions for this part closed in May and a decision will be made this month. However, judging by the fact that the government wants this tax to be as wide-ranging as possible it is feared that only a few charitable institutions will be exempt from paying GST on donations. This is the view of an Inland Revenue spokesperson. On the other hand, the Small Businesses Association could not see

how the government could possibly tax donations. So at this stage we can only speculate. If they do tax donations, it will mean less money will go into *Broadsheet* coffers.

What are the wider ranging implications of GST on books? Well, it has been suggested that publishers will narrow the range of NZ books they will publish and stick to books that have mass appeal. It will mean they will take fewer risks with specialty type books such as poetry, feminist books and books by black writers. Add to this smaller print runs and the GST will inevitably put the price of books up by at least 15% or 25%. Another side-effect will be that small businesses like bookshops will be put under considerable pressure. Declining sales and a greater workload will make these small businesses less viable and many will go under. The government's proposal of exempting businesses with an annual turnover of \$2,500 is unrealistic and underlines the government's determination to let few slip by without paying GST. As these small businesses are driven out, larger concerns will corner the book market, coffee table books will become the order of the day, and specialty bookstores will become fewer and far between. The future for *Broadsheet* looks bleak, but not as bleak as for the Lange government who seem hell-bent on electoral suicide. □

Roger Douglas replies to an Auckland School

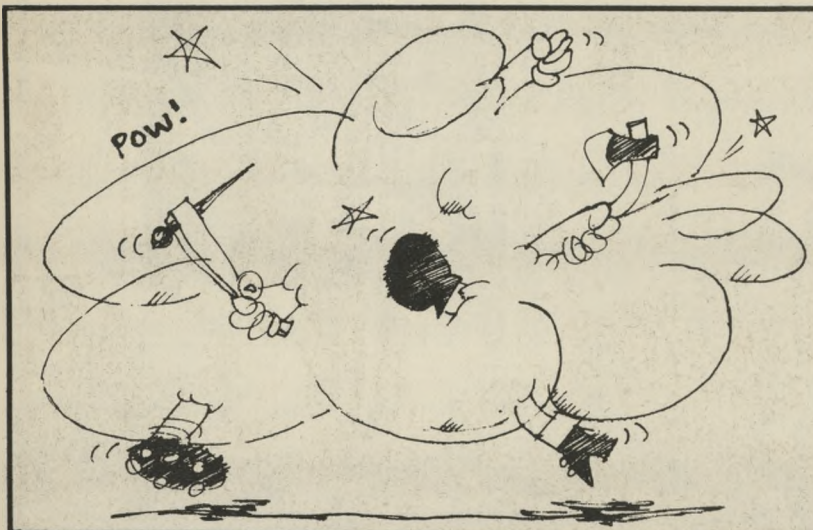
Thank you for your recent letter about the Goods and Services Tax.

There is no case for exempting books, periodicals, magazines and newspapers from a general tax such as GST. These are commodities which must sell on their own merits, and not by being given special advantages. Moreover the claim that to tax publications is a "tax on knowledge" is pure nonsense. It is a misuse of a nineteenth century slogan directed against a stamp tax specifically intended to suppress certain popular newspapers. Knowledge is only one of the many things the publishing industry sells. To give a subsidy on all of the output of the publishing industry by a GST exemption would be an indiscriminate and wasteful way of assisting the few articles of merit it produces.

The Government intends to redistribute the revenue gained from GST to cut income tax. This means that many people's purchasing power will be increased and some will use it to buy books.

Yours sincerely
R O Douglas

BROADSHEET COMICS



Tell me
about the joy of
feminist
collectives
again ...



I keep
forgetting

COWLEY



Bidge Smith is Women's Rights Officer at Auckland University

Like other low income workers, students spend on a greater part of their incomes on essential goods and services than high income earners. Many students subsist on a very tight budget; they work through the summer vacation or have part time jobs to survive. Usually money earned over summer goes towards paying off debts from the previous year. Next year, after paying off debts, paying enrollment and tuition fees, students will face a sudden rise in costs in April. Increases are bound to be unpredictable, there will be hidden costs that cannot be budgeted for.

Although rents will not come into GST, various maintenance costs will be passed onto tenants by landlords. Food costs will increase, and as stu-

dents eat a very basic diet, they can economise no further on food.

The bursary structure is under review but it is unlikely that alterations can be made which will adequately compensate students for the increased costs they will face.

Students simply have to buy books and stationery. It is not unusual for a single book to cost \$50 now. As new prices go up, so will second hand book prices. Although students can use library books, the library's buying power will be reduced under GST and queues for desk copies are already long.

General running costs of the universities will increase which probably means an increase in fees.

Unless the government channels money back into the education system, GST may become another force limiting access to education, particularly for low income families. □

BOOKS BY DALE SPENDER

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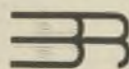
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to launch my oblivion:

It's too bad you boys
with the toys
no longer
have to fly airplanes
and personally
at least
for a fraction
of a second
actually
physically
be
over
the diminished
human
forms
beneath
you —
the
less-than-your masters
to you
soon to be
debris

people.

Because
if I'm going
going to be
immolated
incinerated
obliterated
well,
I'd like
a few moments notice
so I can put on
my Green Peace tee shirt,
go out in the garden
and be
fried
frizzled
flambeed
with my fist
raised
at
your
face.

Glenda Laurence



Te Vaine Taito, by Jean E. Loomis 1982.

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BULIMIA

Eating to Stay Thin



Marieke Hilhorst writes about being bulimic.

If you have ever gorged yourself on food and felt so disgusted that you found yourself face to face with a toilet bowl for between one and twenty times a day you will be aware of the incredible loneliness, guilt, self-degradation and anxiety it entails. You will also have suffered from bulimia, literally "ox-hunger", the term used to describe the binge-purge syndrome which is affecting increasing numbers of women (and a few men) in post industrial Western societies.

In the past few years an unprecedented number of young women have been recognised as suffering from bulimia, partly due to the public interest aroused by Karen Carpenter, Jane Fonda and Cherry Boone-O'Neill. This is also borne out by the upsurge of self-help groups, articles and research done on the topic.

I was a victim of the thinness mania, being a junk food and toilet bowl junkie for eight of my 23 years. A

Bulimics regularly binge-eat — quickly eat a large amount of food, usually in less than two hours, as well as doing at least three of the following:

- * Binge on high calorie foods
 - * eat inconspicuously during a binge
 - * end binges with self-induced vomiting, sleep, or stomach pain
 - * repeatedly try to lose weight by vomiting, using diuretics, or going on very strict diets
 - * have frequent weight fluctuations greater than 10 lbs, due to alternating binges and fasts
- Bulimics know their eating pattern is abnormal and fear they won't be able to stop if they want to. They also feel depressed and self-hating after binges.

compulsive gorging and purger who defaulted from taking any control in my life; who in fact gave food the control rather than face any of the issues that had made me that way.

There are millions of young girls and women who starve themselves in order to look like these envied models for whom slimness is a well-paid professional pose. Ordinary young women do not get paid for being slim.
Hilde Bruch

To trace back through my family to the roots of my bulimia was relatively easy. Put simplistically, my upbringing was strict, undemocratic, strongly religious and authoritarian. I had an excellent role model in my father who used alcohol as a crutch to avoid feelings of failure. My mother hated the unpleasant nastiness that occurs when people are allowed to express their emotions. And then I had myself. Someone overly self-conscious and unconfident. Someone not encouraged to think for myself, stand up for my rights, be my own person. This recipe will not always produce a bulimic (or anorexic) but in my case it did. From talking with other sufferers I learned that the one common factor running through all our varied upbringings was that we never separated from our parents and became autonomous adults.

Families of bulimics are apparently closeknit and nurturing. However, closer analysis shows that feelings (particularly negative ones) are suppressed, that parents

generally have too high a standard of achievement for their children, and exert excessive control over them. There is little or no encouragement of self-expression or autonomy so that the child's own inner resources, ideas, decisions, and consequently their self-worth is undeveloped. Overall the families are highly resistant to change, or expressions of individuality which present a threat of change.



For many women, compulsive eating and being fat have become one way to avoid being marketed or seen as the ideal woman.

Susie Orbach

As a result of this bulimics feel out of control of our behaviour, needs and impulses, feel we don't own our own bodies. When confronted with demands for more than conforming obedience as we enter adolescence, our compliance turns into feeling bad about ourselves. We turn these feelings of lack of control and self-worth back in on ourselves and turn to weight control as the only area we have autonomy in. The bingeing is a release from anger, frustration, disappointment, loneliness and boredom. Over time the food is used to regulate these feelings and tensions until it occupies a central role in the individual's life. As such it is a substance abuse much like alcoholism and drug addiction.

The conflicts causing bulimia come from the bulimic's individual history and personality, but they are also related to being in a female body in the world.

Writing this I began to remember some of the pain and agony of what it was like to be bulimic. I remember feeling dirty and freakish. The secrecy of the binges and the guilt of the purging. The stench of vomit that somehow would never wash off. The loneliness of the self-imposed isolation for fear that if people got too close they would find out what a revolting person you really were and reject you. Or worse than that, they might try to stop you — remove your drug, your crutch, your lifeline.

My bulimia started when I was 14, when the uncertainty of puberty finally hit me and the indoctrination of the slim, attractive, hairless, odourless woman portrayed in the medias and by society sunk in. It was great. I could stuff my ever ravenous mouth and not get fat. Better still, I could even lose weight and achieve that idyllic svelte female form we are all conditioned to strive for. But when I started bunking school to stay home and eat I knew I was hooked. I was a junk food junkie. I began to isolate myself from my family in case they found out. But mostly I began to feel out of control.

The one avenue I saw for taking control over my life began to take control over me.

So began the next eight years of ups and downs and downs. I binged my way through university, through an unwanted pregnancy, through a very young marriage and almost through a divorce. But I was one of the lucky ones. A woman came into my life who cared enough to see through my lies and double-talk and who had the courage to confront them. I hated her for it. The dreaded

thing was happening — someone was trying to make me face the issues I was trying to bury under mountains of food. It took three years of hard work and many times I regressed to the numbness of the binge. But always she was there. Prodding, provoking, encouraging and being rejected. I wish that all women suffering from bulimia had someone like her.

Through her support I began attending the Christchurch Anorexic and Bulimic Self Help Group which is run by and for sufferers. Through meeting others I discovered the good and bad parts of myself I had submerged all those years and slowly I began to regain a healthy control over my life. I increased my feminist awareness, rejecting the social stereotype of women and now strongly believe that unless a woman does become feminist in her outlook she will never be able to fully shake off society's unrealistic demands on women. If she does not, she may be able to get her problem under control but she will never be completely rid of it. My involvement with the group taught me just how widespread the problem is. Nearly every woman I have talked to then and now has hang-ups over food and weight. Anorexia and bulimia are just extremes along the continuum.

I also have parents who had the courage to face their own self-doubts and inadequacies, who recognised their role in the development of my bulimia, who were not afraid to face it and opened themselves up to grow as I grew. I love them for it.

Women are brought up to regard their bodies as objects to be sacrificed for beauty.

Alderbaran

Many bulimic women have parents who won't accept their part in the development of the disorder. They resist the changes the women want to make in their lives and try to keep them as the same person they have always known — even if this means keeping them bulimic.

I am now on the other side. There is much of the pain and misery that I find hard to remember, like a sub-conscious mechanism has shut them out. But I retain the new self-awareness and insights, the confidence and new-found abilities I never dreamed I would have. I am no longer just a bulimic, I am a worker, a wife, a mother, articulate, creative, intelligent — I am me!□

BULIMIA

Jasbinder Singh has been involved in a bulimia support group. She outlines the research and useful self help techniques.

Although the actual behaviour of binge eating/vomiting goes back to early Roman days, it is only in the last few years that bulimia has been identified as a distinct eating disorder. Women with bulimia regularly go on eating binges, and then get rid of the food by vomiting, dieting or using laxatives. They feel unable to control the disordered eating pattern and usually feel depressed and self-hatred after a binge.

