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MARCH / MAEHE
Feminism and Anarchy
The Beauty Myth

Policy is made by the Broadsheet collective: Helen Courtney, Megan Fidler, Cathy Hall, Lisa Howard-Smith, Juliet Jacques, Claire-Louise McCurdy, Pat Rosier, Lisa Sabbage, Shirley Tamihana, Athina Tsoulis, Lewis Williams. Main areas of responsibility are: ADVERTISING: Lisa Howard-Smith EDITORIAL: Megan Fidler, Pat Rosier FINANCES: Cathy Hall PRODUCTION: Helen Courtney SUBSCRIPTIONS: Edith Gorringe. THANKS TO: The Print Centre, Uma

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Women begin early in life with this sense that we aren’t quite right. During childhood the identification of woman as other and less, lays the groundwork of all forms of inequality. But appearance is the first, constant commentary. As a woman comes to accept her physical “difference” as evidence of personal failure, she also learns to share society’s belief that hostility is her due. This experience of inadequacy means that no woman is allowed to say or to believe “I am beautiful”.


To judge another person on their appearance is among the most ignorant of habits commonly indulged by our society. It is quite wrong that someone can judge another person based on their skin colour, body shape, size, or dress.

This has a particularly devastating effect on women, who are almost always judged by others (at least initially) by their external appearance. Many women I know have had their self esteem destroyed by strangers (and people they know), who feel the need to pass comment with nothing but their own preconceptions and conditioning to base their comments on.

Body size is a particularly disturbing criteria by which to make a judgement. This arbitrary aspect of a woman’s body is regularly used to make invalid comments about their talent, creativity, and other general characteristics, often including assumptions about their ability to love. There are many misconceptions that are commonly assumed to be true for all those who are fat: they eat excessively, are lazy and slovenly, and are somehow substandard in comparison to others. To become “normal”, they need to lose their “excess” weight and “tidy themselves up a bit”, thereby making themselves more preferable to potential mates, and society in general.

Most of the women who are perceived as being different from the standards set down by society, will of course have bodies that work perfectly, bodies which can do anything and everything that is desired of them, regardless of how they may look. The sooner society is alerted to these discrepancies, the easier it will be for our young women especially, to grow into confident and self assured people. Education aimed at these goals is essential for all children, yet unfortunately the only courses which are offered in the standard school curriculum are inadequate and judgemental. Only some “alternative” schools seem to be addressing this very real problem.

It is obvious though, that many cultures have no stigma associated with women who are fat. In fact it is often desirable for a woman of child bearing age to increase in weight - this is the case in the Cook Islands for example, where I spent some time recently. This intelligent and healthy attitude results in an absence of eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia, among the native population. There is also no struggle against the body’s natural tendency for weight to increase during pregnancy and aging.

My own experience of this culture has taught me that the larger, older and more experienced woman is often the better dancer, weaver, singer or choreographer, than the younger and/or thinner woman. Positive body images abound in the Cook Islands, and not to be judged on my appearance turned out to be a blissful new experience for me. My personal strength and self esteem flourished because of this.

In my own short lifetime I have been judged often. My own anger at this offensive behaviour was often swallowed to avoid confrontation. I have now reached a stage where I have stopped this dangerous suppression of feelings, which I can now openly own and express. Energy which had previously gone into trying to alter my natural body shape - through diet, exercise and constantly worrying about food - is now directed into doing things I enjoy. This active living is to be encouraged in all women, especially younger women, who must certainly undergo a hellish experience, in growing up in a world where the common perception is archaic and resistant to change. Never deny yourself the pleasure of doing something you wish to do, merely because of the fear of judgement. Kia kaha! Be strong!

Jeni Little
CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

I am in the process of writing a health book for mid-life women and would like to include some experiences and thoughts of women around the themes of aging and health care. I would be very grateful if any of you felt like writing a few paragraphs or more on the matters I will outline below. All quotes from these comments I receive will be published anonymously, so it will not be possible to identify anyone.