Bulimia is a fairly common problem and it is becoming even more prevalent. Most studies about bulimia have been done overseas using college students. Between five and 19 percent of female college students report all the main symptoms of bulimia.^{1,2} In one English study, 620 women using self-induced vomiting to control their weight were identified with the help of a women's magazine.³ Of these, three percent were anorexic and 83 percent had bulimia. All of these women had profoundly disturbed attitudes towards food and eating. Unfortunately, studies on the general population are rare.

Bulimia is almost exclusively a disorder afflicting women and has its onset during the teens and early 20s. It is rare in non-Western cultures. In some Asian and Pacific Island societies, for instance, fat is associated with affluence, while in the West, slimness is the elitist value. Most bulimics come from well-educated, white middle-class families where there are high expectations for them to achieve academically and socially. The common feature shared by both anorexics and bulimics include a strong desire to be thin and the inability to see

themselves as anything but fat. However, while anorexics are obsessed with getting thinner, bulimics are obsessed with not putting on weight. Women with bulimia do not look emaciated and have ordinary body weights.

Bulimic women may binge and vomit once or several times a day. Both bingeing and vomiting are done in private, and even close family members and partners may not know of the woman's silent suffering. So she can feel shame, guilt, a sense of disgust and helplessness. She is usually depressed and anxious. Bulimics tend to binge on the kind of high carbohydrate foods usually restricted in diets. Binges can cost up to \$100 a week.

A major factor in the increased incidence of anorexia and bulimia is the vast pressure on women to be slim, as well as the ideal body shape. This ideal means women are fighting normal fat deposits in their bodies

and trying to achieve unphysiological weights. Research indicates that within the last ten to 20 years, there has been a shift in our society towards a thinner ideal shape for women. A North American study that looked at average weights of Playboy centrefolds and Miss America Pageant winners over 20 years, found that the pageant winners were almost invariably thinner than the average contestant. This trend is even more significant when we realise that the average woman under 30 has become heavier in the past 20 years.

The same study found that the number of diet articles in six popular American women's magazines had also increased significantly over the last 20 years. The media has sold and perpetuated the image of desirable women as slim and glamorous.

In Western society, fat women are called unattractive, unsuccessful, and undesirable. On the other hand, similar sized men can be seen as forceful, respectful, commanding attention and authoritative. These are very effective ways of taking personal power further away from women. Conflicts and struggles in adopting our bodies (our frontier) culminate in eating disorders and the accompanying emotional trauma.



Sharon Alston

Self-induced vomiting and overuse of purgatives can lead to metabolic disturbances (especially hypokalemia) which can result in potentially fatal irregular heartbeats. Kidney damage is also likely. Other complications include epileptic seizures, dehydration, erosion of teeth enamel and chronic hoarseness of the voice. Binge eating can cause acute stomach swelling.

Self help support groups for bulimics provide an environment where women can talk freely about their pain and difficulties, as well as sharing ideas they've found helpful. Support groups meetings are often the first time the secret is shared. It gives a great sense of relief for some women to discover they're not alone in their suffering, and that someone else can understand. Having a woman in the group who has overcome bulimia provides a positive role model. As well as providing informal networks of support, self help groups can become powerful lobby groups to combat the advertising which primes women towards such eating disorders.

Bulimic women can start to help themselves by keeping a record of everything they eat for two weeks, including the time, place and situation as well as each binge. Record how long bingeing and vomiting last, as well as how you feel afterwards and what you did.

After two weeks of recording, look at the chart and see if there are any patterns. For example, do most of the binges occur after the evening meal at home (maybe the only regular meal eaten that day); does bingeing often follow a particular emotional state, like feeling lonely or unloved, or is it a way of coping with stressful situations?

When you see a pattern, work out alternatives to food at these vulnerable times. This may include ringing up a friend, going for a jog, or just getting out of the house. Women have to find alternatives that work for them; something useful for one may be unhelpful for another.

Having three regular meals is important as this means you're not physically deprived, which can result in bingeing. Trying not to see food as an enemy, or rigidly divided into "good food" or "bad food" can

reduce the power food has in one's life, as well as reducing the guilt and self-hatred if you do binge.

If possible, explain to people you're living with that you are going to take responsibility for your eating and you don't want to be pressurised in any way.

SELF HELP RESOURCES

GROUPS

Bulimia self help support groups are run in Christchurch at The Health Alternative for Women (THAW), cnr Peterborough and Montreal Sts, ph 796-970. They have been run in Auckland at the Women's Centre, 63 Ponsonby Rd, ph Jasbindar 452-560 (w). There is also an Anorexic parents' support group in Auckland. Contact Mrs Ann Lumb, ph 678-493.

BOOKS

The Anorexic Experience by Marilyn Lawrence, The Women's Press Handbook Series 1984.

Bulimia: The Binge-Purge Compulsion by Janice Cauwels, Garden City, Doubleday, 1983.

Fat Is A Feminist Issue II by Susie Orbach, Berkley Books, NY, 1982.

The Slender Balance: Causes and Cures for Bulimia, Anorexia and the Weight-Loss/Weight Gain Seasaw by Susan Squire, Putnam, 1983.

The Art of Starvation by Sheila McLeod, Virago, 1981

The Golden Cage: The Enigma of Anorexia Nervosa by Hilde Bruch, Shepton Mallet, Open Books 1978

It's important to reward yourself for any progress you make; "I only felt like bingeing twice this week" instead of "I can't stop". Negative thinking and expectations can lead to negative behaviour. For some women just dealing with one day at a time is helpful. Think up your own

rewards for progress you make.

You need to refute and replace negative and perfectionist thoughts — "I have to be my ideal weight before I'm acceptable or loved" with "I'm worthy to be loved as I am". Women can practise this looking in the mirror and saying positive things about themselves.

Some women believe that if eating is the only part of a woman's life where she feels in control, it is important to enable her to feel in control in other areas of her life before tackling the disordered eating. When bingeing follows a stressful situation, bulimic women have found other ways of coping with that stress — taking time to rest and relax, learning to be more assertive with people who make demands, set time limits on what they will do for other people, being honest with themselves and other people about negative feelings, setting realistic goals. Some self help groups have found it a valuable exercise to write down positive things about themselves. They can dip into this list when they're feeling low before or after a binge. But women in any self help programme who expect a quick magic cure for bulimia will be disappointed. There are no easy solutions; recovery is slow and painful.□

1. K. Halmi, J. Falk and E. Schwartz "Binge eating and vomiting: A survey of college population", in *Psychological Medicine*, 1981, no.11
2. R. Pyle, J. Mitchell and E. Eckert, P. Halverson, P. Neuman and G. Goff "The incidence of bulimia in freshman college students", in *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 1983, no.2
3. C. Fairburn and P. Cooper "Self-induced vomiting and bulimia nervosa: An undetected problem", in *British Medical Journal*, Vol 284, 1153 — 1155
4. D. Garner and P. Garfinkel "Cultural expectations of thinness in women", in *Psychological Reports*, 1980, no.47

Jasbindar Singh is researching the extent of bulimia and how it affects women's lives. Any women who want to answer a questionnaire about bulimia, write to her c/- Pentlands Community Mental Health Centre, 19 Buchanan St, Devonport, Auckland 9. All replies will be confidential, and the results of the research will be sent to all the women who want to receive it.

LESBIAN OUT^{side} the LAWS

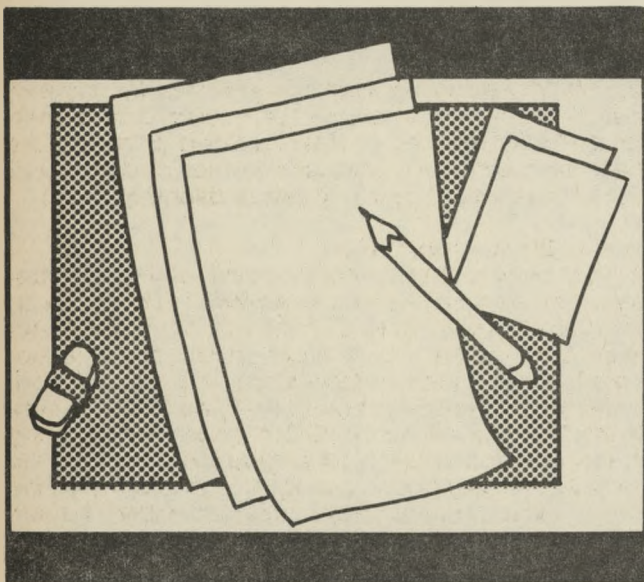
Chris Forbes outlines lesbian invisibility under the law.

As lesbian, you are invisible to the legislature in New Zealand. This reflects the lack of recognition of lesbians as a part of New Zealand society. The system simply does not deal with lesbianism except in areas where it has no choice. For example, there are a growing number of lesbians who have come out during their custody disputes. Our invisibility is no surprise. One has only to look at the slow pace of law reform relating to heterosexual de-facto relationships. Heterosexuals who live together in socially acceptable relationships still receive a raw deal in many aspects of the law compared to their married counterparts. The most blatant example is the non-applicability of the Matrimonial Property Act. There are other important areas in which unmarried heterosexual couples are not specifically catered for. They are, however, better off than lesbian partners/couples.

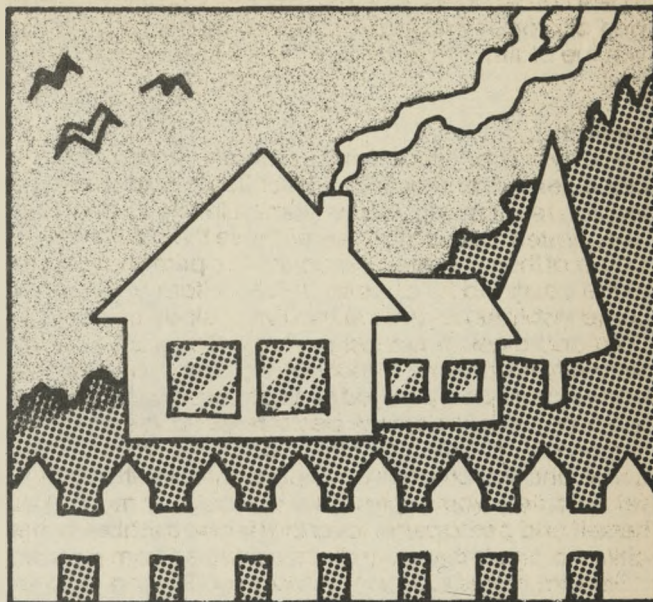
Death of a Partner

Real difficulties can arise in situations where one partner dies and does not leave a will, or alternatively dies leaving a will which makes no provision for her partner. Under the Family Protection Act 1955, the courts have jurisdiction to hear claims from a surviving husband or wife, children, grandchildren, and parents. Generally, awards are made when the dead person had failed in their moral duty to support family members. A partner in a lesbian relationship (or for that matter a live-in heterosexual partner) has no legal standing to make a claim.

Sharon Alston



The Law Reform Act 1949 enables claims to be made against a deceased person's estate if someone can establish a sufficient promise made by the deceased in her lifetime to provide for her in her will in return for her services. The surviving partner in a lesbian relationship may find some possibility of relief under this act. A common claim is of the traditional "house-keeper" variety.



The Administration Act 1969 provides specifically for cases where a person dies without leaving a will. Under this act a surviving husband or wife takes all or shares with the surviving children, depending on the value of the estate. This act does not apply to a surviving lesbian partner, or a surviving live-in heterosexual partner.

Separation and Division of Property

The New Zealand Family Court system has been hailed as one of the most modern in the world. However, even in this area lesbians in general are outsiders with little recognition. Married couples have very real resources available to them through the court's free counselling services in breakdown situations. These services are not available to live-in partners either lesbian or heterosexual unless there are children involved in the dispute. Lesbian partners can, of course, pay for counselling somewhere else. But it is more difficult for a lesbian couple to seek assistance with reconciliation or even conciliation in breakdown situations.

The Domestic Protection Act 1982 provides protection from domestic violence. No such protection is available for lesbian partners. We could get assistance, if we needed it, under the criminal law of assault and trespass. This is nowhere near as effective.

Women in lesbian relationships need to ensure that their respective property rights are clearly defined. If we disagree the presumptions of equal sharing under the Matrimonial Property Act apply only to married couples. It is common today for lesbians to jointly own real estate and chattels. To avoid any possibility of disputes some agreement should be entered into in every case. It is also common for one partner to own property and the other to contribute towards maintenance or improvements. Again, it is most important to have some form of agreement in case one partner needs to provide proof of ownership or contribution if the other partner leaves or dies. Failure to do so may mean one partner will lose money.

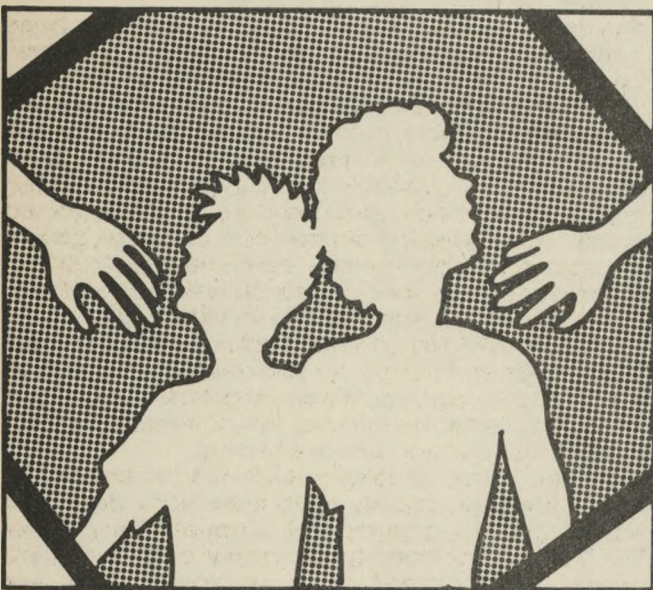
Difficulties sometimes arise when there is no agreement as to the distribution of jointly owned property. It may be necessary to make an application for partition or sale and division of the proceeds under the Property Law Act 1952. Trusts, which have been used for a long time by heterosexual live-in couples, could be useful to lesbian partners. Whether one party is holding all or part of property on trust for another depends on things like the claimant's contribution and the intention of the trust.

Custody

Custody is a big problem for women coming out of a heterosexual relationship with children and starting a lesbian relationship. Many women in this situation are desperately afraid that they will lose their children because of their preferred sexuality. The primary concern of the courts about custody is the welfare of the child. Some lesbians have recently won custody of their children and others have lost custody. Generally a wife's sexuality is only one factor among many, all of which are weighed up by the judge in accordance with what she or he believes is in the best interests of the child. Unfortunately, a wife will often leave the matrimonial home and the children on separation. She then has to set up a new home (probably without any money) for herself and perhaps her lover that is also suitable for her children. She is therefore disadvantaged from the start.

Several myths surround homosexuality and appear to have influenced judges' responses, eg homosexuality is an illness; homosexuals are emotionally less stable; and homosexuality is catching.

However, court decisions suggest an approach where the only relevance of a mother's lesbianism is its affect on the children. It is not a disqualifying factor by itself but only as it is shown to "affect the parenting capabilities" or "pose risk" to the children.



Benefits

The Social Welfare Department ignores the existence of lesbian relationships. With Domestic Purposes Beneficiaries, if there are two women in the house it would be a rare event for them to come looking under the bed for another woman's shoes. However, there are disadvantages in having no status. For example, sickness benefits will be paid on the single rate. Widow's be-



Sharon Alston

nefits are not available on the death of a partner. Income related compensation for accident victims is available to lesbians, but always in their capacity of a single person. The Accident Compensation Act 1982 lists potential beneficiaries, including spouses and people who, in the opinion of the corporation, have entered into a relationship in the nature of marriage. This may apply to heterosexual women, but it is very unlikely that the corporation would recognise a claim in a lesbian situation.

Immigration

The Minister of Immigration can permit entry and residency to the wife or husband of an applicant. Permits for de-facto spouses of New Zealand citizens have been granted, but it is unusual. A lesbian couple would not get a permit because of their relationship alone.

Human Rights Commission

It is unlawful to discriminate against any person because of sex, marital status, or ~~religion~~ or ethical belief under the Human Rights Commission Act 1977. The reference to marital status might protect heterosexual couples in de facto relationships, the act does not cover lesbian relationships. In 1979, the National Gay Rights Coalition asked the HRC to recommend adding sexual orientation to the other grounds in the HRC Act on which discrimination is illegal. In its 1980 report the Commission decided sexual orientation didn't have a status comparable with race, colour, sex and other terms in the act. The Commission recommended that the Crimes Act be reframed so no distinction was made between women and men. This vague recommendation left open the possibility of lesbianism being made illegal, and both lesbians and gay men protested vigorously against that decision.

There will obviously be no change in the Commission's attitude to lesbians and gays until an act like the Homosexual Law Reform Bill is passed. □

— A DISAGREEABLE FEMINIST —

and proud of it

Jill: When did you first become interested in feminism?

Dale: Difficult to put a date on it. Much more a period. A period of disillusionment, particularly as a supposedly happy housewife, becoming more interested in my job, facing the fact that the sort of life plan for the Australian middle-class woman was not one that I was partial to. There was a gradual move toward questioning what I was doing. Of course there were the daily arguments about washing the shirts, but there was also a much more fundamental argument about "What's it all for?" and "Is this it?" and "Do I just live out every day of the rest of my life like this?"

I can remember the first few women's meetings I went to and I just had this marvellous time. I can remember the famous night of discussing the orgasm and people just dying with laughter comparing notes. And then coming home to the front door and knowing that I had to put on a straight face before I went inside. Because it was one thing to go out to women's meetings; it was quite another thing to come home happy and having enjoyed them.

I faced the fact that I was really being quite deceptive and that the sort of me who was married and washing the shirts and going off to work each day, but never ever evading any of my domestic responsibilities, was a person I didn't particularly like, didn't want to be, didn't have much respect for.

I don't think initially I came out as angry feminist. I came out much more as an exploratory feminist. For me one of the biggest delights and biggest joys, which is not at all politically correct, is that I am a feminist out of curiosity... I want to know what the world could be like. When you grow up, as I did, with very, very narrow limits to reality, to suddenly understand that it's not real, that you can change it, that you can make your own decisions and your own choices, I think there is an enormous curiosity about that.

So a lot of my feminism is just sheer curiosity about what you can do, what are the limits. And I think



DALE SPENDER is the most prolific writer. She edits the *International Feminist Quarterly* and has authored or edited at least seven books of major significance to feminists. Although she has written about subjects as diverse as education and women's history, her greatest preoccupation has been with how men maintain power.

This has led Spender to probe the "hidden agenda" of sexism; the way reality is shaped by male control of language, space, knowledge and history. Women have learned to toe the line. "Male approval," she says in this interview with JILL ABIGAIL done in London late last year, "is the most insidious and dangerous strategy men have used against women... it colonises your mind."

All Spender's writing goes about unravelling the lies and giving back to women their history and their lives.

it's also about responsibility. I know I am daily more aware that I have had many, many more of the world's resources than is my share, as a white person and I just am ashamed sometimes of the extent to which I use the world's resources. I can't do a great deal, personally and individually, about changing that. The only thing I can do is try and use those resources in the most responsible way that I can. My test is always, am I utilising to the best of my ability all sorts of good things that have come my way. Now those good things are not a lot of money. They are a nice place in which to write and I am never cold and I get a lot of financial support from very good friends and family.

I can make choices in my life, and that's not the norm in this world for women. The norm is that your life is interrupted by violence, by malnutrition, by dodging bullets — that's the norm of experience for women. I don't really have to worry a great deal about some of the things that preoccupy so many of the women in the Third World. I think then I have a responsibility to use the time that's not spent searching for food, or trying to help children survive, in some sort of constructive way. So it's just a little bit, but it leaves my conscience reasonably at ease.

That's basically the sort of philosophy and it's the old, old feminist philosophy, which distresses me enormously because it sounds so close to Christianity it embarrasses me! Basically it is about trying to live in a "do unto others" philosophy and it's very simple and not very popular is it?

I loved your use of the term "disagreeable women" in Women of Ideas. You must certainly be a very disagreeable woman in men's terms. How have you actually got yourself into a position whereby you can make a living by editing a feminist journal and writing feminist books without at all softening your very strong radical stand? How have you actually wangled that position?

Sometimes with an enormous loss of honor and a great deal of deceit.

Because I'm not all that disagreeable while I am trying to get the contract, I assure you. I come home and feel quite shabby about the way I can occasionally wear my skirts and my high heels and smile sweetly in all the right places, which is I think what so many women have to do. I'm not disagreeable to the editor and to the publisher. I reserve it for my writing, in lots of ways.

But that's what I was actually referring to — that in your books you don't tone down your stance at all. I assume that the people in the publishing world do read what you are writing. Why do they let you come back with another book the following year?

They sell. I think it's very simple. And I also think that there is a complex relationship there because if they sold too well, I wouldn't be allowed back, because it would be seen to be swamping their image and their particular market. But I sell well enough to be a good proposition commercially, and not so well that I would challenge them.

*There is a feeling that I get from your work of great gusto and exhilaration. I love the kinds of tricks that you play by coining phrases like "men's studies" to describe the education system, and in *Women of Ideas* you choose not to name the men you are quoting from. That was wonderful. I do find when I am reading your work that I move up and down between laughing aloud with joy about things, and then being absolutely incensed and outraged by the evidence you put forward of what's happened to women. You mention yourself in your work, in fact, that you often have felt outraged and incensed. How do you actually cope with your anger?*

I think a lot of it gets channelled into the writing. And there are some days when, sitting there writing, I feel myself shaking, I am so angry about the way a particular woman has been treated. I think anger needs to be turned into something that can be more constructive. I feel quite a release of tension once I write about something, once I actually get it down and know that it's got some sort of substance there in front of me, instead of just being something that makes me feel immensely emotional.

So is that the way you have actually

avoided burn-out? Or have you avoided burn-out?

Oh, not burnt out. But that's partly Jane Fonda! My sister gave me Jane Fonda's video for Christmas and I started off and I could only do about ten minutes a day and now I do about 45 minutes every morning. And I am so fit, I want to take up weight lifting! No, I don't get depressed very often. I feel very good about — it's another day, and it's an opportunity to do something.

I think that's partly a reaction, too, to some of the earlier days in my life, as a young woman, when they seemed to drag, when life seemed to go so slowly.

It also comes from a mother who says "Today's it! This is it!" And I do very much live today what I can today. And I usually go to bed at night feeling very tired and quite good.

You mention in one of your books that there were stories in your family about women who had stood together in seemingly unlikely alliances — mothers-in-law who had supported daughter-in-law and so on. Is female solidarity, then, an idea that you actually grew up with?

"When women are consigned to the periphery - it's such a slight imperceptible move to fall off the edge into obscurity."

No, no, and that was always quoted as something that was unusual. But my grandmother, my father's mother, supported my mother in a very unusual alliance. Mother, who had come from a very secluded background and who knew very little about the world, was taken under my grandmother's wing and literally helped with things like contraception before she got married. I am talking about fifty years ago. That was astonishing.

The solidarity I grew up with was a mother who wanted two daughters. I often feel sorry for my brother, for a few minutes at a time! All she wanted was two daughters. From the day my sister was born — my sister is younger than I am — we were both told "You are the two luckiest people there are. You've got each other." Mum never had a sister. It was always something that she wanted. And she

structured very definitely that Lynne and I still feel that each is the most important thing the other has. Lynne is just so central to my life — which seems silly when she is 12,000 miles away. But you know, I write to Lynne just about every day. It's not an obligation, it's not a chore. It's because we actually do keep each other in touch — just like having a chat.

You've been living with a man for some years now, haven't you? Do you feel any conflict about that? I think you feel conflict about whoever you live with, in lots of ways. I probably felt as much conflict when I lived with my mum. First of all I think I have to state, absolutely categorically, that people have one very set stereotyped picture of what a relationship means when a male and a female live under the one roof. I don't think my life corresponds very much to the way many, many people do live their lives in those circumstances.

Basically I live a very independent life where I do very much my own thing and where I don't like any notion of being seen as a couple, where I have got friends who have known me for nine years and accuse me of having made up this man I live with, because they've never met him. I am quite happy to keep it like that. I don't experience the conflict that is supposed to come from merely living with a man. He's a very pleasant, supportive, understanding person.

I think there often are lots of problems about living with men. I'm not denying that reality. But I don't think you can assume just the opposite either, that simply by virtue of being a man he presents a problem. I mean in some ways he blooming well does, but in other ways I think that's such an oversimplification. I mean, he's a human being, he's got deficiencies and so have I. And in fact he is very tolerant of my inability to concern myself with domestic chores. I couldn't live with my sister like I live with him, because I'd feel very unkind about letting her do all the cleaning. I'd feel obliged to do half. But I don't feel obliged to do half with him, so it's much simpler.

I think the conflict usually comes when women feel that they are putting energy into a man when they would actually like to be giving all their energy to other

women. Are you actually saying that you don't put any energy into your particular relationship then? Is that why there's no conflict.

I think that's partly an answer, but it's also partly a denial. Because yes, I think every woman who lives with a man is putting energy into it and doing those management type things. I know if he comes home distressed or upset, I could cheer him up in a way that I don't think he'd begin to know how to put me at ease if I was emotionally disturbed. But by the same token, I'd also say that if I didn't talk to him for two weeks he'd assume I was busy. He wouldn't have any notion that he was being ignored or that he warrants my attention or that my role in life is to stay here and reflect him at twice his normal size when he comes in the front door.

My work is very, very important to me and I work long hours and I work at home. And I would shoot anybody who dared to interrupt or intrude on that — including him. He wouldn't even think of doing that.

Who are the women whose ideas have most inspired you?

Matilda Joselyn Gage, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, many of those women who were the suffragettes early in this century, Christabel Pankhurst, whose birthday is the same date as mine, Rebecca West — cheeky women, impudent women, women who've said no to behaving themselves and being polite and being deferential. I think there are basically two types of feminists. There have been those who've been good, who've tried to persuade men, to educate men. They might have been very honourable women but they weren't very successful in achieving their goals.

And there've been other women — basically my notion of disagreeable women — who haven't looked to men for approval. There is no way in the world I need male approval. In fact I think I'd feel rather uncomfortable these days if I had it. I grew up thinking that if men didn't approve of you, you didn't exist. That the only way to validate your existence was to be seen as approved of by men. I think it's the most insidious and dangerous strategy that men have used against women. I think it colonises your mind. And the thing that I take most joy in is the number

of women who've just been so "disagreeable" in the fashion, to turn some of the social codes which men have devised and which suit men, to turn them upside down.

People just go on using them because that's the way you were trained. And I think they're very good consciousness-raising activities, to turn those social codes upside down.

"I can remember the famous night of discussing the orgasm and people just dying with laughter comparing notes. And then coming home to the front door and knowing that I had to put on a straight face before I went inside."

The number of men who continue to interrupt, who continue to dominate the conversation, who continue to say "Now what you really mean in..." I just think that's outrageous and I am very quick to say so, and I think that (a) it earns you a reputation for being rude, but (b) I think it also makes people think about what it is they've been doing in a way they haven't thought about before. And that includes me. I know I can still make some of those errors. I'm still one of the first ones to rush in and rescue a man who's making a fool of himself, when everything tells me you should leave him there and let him make a bigger fool of himself. This whole thing about the loss of face of men — the reason I am talking about this is that Sally Klein and I are writing a book called *Reflecting Men at Twice Their Normal Size* and it comes from Virginia Woolf's statement that for centuries women have been serving as looking glasses for men. And we've suddenly just become aware of how every aspect of our daily lives is reflecting men at twice their normal size and how men get quite angry and feel deprived of their rights if you don't do it.

Now one of the reasons I can live with the man that I do is because I clearly don't do it, never have done it, and that's the basis of the

relationship. I've got better things to do than reflect a man at twice his normal size. Unless I want something — and I think that has to be said.

There are some women who need a great deal more than I do. It's no good saying you won't do it, if you're financially dependent and unless he feels good he is not going to give you the housekeeping...

In Women of Ideas you point out that the liberal idea that civilization progresses in an upward direction is in fact nonsense, that women, along with other oppressed groups, have often lost ground, and have to keep refighting for rights they once had. It's daunting, isn't it, to think that we can't actually afford to relax for a moment on any of the so-called rights we think we have now.

I think that's very true. You even see it with things like abortion reform. You know, you get an abortion law passed in this country and, unlike any other laws, you can't assume that now it's on the statute books, that battle's won. Because what will happen will be that within two years someone will propose new legislation to amend it and to take away what it's granted. And you have to mount the campaign over again.

What we have is a cyclical model and wherever we can observe the way the world works, we can see that it has seasons, that it has death and life, and death and life, that things come and that they go, and I think one of the ways that we have to start looking at the women's movement is most definitely in terms of that ecological model... And so if today looks a bit wintry and we look as though we're losing ground, we know with absolute certainty that it is followed by spring.

When I interviewed my old ladies for *There's Always Been a Women's Movement* that's what impressed me greatly, their philosophical notion about "Well, it comes and it goes. And this is the second time round. We have lived long enough to see it come again". They were amazed at the similarities and not just the similarities of different women with ideas, but the similarities in the way the movement's evolved. They just kept saying "It was just like this in 1920. It was just like this in 1920". *What doesn't seem to change or go in cycles though but seems to be a steady constant, is men's*

intransigence, men's loathing of women, men's fear of women. That doesn't seem to change at all. Men haven't received any of the messages, they haven't thought, they haven't analysed, they haven't looked at things, they haven't examined their inner selves. Isn't that dispiriting?

Yes, but is it because they're men or is it because they have got power? Because you could say exactly the same thing about whites, which would include you and me in it. And is it that you and I haven't honestly examined our own consciences and found ourselves culpable and tried to do something about it? But because whites as a group have not divested themselves of power, nothing changes. Men's power base is just phenomenal. It makes me so angry that you get two women in politics, or three women in banking, and we're told it's all right now. And if you had three men in politics and told them it was all all right, there'd be an uproar. As a feminist I would say that what I fight is the mentality of power. Sadly, most of the people I know who have that mentality are men. But I think if you take the power away you very quickly find a different mentality.

Men can, without power, examine, rethink, reanalyse, change. But part of their loathing of women is very definitely because women represent the threat to that power.

"Mrs Thatcher would never have been the Prime Minister if she'd shown the slightest interest in advancing her sex. The rules for being there are that she doesn't...."

So how do we divest them of it, then? We've been singularly unsuccessful so far, haven't we?
I've no idea. Not one idea. I don't know how you do it. It seems to me so huge and so entrenched I really don't know how you begin to unravel all those threads which support male power. Because it's at the material level, at an emotional level, at a financial level, a sexual level. I mean, the whole cult of heterosexuality is set up to give men prominence. And one of the reasons, as Adrienne Rich

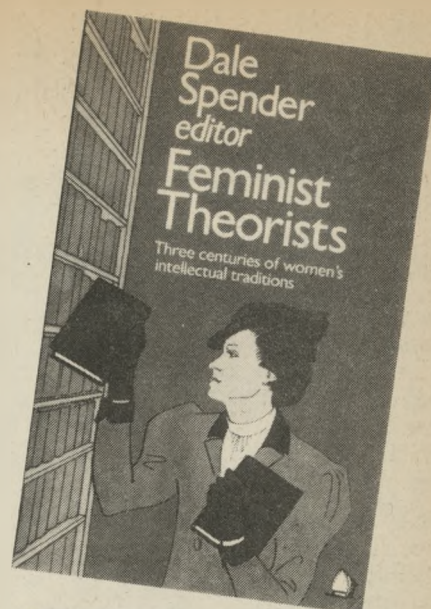
has said, that heterosexuality is compulsory, is because of this enormous fear men have that they'll be irrelevant if it weren't compulsory. That women would very quickly find that they liked being with women, that they had much more in common with women, that women are better company, they're more understanding, they don't interrupt. They are very pleasant people. And that men actually fear the ultimate irrelevance.

I think the only possibility of change is millions and millions of women the world over, each working on it in their own way and in their own things.

It won't be achieved by one sort of public grand movement of a woman becoming Prime Minister. And in fact, Mrs Thatcher has the same mentality of power as most men who are in power. Mrs Thatcher interrupts, Mrs Thatcher determines what will be talked about, Mrs Thatcher knows, she knows everything which is very much the characteristic of people in power, who know what is best for you.

I think it's power that is the issue rather than the sexes. But I think it all gets mixed up because it's basically one sex that's got the power. But I don't know that men are born that way, and I don't think I've got any basic objections to men as human beings or to their souls. What I object to, strenuously, strongly and consistently, is the way they learn to use the power that's available, the way they resort to violence, the way they resort to threats, the way in which they will exploit this world to maintain that position of power. That's my source of very deep anger. That they will continue to use the most awful means to maintain their present position. And of course, ironically, the more gains women make, the more independent women become, the more women control their own fertility — and you should never underestimate what an enormous gain birth control has been — the more women make those gains, the more men will put energy into retaining their supremacy. The nastier they will get. There is a lot of evidence that men can be a lot nastier now than they were even a hundred years ago. □

Janey Bedggood transcribed the tape; Gay Stanton retyped the edited interview



Dale Spender's books are available from the Broadsheet bookshop:

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WOMEN
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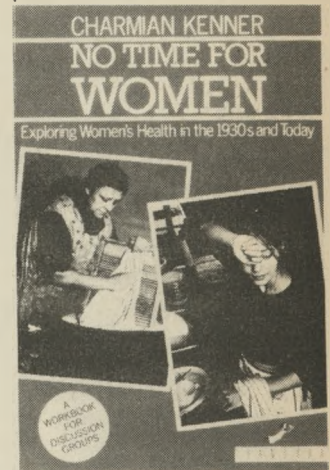
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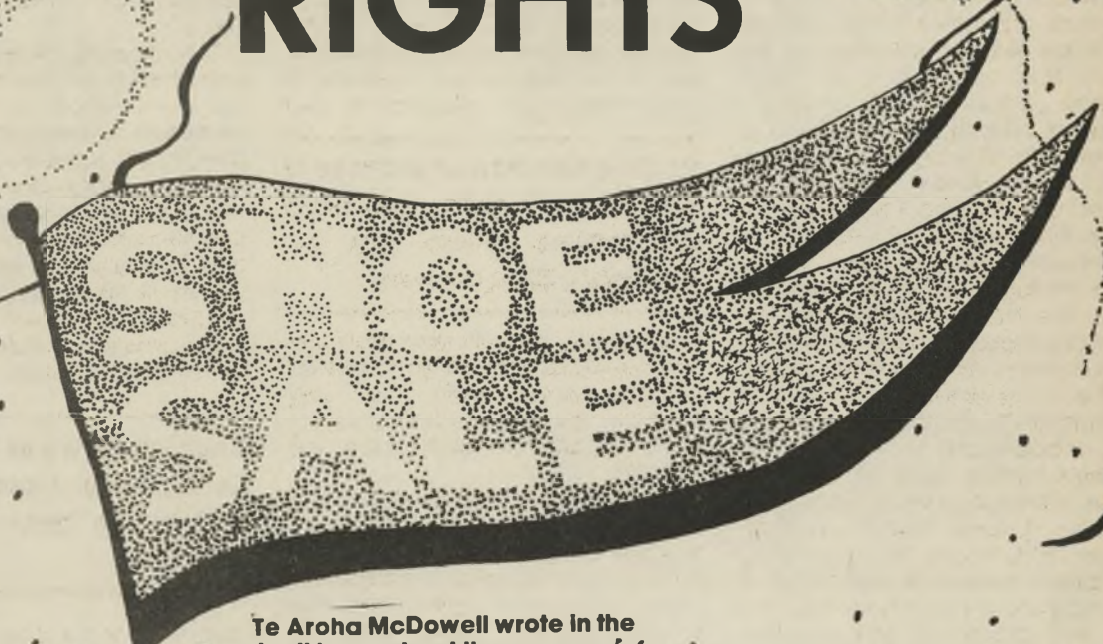
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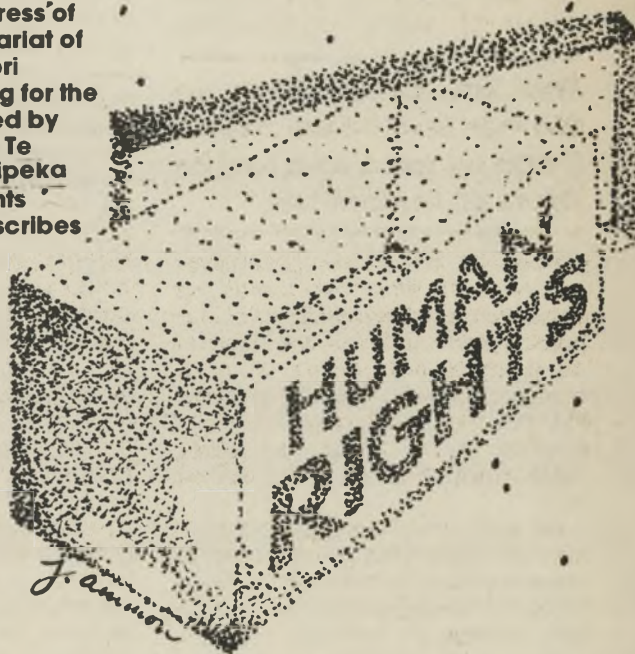
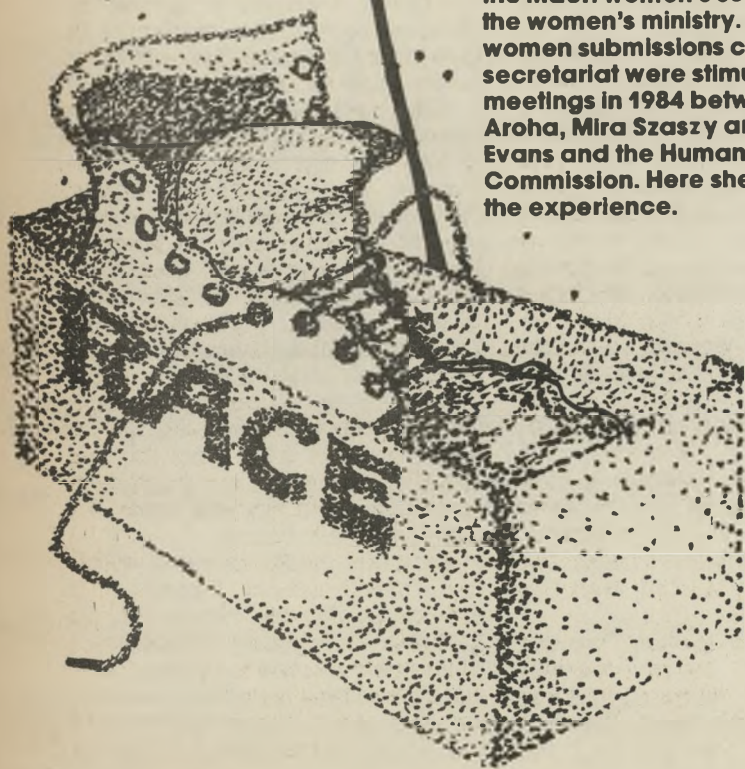
DOING FEMINIST RESEARCH Edited by Helen Roberts

THE GREAT HUMAN RIGHTS



SHOE
SALE

Te Aroha McDowell wrote in the April Issue about the progress of the Maori women's secretariat of the women's ministry. Maori women submissions calling for the secretariat were stimulated by meetings in 1984 between Te Aroha, Mira Szaszy and Ripeka Evans and the Human Rights Commission. Here she describes the experience.



The last bastion for every culture's self-interest is its judiciary and legislature. We had to look at the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and the Race Relations Office, although we knew that Maori challenges to these organisations could be time wasting and ineffectual. Our short experience with them was like happening on a shoe sale with only two pairs of shoes for sale. One brand is "human rights" and the other "race relations". They only come in one size which is not ours.

A lack of positive initiatives from the Race Relations Office on the status and oppression of Maori women does not advance its cause or ours, and its appraisal of the climate of indigenous opinion and assertiveness already on record is out of step. I doubted that Race Relations would take any initiatives unless we were madly keen on rugby or South Africa, or were, like the conciliator, "into the business of conciliation".

Mira Szasz said in a 1983 speech on the status of Maori women that the Human Rights Commission Act was inadequate in that it only defined human rights in its widest sense. Although quite powerful, that premise ignores already existing power imbalances. Not specifying the actual existence and rights of the indigenous minority women, the first occupants of this country, effectively made at least fifty

The UN Convention on Women is of no use unless it can be used as a tool by those at the bottom.

percent of the Maori population non-existent. When we assert our experience, monoculture says that human rights is about the rights of all women, irrespective of race, creed or colour, and that to claim the greater rights of one group over another is to show the same discrimination being complained of.

But before we started looking at the convention, the greater rights of the white majority in Aotearoa have been claimed over ours. We want to be liberated before we are possessed. But white women want to standardise and make us conform with all women. If they do that, our very essence, our difference, turns grey and insignificant. We need a historical

account of Maori women. Otherwise we are cast adrift from our natural environ Papatuanuku, and we assume the ephemeral substance and colour of smoky air.

To assert our rights as a distinct people means creating a vigorous vehicle or forum in which to claim, dispute, negotiate and express that best; something outside the playing fields of pakeha courts. Marae-atea provided that cultural forum for us to kick up the dust of dispute, bargaining and social fulfillment. But marae have been tokenised in the colonisers' minds, and discredited as a proper formal venue for the serious business of government or judgement. Not

In debate about women's speaking rights, the bad examples given are invariably Maori ones.

surprisingly, protests and struggles for power happen on golf courses, bridges and streets, the only domain left us in pakeha law in which to clamour and squeak our integrity.

There have been growing rumblings in established Maori women's organisations about our lack of national and international status. For several years, respected Maori women have had to accompany pakeha women's delegations to international forums, always in the minority, only to be reminded of their secondary associate status to "parent bodies"! Sometimes they are even directed to condense their speeches into a pakeha women's speech in their hotel room, as happened in Japan recently. An acquaintance talked about once being ostracised at an international conference for daring to say that Maori women may have an opposite view to that given by pakeha women. We share a similar plight to indigenous women of Japan, Hawaii, Australia, French Polynesia, Canada and America. Several Maori women give accounts of being asked to gather data and findings for pakeha women urgently scratching together some original indigenous material for their special overseas conference.

Pakeha central policy making places national Maori organisations like Maori Women's Welfare League and the New Zealand Maori Council squarely in a to-

kenist role for influencing policy making. Although they are theoretically apolitical, national Maori groups cannot possibly be apolitical in a two-party state. Like Pacific Islanders who have been left far behind, still in love with the church, Maori groups have been held back by their love for particular political parties. Both ultimately promise us nothing. We are socialised into accepting and padding their political system, but when we appear not to service their needs, we get left behind like the baby outside the shop.

This country forgets that we are bicultural creatures and our view of life is coloured by that. Religion, marriage, sovereignty, nation, culture, family, love and hospitality all have more than one cultural meaning in our lives, not adequately expressed or fulfilled by pakeha lifestyle, pakeha feminism or pakeha political ideology. Each of these subjects has its own history, including damage by white christian morality. Each needs a discussion

Our integrity is embroiled in that of our men — we do not have their choice of burdens.

paper of its own, reinterpreted by Maori women from our essential analysis in the order of oppression. Unravelling that from a deeply incultured colonised frame of mind is a complex task in itself.

I did not fully understand Maori women's legal, political and philosophical non-existence in this country until Mira Szasz, Ripeka Evans and I sat in on the HRC review committee's discussion of the commission's paper on the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. This convention, born out of the struggles of women at the bottom, has become a tool of privilege. Monoculture is a parasite, and a true parasite never loses its host. Monoculture resists the struggle for liberation, and co-opts when the struggle begins to fail.

The convention has been edited by monocultural hands. In Aotearoa, in the hands of the pakeha, its original principles may still have the same form, words and sense, but their liberation meaning will not reach Maori women who are closest to the women at the bot-

tom who originated them. The process of empowering can only happen from the bottom and the convention is of no use unless it can be used as a tool by those at the bottom.

Debating with the pakeha women on the HRC review committee, who were obviously familiar with the lingo and worked-over phrases of international conventions, reflected Maori women's general lack of informed involvement in international conventions. There are a handful of individual Maori women who are involved but that is because of their separate occupations, not because we enjoy mandate status in our own right as indigenous women of this country. This is an imperative for Maori women for legislation.

I was not bothered about being inadequately briefed for that lengthy exercise. It was an in-crowd with the Maori women in a minority. It probably helped that my mind was free of the introversion so obvious in the discussion paper. The central issues in my view were clearly our non-existence for a start, no originating history of each article, monocultural definitions of social institutions and conventions, monocultural interpretations of the contentious issues and values inherent in them, and monocultural commentary all round. There was some unease about our presence.

There was a debate in the review committee about a passage in the discussion paper on women's speaking rights. The bad examples given are invariably Maori ones. For example, Maori women not being permitted to speak on a marae in certain tribes. That angered me as I could see the parasite at work again. The question of whether or not the convention could be enforced to equalise Maori cultural practice takes attention away from which colour of man prescribes this hierarchy as it is. A better example to use would have been pakeha parliament. At least Maori women can attend our parliaments when they are in session. How Maori women resolve speaking rights is a complex issue, which is not eased by pakeha women playing mischief with our concerns, destroying us in the guise of attacking our men. Our integrity is embroiled in that of our men — we do not have the choice of burdens.

(Another example of a removal of speaking rights is the giving away of a bride by her father. It came with

the white man and his christianity. Do something about that, and we may be able to do something about the other cultural inequities that took their lead from that white christianity.)

It does not help having appointed commissioners who are white women from traditional rural occupational backgrounds. How can they convey Maori women's initiatives, which will question what they themselves did? It does not help having them preside over our activities and initiatives. We must have Maori women commissioners appointed.



Te Aroha McDowell

The discussion paper did not point out, as I think it should, that its interpretation is still monocultural. When this is so, I do not think such papers can be thoroughly discussed by Maori women until they have been reinterpreted point by point, sentence by sentence, and social institution. We have inherited the dilemma already raised at UN level and reflected by their paralysed forums. They have not dealt with or have left unclear the status and rights of indigenous minorities. The UN is the biggest monocultural parasite of them all. So we are paralyzed because it is, and because no one will allow us to define ourselves.

The discussion with the HRC committee left us disoriented, angry and belittled. We felt we had to challenge the commission about what that exercise said to us and what we felt about its role.

The three of us met Kate Birch, senior executive officer, and outlined our feelings about being nothing in this land of our birth. The commission has laundered the convention's language for New Zealand's monoculture. When and how would we ever become? Here she was from England interpreting our future for us.

Our status, priority rights and per-

ceptions as indigenous women have again been subsumed in the tussle over the convention between radical white feminists and fundamentalist christian white women. Among the latter, Maori women have figured more deliberately as front line lobbyists. I was interested to see one Maori woman marching on parliament wearing a taniko ensemble and wondered what that meant and who put her up to it. Does fundamentalist christianity align culturally with even a scrap of Maori? Someone is trying to imply that.

The Human Rights and Race Relations Commissions are not at the cutting edge of political decision making, but they do have a lot of affirmative power over public attitudes, education, men's minds and the respectability machine. In educating public attitudes, they help to advance research and theory, legitimate what the ostracised say, rewrite monocultural history, and help in job creation. But their professed impartiality slows down this work and does not help to confront our collective reality.

Why Maori women are regarded as a fearsome force is probably because we do not fall within predictable prescribed boundaries. Our own boundaries move with us and are often indefinable. Instituting some things will not get rid of our assertions. Monoculture's co-opting mechanisms have serious shortcomings. They depend on satisfying individual self interest, not on achieving autonomy of the oppressed.

With an assumption of impartiality, the language of the two commissions could not hope to be radical or empowering, or even aware at times. It is noticeable that social policy research is increasingly using politicising and critical terminology, and not soon enough too. Terms like "the domestication of Maori culture", "the death of white sociology" and "the 'germ theory' of disease-minded monoculture" are necessary to illuminate and decolonise the language of colonisation. Monocultural language has always stated only its reality and its agenda.

Maori women must invest in the best social structures for our aims. The connotations and traditions of "Human rights" in Aotearoa are so monocultural that we should consider changing the HRC's name and function to an Indigenous Rights Commission.□

WHAT'S NEW?

WORKSHOPS MEETINGS COURSES

AUCKLAND WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Making Changes — Self Esteem and Assertion for Lesbians — eight week evening course. Starts Tuesday June 4 — 7.30pm — 9.30pm.
Report on Cuba and Nicaragua — a one-off evening seminar and discussion facilitated by three people who have recently been to Cuba and Nicaragua. Thursday June 6 at 7.30pm.

Maori Language (Intermediate) — An eight week daytime course — starts Wednesday June 12, 9.30am — 11.30am.

Public and Effective Speaking a five week course — starts Monday June 10.

Women and Health an eight week daytime course held at Highbury House, Birkenhead. Phone 485-279 for more information. Starts Wednesday June 12 10am — 12 noon.

The above courses unless otherwise noted are held at WEA, 21 Princes St. Auckland. Phone 732-030.

AUCKLAND YWCA

Car Mechanics Theory and Practical — June 8 — 9

Photography A practical workshop for women who would like to learn more about the workings of a camera and how to improve their photographic skills. June 8.

Computers — How to make the best use of computers and related technology, exploring a keyboard and package demonstrations. June 15.

Home Handywomen An opportunity to learn some basic maintenance skills, including changing fuses, tap washers and door locks, preparation for and painting, hanging shelves and doors. June 15.

Lawn Mower Repairs 2 stroke) — A practical workshop held at Myra's Richmond Mower and Garden Centre, for women wanting to do minor repairs and maintenance of their motor mowers. Starts 1pm at 479 Richmond Rd.

Massage — An introduction to various methods of massage which can be used to alleviate the aches and tension experienced in everyday life. Please bring one small and one large towel.

Woodworking — Part 1: A three day workshop in basic carpentry. Assumes no prior knowledge of tools, woods or techniques. Venue: Technical Block, Secondary Teachers College, 52 Epsom Ave, Epsom. (NOT main entrance.) June 22 and 29, July 6.

Herbs — A full day for women wanting to know more about herbs and their many uses. Covers identification, culinary uses, healing remedies and gifts. June 29.

For more information ring YWCA Phone 778-763

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES

Justice and Society Courses
Justice and the Young Offender — A nine week course commencing Wednesday June 5

Welfare Law — Saturday seminar July 27

Uses in stress in Personal and Work situations — Friday June 7 and Saturday June 8

Using the System: An insiders guide to Parliamentary Process, with Marilyn Waring. Saturday June 8

Administration and Management in Voluntary Groups — Friday June 28 and Saturday June 29

SEXUAL ABUSE OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMUNITY SEMINARS

Wednesdays June 5. Two sessions from 10am — 12 noon and 7.30 — 9.30pm (repeat)
 Why are Women and children the victims of sexual abuse?
 Wednesday June 12, 10am — 12 noon and 7.30 — 9.30pm.
 Incest. What is it and why does it happen?

Wednesday June 19, 10am — 12 noon and 7.30pm — 9.30pm. Children and Sexual Safety. How to talk to your children about sexual abuse.

Wednesday June 26, 10am — 12 noon and 7.30 — 9.30pm. Sexual Abuse and the Law.

How to report rape and incest. Wednesday July 3, 10am — 12 noon and 7.30 — 9.30pm. The prevention of sexual abuse in the community. All

seminars will be held at the YWCA coffee lounge in Powderham Street. For more information phone Diana Dickson 84957.

WOMENS NATIONAL ABORTION ACTION CAMPAIGN (WONAAC)

PO Box 2669, Wellington. Meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at 8pm. Phone Di Wgtn 861-857 or Helen 848-541 for dates and venue. Copies of their latest poster advertising condoms as protection against AIDS, cervical cancer, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, syphilis and pregnancy are available for \$1 plus postage from their box number.

NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (INC)

— The North Shore Branch meets every 3rd Tuesday at 7.30pm, and fortnightly on Thursday mornings. For details phone 496-685 Auckland.

YWCA Box 9563 Wellington. Two weeks of "very introductory" computer courses in June: 4th — 5th Women in Voluntary Agencies and Mixed Group; 6th — 7th Working Women and Women at Home; 12th — 14th Mothers with Small Children (free creche). All these \$20 per person for 6 hours. 10th — 11th Unemployed Women (enquire for subsidy); plus 10th — 13th "Serious Computers for Women" \$80. 10th — 11th Retired People \$20. Also computer classes for children. Enquiries: Clare Jensen, YWCA Programme Officer, 850-505
 Note: All sorts of other classes for women begin in June.

Society for Research on Women, PO Box 13078 Johnsonville, Wellington. Phone 650-878. AGM Friday 14 June, 192 Tinakori Road 7.30pm. Allison Webber will speak on Women Against Rugby at 8.15pm. (see Women Against Rugby notice).

Wellington Women's Health Group in process of being set up: 1st floor, Newport Chambers, 50 Courtenay Place, Wellington, access: good.

For further information contact Gill Stannard, 851-909 work, 845-074 home.

Women's Support for Action Group. Meets last Thursday of each month, 7.30pm, at Pacific Island Resource

Centre, 41a Willis St, Wellington. To pool information, exchange ideas, get support for actions and campaigns of all kinds, and generally to keep in touch with what is happening for women in Wellington. Contact: Diana Crossan, 758-402, home, or Alison Sutton 728-798 work.

Women's Studies Association, Wellington branch, next meeting Monday 10 June, 7.30pm, Rm 210, Von Zedlitz Bldg, University. Contacts: Patricia Maunier, 720-367 work) or Anne Else (759-958, home).

Women Against Pornography, Box 475, Wellington, phone 893-038, meet every 2nd Wednesday, Newtown Community Health Centre.

March Against Pornography, Wellington, 7 June Assemble Civic Square, 7pm to express concern at the increasing incidence of violence against women and children caused by pornography and to demand that the government take action.

Women Against Rugby. Regular house meetings for action to stop the tour. Contacts: Allison Webber 849-307, Dinah Priestley, 727-275. PO Box 28097, Wellington.

Women's Studies Association Annual Conference, "Feminism, Racism and and Heterosexism in Aotearoa", August 23 — 25, Hamilton Girls' High School, \$35 for waged women; \$25 for unwaged. Includes meals and morning and afternoon teas. Write for enrolment form to WSA Conference, PO Box 13-027 Hamilton by July 30.

Australian Pacific Women's Peace Conference, WILPF, 28-30 June, YWCA Conference Centre, 5-11 Wentworth Ave, Dalington, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia. For info write to Gillian Fisher, Rm 301, 3rd floor, 156 Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW 2000, Tel: (02) 267-1105.

Coming

The Minehan Report, the first all-woman Radio New Zealand show. Mike Minehan hosts this show which focuses on women's issues. Hear it on 3ZB Christchurch on Fridays after the 10.00am and 8.00pm news.

Cont. on p. 48

AUCKLAND

ACWAR (Action Council for Women's Abortion Rights) PO Box 1236 CPO

ALRANZ PO Box 33-135 Takapuna

Broadsheet Magazine 43 Anzac Ave Ph 794-751

Broadsheet Bookshop 485 Karangahape Rd, Ph 398-895
Mailing address for both: PO Box 5799, Wellesley St Ak 1

CSMC (Council for the Single Mother and her Child) PO Box 47-090, Ponsonby Ph 760-476

Dyke News PO Box 1236, Auckland

Family Planning Association National Office: PO Box 68-200 CPO; Education Unit: 214 Karangahape Rd, Ph 796-182

Federation of University women, North Shore Branch, c/- Beverley Turner, 23 Sydney St, Takapuna Ph 496-685

Feminists for the Environment c/- Kathleen Ryan Ph 868-399

Feminist Lawyers (nationwide) c/- Linda Kaye, Ph 688-139

Feminist Teachers PO Box 47-095 Ponsonby

Fertility Action c/- 21 Albany Rd, Herne Bay

Halfway House PO Box 78-016, Grey Lynn, Ph 767-635

HELP Counselling for Victims of Sexual Assault, PO Box 68-165, Newton Ph 399-185

Indian Women's Support Group Ph Jesvier Singh 546-633

ISIS (International Feminist Network) 663B Te Atatu Rd, Ph 834-6629

Jigsaw PO Box 28-037 Remuera Ph 543-460

Lesbian Support Group 7pm Mondays, Ph 888-325

Lesbian Social Group PO Box 44-167, Pt Chevalier

Maternity Action Group, c/- 24 Ashton Rd, Mt Eden

Mediawomen PO Box 6860, CPO 794-179

New Women's Press PO Box 5294, Wellesley St, Ak 1 Ph 768-978

Papakura Women's Support Centre 122 Dominion Rd, Papakura Ph 299-9466

Rape Crisis Centre 63 Ponsonby Rd, Ph 764-404

Self Defence Teachers c/- YWCA

Snappedragon Women's Bookshop 256 Jervois Rd, Herne Bay Ph 768-978

South Auckland Family Refuge PO Box 22-036 Otahuhu, Ph 276-8868

Supportline (for abused women) PO Box 6450, Wellesley St Ph 396-167

Te Hauora Mo Te Rangatahi 70 Anzac Ave, Ak 1 Ph 399-126

WEL c/- national co-ordinator, Dorothy Wilson, 44 Castleford St, Auckland 7, Ph 817-4571

West Auckland Women's Centre 111 McLeod Rd, Henderson, Ph 836-2470

West Auckland Women's Refuge PO Box 45-063, Ph 836-4419 (10am — 4pm), 836-9099 (after hours)

Womanline (Telephone listening, information and referral service) 63 Ponsonby Rd Ph 765-173

(11am — 8.30pm Mon — Fri)

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

Women's Political Party PO Box 6608, Wellesley St, Ak 1

Women's Studies Asson (NZ) PO Box 5067, Ak 1

Working Women's Council PO Box 68-480, Newton

Working Women's Resource Centre TUC, 156 Great North Rd, Grey Lynn, Ph 762-156

BAY OF ISLANDS

WEL c/- Ellen Altschuler, Waimate Nth Rd, RD 3 Kerikeri

CHRISTCHURCH

ALRANZ PO Box 13-129, Armagh St

Battered Women's Support Group PO Box 2720, CPO

Canterbury Regional Women's Decade Committee PO Box 237, CPO

Coalition Against Violence on Women Penny Owen, PO Box 884, Ph 794-491

Incest Survivors Gp c/- 11 Carrington St, St Albans

Kate Sheppard Women's Bookshop 202A High St

Lesbian Line PO Box 21-069, Ph 794-796 Thurs 7.30 — 10.30pm

Lesbian Support Group meets at THAW, Peterborough Arts Centre, Tues 7.30pm

NOW PO Box 2720, Ph 881-030

Patients Rights Group PO Box 884, Ch'ch

Rape Crisis Collective PO Box 25-167, Ph 794-793

SOS PO Box 884, Ph 796-970

Self Defence Teachers Sarah Taylor, PO Box 13-538; Lynda Morgan, 11 Carrington St, St Albans; or contact YWCA

THAW (The Health Alternative for Women inc. SOS) Cnr Peterborough and Montreal Sts, Ph 796-970, PO Box 884, CPO

University Women's Group Student Union Building, Private Bag

WEL C/- Paddy Austin, 867 Main Nth Rd, Belfast

Women's Decade Festival PO Box 21-110, Ph 63-063

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

Women's Union PO Box 2258, CPO

WONAAC 154 Columbo St, Ph 33-254

DUNEDIN

ALRANZ PO Box 1289 GPO

Community Childcare Centre 86 Elm Row, Ph 770-950

Family Day Care Centre 76 Russell St, Ph 777-926

Collective for Women PO Box 446, GPO

Lesbian Drop-in 7.30 every first Mon of month, WRC, Rm 10 Regent Chambers, Octagon

Lesbian Line Ph 778-765 (Mon 7.30 — 10pm)

LMDG (Lesbian Mother's Defence — support group for lesbian women). PO Box 11-009 Musselburgh

Rape Crisis Centre Rm 6 Regent Chambers, Octagon, PO Box 5424 GPO, Ph 741-592

SOS Knowhow PO Box 446, Ph 775-502 or 36-284 (after hrs.)

Women's Refuge PO Box 8044, Ph 771-728

Women's Resource Centre Rm 10 Regent Chambers, Octagon, 2

— 5pm Weds, (books, space, coffee).

GISBORNE

Lesbian Support Group PO Box 1398

Rape Crisis Centre PO Box 1398, Ph 83-857

Women's Centre PO Box 1398, Ph 76-247

Women's Refuge PO Box 1398, Ph 81-788

HAMILTON

Maori Women's Centre PO Box 1560, Hamilton

Rape Crisis PO Box 1560, GPO, Ph 80055 (6pm — 6am)

SOS 155 Galloway St, Ph 65-474

Waikato Women in Education Rebecca Judd, PO Box 13027 GPO

WEL PO Box 9581 Hamilton North

Women's Centre PO Box 7025, Subway Shops, Claudelands Bridge

Women's Studies Resource Centre University of Waikato

Working Women's Council c/- Barbara Ware, PO Box 80 GPO, (national office, PO BNox 14-042 Enderley)

HOKIANGA

WEL PO Box 55, Opononi

HUNTLY

Women's Group c/- Judy Wilson, Rover Road

INVERCARGILL

Gayline Ph 66-243

Southland Women's Support Group PO Box 676 CPO, Ph 82-710

SOS PO Box 676, CPO, Ph 86-648

LOWER HUTT

Women's Refuge PO Box 31-073, Ph 727-072 (24 hrs) or 689-325 (Office at Community House)

MARLBOROUGH/

BLENHEIM

NOW and SOS PO Box 607, Blenheim

Women's Emergency Refuge PO Box 699, Blenheim, Ph 84-099

MASTERTON

WEL PO Box 201 GPO, Penny Bunny, Ph 88-835

NAPIER/HASTINGS

Hastings Women's Emergency Centre, PO Box 328

Hawkes Bay Gay Socy PO Box 138 Napier

Napier Women's Emergency Centre PO Box 676, Ph 436-515

SOS 28 Bristol St, Napier, Ph 438-484, 600 Gordon St, Hastings, Ph 68-642

WEL 10 Bay View Rd, Napier

NELSON/MOTUEKA/

GOLDEN BAY

ALRANZ PO Box 476, Nelson

Lesbian Support Group meets Tuesdays, 7.30pm Women's Centre

Nelson Women's Emergency Centre PO Box 832, Ph (Lifeline) 87-566

Nelson Women's Centre and Rape Crisis 320 Hardy St, Ph 82-407

Onekaka Feminist Front c/- Liz Thomas, Washbourn Rd, RD 2, Takaka

Rape Crisis Moteuka Ph 89-045; Golden Bay Ph 58-099; Murchison Ph 390

WEL PO Box 145, Motueka c/- Kate Light Ph 89-482

WIN (Newsletter of the women's movement in Nelson) c/- Community Education, 324 Hardy St

NEW PLYMOUTH

WEL c/- Vicki Dungan, 112 Pioneer Rd, Ph 510-869 (night)

Women's Centre 66 Brougham St, Ph 84-957

Taranaki Women's Refuge and Rape Crisis contact Women's Centre

OAMARU

Women's Group Philma Ann Phillips, Fl 3/10 Mersey St

PALMERSTON NORTH/

MANAWATU

ALRANZ PO Box 639, CPO

Rape Crisis Centre 165B Broadway Ave, PO Box 637, Ph 76-805

Women's Health Collective Old Firestation, Cuba St, Ph 70-314

Mail to 11 Glasgow St

Women's Refuge PO Box 573, Ph 72-057

Womyn's Resource Centre PO Box 4253, 165B Broadway Ave, Ph 774-26 Open Mon — Fri, 10am — 3pm

DIRECTORY & WHAT'S NEW?

ROTORUA/TAUPO

SOS 8 Taupo View Rd, Taupo
WEL c/- Susan Chrisp, 90 Invergarry Rd, Taupo
Women's Refuge PO Box 1652, Rotorua, Ph 476-210

TAURANGA

NZ Women's Health Network Newsletter c/- Sarah Calvert, PO Box 2312
Rape Crisis PO Box 368
Tautoko Wahine c/- Orewa Ohia, 109c Maungatapu Rd
Women's Centre PO Box 368, 42 Grey St (Govt Life Bldg) Ph 83-530
Women's Refuge PO Box 753, Ph 84-012

TE AWAMUTU/THAMES

Te Awamutu Feminists c/- Carol Lamb, 111 Hazelmere Cres, Ph 4485; c/- June Bright, 20 Thorncombe Rd, Ph 5901
Thames Women's Refuge Centre PO Box 93, Ph 89-830 (24 hrs)

UPPER HUTT

Family Refuge Centre PO Box 40-051, Ph 257-997

TIMARU

Aorangi Women's Health Centre PO Box 783
Lesbianline Ph 84-409, Thurs 7 — 10pm

WAIRARAPA

Women in Agriculture and Affirmative Action c/- Danna Glen-dinning, Box 45, Martinborough

WANGANUI

Women's Network 76a Koromiko Rd
WONAAC 56 Parsons St, Ph 42-291, 44-939

WELLINGTON

Access Radio 783 khz, Woman Zone. Sundays 10am Lesbian programme, Sundays 11am Contact the collective via Access office at Radio NZ, Ph 721-777
ACWA (Advisory Committee on Women's Affairs) State Services Commission, Private Bag, 3rd Fl, National Provident Fund Bldg, 1 The Terrace, Ph 722-834
ALRANZ PO Box 19-052, Ph 758-450
Circle Magazine PO Box 427
Federation of University Women PO Box 2006, CPO
Fertility Action PO Box 5043 Wtn
Hine Tu Kaha Iris Roberts, Fl2, 12 Dorset Way, Mairangi
Lesbian Line Ph 898-082, Tues — Thurs 7 — 10, PO Box 427
Lesbian Club contact Lesbian Line
Kidsarus 2 PO Box 9600
Ministry of Women's Affairs see ACWA
Non-Sexist Resource Group (feminist teachers working in the Wtn region) PO Box 300, Wtn Ph Raygun Macdonald 846-421 after hours
NZ Working Women's Council PO Box 27-215
Porirua Women's Health Group 215 Bedford St, Cannons Creek,

PO Box 53-055 Ph 376-135

Rape Crisis Centre PO Box 11-389 CPO, Ph 898-288

Society for Research on Women in NZ (SROW) PO Box 13-078 Johnsonville

SOS PO Box 28-099

Spiral PO Box 9600

The Women's Place (feminist bookshop) 289 Cuba St, PO Box 19-086, Ph 851-802

Values Women's Network Ph 797-611

WEL PO Box 11-285, CPO; PO

Box 1491 Paraparaumu Beach

Wellington Women's Health Group 1st fl, Newport Chambers, 50 Courtenay Pl c/- Gill Stannard Ph 851-909 (w) 845-074 (h)

Women Against Pornography 28 Hanson St, Newtown PO Box 475, Wtn Ph 893-038 Meets every second Wed 7.30pm

Women against the Sexual Abuse of Children PO Box 3260,

CPO

Women for Peace PO Box 9314 Wtn, Contact Celia Lampe, Ph 758-063 after hours

Women's Refuge Group PO Box 16-079 Courtenay Place, Ph 736-280

Women's Support for Action Group c/- Diana Crossan Ph 758-402 and Alison Sutton 728-798 office hours. Meets last Thurs of each month

Women's Studies Assn Wtn Branch PO Box 5043, Wtn Contact Penny Fenwick Ph 727-666 office house or Anne Else Ph 759-958 after hours

Women's Action Committee NZ Students Assn, PO Box 9047, Courtenay Pl, Ph 856-669

WOMNAAC PO Box 2669, CPO
YWCA recreation Officer, Ph 850-505

WESTPORT

Women's Support Group 38 Russell St

WHAKATANE

SOS Ph 24-757
Women's Collective PO Box Ohope, or PO Box 453 Opatiki Ph 85-355

WHANGAREI

NOW and WEL PO Box 4294, Kamo
Rape Crisis Group 43 Bank St, PO Box 913 Ph 71-812 (office) or 71-537 (crisis)

ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS

This directory is published irregularly. It is important to keep it updated, and we cannot check addresses and details, so please advise us of any changes. Thankyou to those women and groups who sent in corrections.

THE 1985 BNZ WRITERS AWARDS

★ BNZ Katherine Mansfield Award

1st \$1,000 2nd \$500

★ BNZ Novice Writers' Award

\$500

★ BNZ Young Writers' Award

\$300

ENTRIES CLOSE
26 July 1985
Entry forms available from all BNZ branches

Entries and all correspondence should be addressed to:
Bank of New Zealand Writers' Awards,
C/- New Zealand Women Writers' Society Inc.,
PO Box 11352, Manners Street, Wellington.



Bank of New Zealand

STROKES AND ART ATTACKS

EARTHQUAKE TOWN,
Dunlop, Beverley,
Hodder and Stoughton
1984 \$13.95

Dunlop has based the events of her story on the 1931 Napier Earthquake, the worst earthquake in New Zealand's history.

She transfers the earthquake to an imaginary North Island town, Clifton, on the 13th February, 1984. The narrator of the story is 13 year old Megan, who has 2 parents, rather unusual in teenage stories these days, and a brother called Don. Her family has offered a temporary home to Lilian and Cecil, children of a widow (friend of Megan's mother) who are not much liked by Don and Megan. Megan's best friend is Kit Foster, who wears glasses and is bright at school.

The book narrates the day of the earthquake from 7.30am when the children are getting ready for school, through the earthquake itself at 9.00am, the collapse of the school, the rush of people to the beach, the tidal wave, the children's escape, fires in the town, the discovery of a secret in an old house and final reunion with the children's parents at 7.30pm in the evening.

The description of these dramatic events is vivid, the dialogue satisfactory and the narrative exciting. Naturally in a book of this type there isn't time for character development. It is a straight-forward, unpretentious tale which reads well. The cover is colourful and eye-catching.

This is Dunlop's third book for the early teenage market and like the second, *The Poetry Girl*, has a girl as the central character. Megan is a resourceful, practical girl who copes well with danger and disaster.

It is good to see the increasing number of New Zealand written books for children and teenagers. This book would appeal to readers of 10 to 14, boys and girls. □

Helen Watson



GROUNDWORK by Renee
New Independent
Theatre:

director, Hester Joyce
design, John Verryt
Working Title Theatre
Players:

Patupatu Ripley,
Joanna Paul,
Dawn Underwood,
Judith Gibson,
Stephanie Johnson

The bellowed commands and ringing anthems of the 1981 Springbok tour resound through *Groundwork*, the sinister chant of Move returning, like a Greek chorus, to

comment on and give perspective to the action. The play is concerned with relationships between women—mother and daughter, close friends, protestors, and cell mates. Out of the noise and frustration of the act of protest and the condition of imprisonment erupt intimate life stories and painful memories. Other women intrude; Ellen's mother, her mother's nanny and Trudi's dead daughter are recalled and dismissed, stretching the scope of the cell confines.

Five women sit in two different cells, on the Saturday of the last match in the 1981 tour. Only one, Trudi, an older

woman picked up by the police for being drunk and disorderly, is not a tour protestor. Ellen Hama has been propelled to protest because of her vague desire to make the world a safer place for women and children. White dyke Cindy says she is trying to destroy her own culture, or the male part of it at least, as represented by her rugby-playing brothers. Emma, a committed activist, is an obvious target for police. The mysterious Fraser tells them she was merely in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Once Ellen and Emma's close childhood friendship is explained by flashback, it is gradually revealed how their relationship has been torn apart by their different viewpoints on the tour. Emma sees a parallel between the oppression of the South African blacks and the Maori situation; the act of protest becomes a matter of Black Pride to her. Whilst Ellen recoils horrified from the violence at Hamilton, to Emma the victory (of stopping the game) is more important than the pain suffered. The tour issue is like an earthquake, creating cracks in the status quo that cannot be healed.

Groundwork raises many issues vitally relevant in this country, most persuasively perhaps the idea of the importance of tupuna, which provides soul and security amongst the chaos of 'civilised' life. The songs and war chants provided by the unseen (and frequently sinister) chorus have strong, if differing, connotations for everyone both in the play and watching it; this is New Zealand history, about to be re-enacted off the stage at this very moment. Working Title Theatre come up with strong, convincing performances, and if the polemic is laid on a little too thick at the end of the play, the message is thought-provoking and well communicated. □

Paula Morris



Top: Dawn Underwood and Joanna Paul in *Groundwork*.



Above: Hester Joyce, Renee, respectively, director & author of *Groundwork*

LESBIANS: AS WE SEE OURSELVES

A VHS colour video made in Auckland by the lesbian community

"I thought that Lesbians were these people that lived in Europe" — one lesbian recalling her former thoughts on lesbians.

Prior to 1984, no film or video was available in New Zealand made by or about lesbian women. Early last year some of the Auckland lesbian community began work on this video. Fifty minutes long, *Lesbians: As We See Ourselves* is a wide-rang-

ing work — with interviews, Circe, a lesbian softball team in action, together with music from Freudian Slips, Maxine Feldman and the Topp Twins.

The video is particularly aimed at straight women, showing that what lesbianism means is giving women primacy in your life — emotionally, sexually, personally, socially and politically. Being a dyke is not just a bedroom issue.

Women talk about common reactions when they're up front about their lesbianism — "Saying you're a lesbian is like you've just farted in public!" Usually there's a long uncomfortable silence, and then the subject's politely changed.

The video begins with a group of lesbians talking about the problems of heterosexism — the presumption that heterosexuality is the cultural norm — they also speak about when they first recognised/chose their own lesbianism: "It feels like coming home, not coming out...."

The second section deals specifically with lesbian mothers and the problems they face with custody battles, and hassles with judges and ex-husbands trying to interfere in their personal lives. The children of lesbian mothers talk about their feelings about lesbianism, what they think of their mum's lover, and how their school friends react to it all!

The video also shows lesbian women learning self-defence, which as one woman said is "just another part of gaining control in my life."

A black lesbian woman talks about the triple oppression she faces, but as the video producers themselves have acknowledged, the video is primarily focused on white middle class women.

What this video wants to show is all the positive things it means to be a lesbian, despite all the hassles, prejudices and shit people heap on us.

So what does lesbianism mean to us? In Jess Hawk Oakenstar's final words, "It's amazing".

The video is available for viewing by groups/organisations. It costs \$50 to buy or \$15 (negotiable) to hire. Write to Debbie Moran, 61 Selbourne St, Grey Lynn, Auckland 2.

K. Thompson

Circe lesbian feminist soccer team.

FROM MENSTRUATION TO BROADCASTING

Margaret Sheffield is a BBC broadcaster and the author of a series of sex education books. DIANE PERCY talked to her when she recently visited New Zealand.

Margaret Sheffield was recently back in New Zealand after many years living and working in London to arrange for the launching of the third in her series of books on sex education. Her work in London has been mainly with the BBC, in the field of education.

Menstruation is the title of this latest book. Aimed at premenstrual girls, it will aim to present the subject clearly and accurately, while deliberately avoiding the diagrammatic-biological approach of so much sex-education literature. Judging by her previous books, *Where Do Babies Come From* and *Before You Were Born*, both also produced in collaboration with illustrator Sheila Bewley, Margaret Sheffield's introduction to menstruation should be attractive, human, non-threatening, positive and good to look at. Margaret feels strongly that, for far too long, the subject has been treated as secret, dirty and embarrassing — she was shocked to see in a public lavatory in Auckland the disposal can for sanitary towels trademarked RENTOKILL! as if the whole thing was something filthy. She wants, through her work, to make it plain to absolutely everybody especially young girls, that menstruation is absolutely universal. She would like every young girl to under-



stand, before it happens to her, that it happened to her mother, her grandmother, back through history, and it happens here and now to every woman, everywhere.

Margaret Sheffield feels very strongly that sex education should be an integral part of the educational process, a natural and normal part of growing up. Children have the right to know. The reticence of the New Zealand educational establishment in tackling the subject disappoints and appalls her. Sex is universal, and its universal nature ought to be the basis of understanding. Parents often fail in their duty through shyness or lack of interest, and it is up to the educational establishment to fill the gaps. In England the youth culture has been far better informed from various sources — the education industry has kept up with what has been happening elsewhere in society. New Zealand needs to develop a more enlightened attitude.

In her many years with the BBC, Margaret Sheffield has seen a considerable change of attitude. Her particular interest in sex education has been part of a wider feminist philosophy which has found expression through various aspects of her work, both in broadcasts to schools, and in her work with the Open University. As a member of the Faculty of Education she is not limited "educational" topics. The work of the department embraces a good deal of social science. Much of the work is related to the analysis of education in terms of inequality of opportunity in employment, and elsewhere in society. Gender, feminism, unemployment, ethnic minorities are some of the topics she has covered.

She sees the roles of radio and television as powerful and profound and feels very strongly that women and minority groups must find ways into the establishment, and learn to use the media effectively as social tools. Recently, as guest of the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Development, she ran training courses on broadcast production for

women from all over the Pacific. While these courses dealt mainly with techniques, she felt the main issue of the course was politicising women, encouraging them to make programmes about women in real-life situations, and to analyse the politics behind their work; to use their access to the media as a tool to consciousness-raising.

It seems a long way from menstruation to broadcasting, but they are both part of Margaret Sheffield's life. As a woman and a broadcaster, an observer and an activist, she has been in the front row of the women's movement. I asked if she feels optimistic about the growing awareness of women.

Everybody's ideas have been changed on the matter of women not getting a fair deal. I think it must be one of, if not the major social revolution of the century. It's all-pervasive and it's nice to be in the middle of it. □

Where do Babies Come From? by Margaret Sheffield is published by Jonathon Cape and is available from Broadsheet for \$6.95. Before *You Were Born* retails at \$6.50.

**WAXING MOON LESBIAN
ARCHIVES CATALOGUE.
NUMBER ONE. AUTUMN
EQUINOX MARCH 1985
COMPILED BY
ZOE CATHERINE ALICE
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HELENA AND SUE.
PRINTED BY THE LESBIAN
OWNED AND ENERGISED
PRINT CENTRE,
AUCKLAND, 1985 \$8**

This catalogue represents the first of its kind for the lesbian woman of Aotearoa. With it and behind it is the energy and dedication of a woman who has worked hard to bring an idea to a realization. An idea that will help to establish our lesbian herstory and give validity to our lives and lifestyles. It is an exciting and emotional thought to know that at last we are going to be on record and accessible to the generations of lesbian woman after us.



The archives catalogue is the first indexed record of written articles, published and unpublished, newsletters, photographs, music scores, posters and personal letters — any information and material relating to lesbians and lesbian lifestyles that has been collected and stored in the archive itself.

Zoe Catherine Alice developed the idea for an archive while working on a PEP scheme in the Womens Studies Resource Archives at Waikato University. In the introduction to the catalogue she says, "I was struck by the excitement I felt when I discovered the occasional newsletter written by lesbian women who had lived in Hamilton nearly a decade ago. I thought of the lesbians I have known in Hamilton who have passed through as invisible women. I realised our herstory was only coming to us in fragments..."

The catalogue lists a wide

range of contents followed by a well laid out section on the Waxing Moon classification system. There is also a page on a glossary of library terms which is helpful to any of us who have trouble unravelling the mysteries of library language.

The main body of the catalogue involves bibliography details of the material collected and stored in the archives. Subject headings or categories are set out in alphabetical order and are clear with wonderful bold type.

The range of classifications is extensive. The section on art includes eight subsections, including drawings, printers batik, and photography. The herstory section looks exciting with matriarchy, witchcraft, the herstory progress of gay pride and lesbianism, to lesbianism and feminism of the 1980s. Thirty subjects are listed, including black lesbians, bars and clubs, car-

toons and humour, lesbian mothers, older lesbians, young lesbians, sport, slogans. Almost anything that lesbians do has been classified. I am sure that as more and more material is collected by the archives, the range will continue to grow because there is nothing that lesbians don't, won't and can't do.

Quite a lot of the published material is from overseas journals and magazines. However, it was helpful to have the Aotearoa material marked with an asterisk for easier identification. I felt hesitant to be critical of technicalities in the catalogue because I recognize that undertakings such as this require a lot of hard work and wominenergy with a few resources at hand. Yet the proof reading disturbed me because some spelling mistakes left me wondering what some words actually were. This means that I have missed out on some information. I also would have liked more information on the overseas sources that were cited. For example the *Journal of Homosexuality* is the source of a few published articles and yet there is no reference to it under the list of publications given at the back of the catalogue.

Initially, I did find it difficult to follow and understand the way the material has been presented. I wonder how interested some womin might be in the catalogue if its uses and purposes are not recognizable. It is not made clear how the archives might be used as a resource to us now. It is stated that some personal material given to the archives would be kept closed. But I wondered if it is possible to get copies of some of the material which isn't personal. Zoe Catherine Alice has given an open invitation to any lesbians to visit the archives which is situated in her own home. She also encourages lesbians to contribute anything about their lives and lifestyles. This includes the idea that we could specify in our last will and testament that our lesbian herstory be donated to the archives.

The catalogue represents a

valuable resource. The most obvious place for it is in the libraries, public and schools, womin's centres and womins educational centres. However, I think its potential is much greater than that as a personal resource for lesbian womin. There are three things that may limit a wider distribution. There is no indication on the cover of what the book is. While the cover design is very interesting it does not attract attention. I'm wondering if a bold title might have helped. Also the cost is very high at \$8 which means that few of us could afford to have it in our own bookshelves. I would like to see the catalogue and the archives more persistently advertised so that a wider interest can be stimulated for the idea. I am sure that many more contributions would be made once the lesbian community is aware of it and how it can be used.□

Anthea

**BLACK WOMAN
presented by Wanjiku
New Independent
Theatre, until May 18**

"Black Woman" is a performance rather than a play; excerpts from six different works are assembled together and presented as analogous parts of a larger story. Wanjiku employs different voices and mannerisms for each person, and is instantly convincing.

*Wanjiku adds her voice to protest against the proposed All Black tour to South Africa.
Gil Hanly super imposed the images.*



Wanjiku

Gil Hanly

Her face can convey sorrow, pain, anger and innocence in quick succession; in an instant the naivety of a young girl arriving in America is transformed to the bitterness of an old woman disillusioned after years of servitude. An impressively strong performance from Wanjiku is combined with skilfully stark lighting for maximum dramatic effect. Music, ranging from traditional African through Billie Holiday to Rasta, is used to both join and comment on each segment, culminating in the dance that shows the character Ntombi symbolically breaking out of her Soweto prison.

Wanjiku uses effective mimes and quick costume changes to define her different environments, which include

urban Africa and America; the old, crippled woman of the second segment, with her patchwork dressing gown and cracked, rasping voice, is evocative of all the fear and isolation of life in the ghetto. In the final piece, a poem written by an Iranian woman, Wanjiku declares herself to be, in effect, Everywoman: she is a mother, sister, and, above all else, a woman. Her violence is a response to her oppression; she is "a woman whose work has created hands suitable for taking arms". Wanjiku is an unfaltering, dynamic artist and "Black Woman" is a superb amalgamation of provoking stories, by Edgar White, Ama ata Aidoo, Steve Carter and R. Mshengu, that demand to be heard.□

Paula Morris



Access Radio, Wellington, 783 Khz. Listen on Sundays to *Woman Zone*, the feminist programme, 10am, followed by the *Lesbian* programme at 11am. New members welcomed to the collective — contact us via the Access office at Radio New Zealand, phone 721-777. We'd also welcome contributions from outside Wellington — apparently we can be heard from Wanganui to Blenheim!

Amnesty International — is pleased to announce that the human rights reading room is now available for your use. Located at Room 505, Canterbury Arcade, Queen St, Auckland. Open 10am — 4.30pm. Tues — Fri. Phone 34520 (Auck) for further information. Canterbury Society of Arts —

Women by Women, a photographic exhibition which coincides with the women's festival '85 being held in Christchurch over Queen's birthday weekend, which marks the end of the international decade for women. Exhibition closes June 3. The art gallery is at 66 Gloucester St, Christchurch.

The Red Overalls, Concept Marketing have reissued this non-sexist children's book by Jane Buxton and originally published by Kidsarus. \$6.95 from bookstores.

Society for Research on Women in NZ incorp — new release "Having a Baby" the experiences of some Wellington women. Study launched in May. For details phone 650-878 (Wellington).

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