The book is a decision-making manual for women, examining the medical interventions, screening techniques and treatments offered to women in their 40's and 50's as part of preventive health care. It will go into the scientific evidence, the pros and the cons so women can make well-informed decisions.

The areas I hope to cover are:

1) Normal aging - how women feel about getting older, social attitudes to aging in women, expectations of the menopause, women's actual experience of the menopause, messages women have got from the media. What do women understand about their risk of osteoporosis?

2) Experiences with the medical profession in this age group - how frequently are mammography and hormone replacement therapy etc being promoted by GP's and for what reasons. I'd like to know what women are being told about these interventions.

3) Actual experiences of mammography, hormone replacement therapy, cervical screening etc - both good and bad.

It would help if your contribution included something about yourself, for example, what age, whether post-menopausal, occupation, single, married etc. And you don’t need to write on all the subjects above, just one will do.

Sandra Coney,
Auckland.

PRIVACY PROTECTED
Re: Your article Computer Capture of Mental Health Service Consumers

As a woman working in a community mental health centre in Auckland, I felt really encouraged by reading this article about the proposed central computer system, as I think the public and consumers have a right to know about information systems. As one of Auckland Area Health Board's employees I have been warned against making this kind of information public. Hence I felt very relieved to see my concerns in print.

I used the Broadsheet article successfully in my workplace to yet again state my concerns about consumers' confidentiality. With support from my team mates and numerous meetings, a decision has finally been made at one management level to discontinue using names, alias, date of birth, address, work and home phone numbers and introduce a code system instead. I hope this will become boardwide.

Regarding other issues such as whether the new data collection procedures have gone before an ethics committee, we have contacted a medical union solicitor who is currently investigating this. Hence I am very pleased to say that some steps have been taken to rectify the situation.

A Worker with the AAHB
(name and address supplied)

NCWNZ SUPPORT DIRECT ENTRY

In the October issue of Broadsheet, Joan Donely, in reporting on the first National Conference of Midwives, says that National Council of Women (NCW) policy is opposed to Direct Entry Training of Midwives as is legislated for in the Nurses Amendment Act.
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FRONTING UP

EDITORIAL DEADLINES
For the March issue 20 January, for
April, 25 February. We want your ideas
and suggestions - please make them
constructive.

OFFICE STAFFING
The best time to find someone in the
office is between 9.30 and 3.30. We
have an answerphone so you can leave
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THANKS
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money. Thanks to all the women who
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or just send us something out of the
blue. It all adds up.

VOLUNTEERS
If you have some regular spare time
during the day and would like to help
Kathy or Lisa with tasks around the
office, please call them on 608 535.
Friends of Broadsheet need more
members to help plan and hold
fundraising events for 1991. This is a
fun, lively group to be part of. Call
Juliet on 444 4529.

Let me set the record straight. At our
recent Conference (4-7 October), a
remit supporting the present system of
midwife training was debated at
considerable length, but was defeated.
The National Council of Women of New
Zealand therefore is not opposed to
Direct Entry Training for Midwives.
We look forward to seeing pilot
programmes established that will
adequately prepare midwives for an
effective role as professionals who can
give women a choice in where and how
they will give birth to their babies.

Alison Roxburgh
National President, NCWNZ.

PENPALS WANTED
I am looking for women to correspond
with who have similar interests. I am 43
but relate to women of most ages. I
enjoy writing and conversation. I like to
toss around ideas of social structure and
philosophy. I am a healer, a lesbian and
a mother. I work part time as a therapist
in the country. I enjoy reading and
learning more about alternative
lifestyles, Indian Women Folklore,
Ancient times and rituals; social, tribal
and women's issues; growth and
change; health and healing. I sculpt,
paint and write but need to learn and
expand more in these areas.

I lead a very simple lifestyle without
many male-system link-ups (like TV)
and will shortly build an alternative
energy (solar) house. (Scary) I would
like to correspond with women who
comprehend (or want to learn more)
about the feminine system or woman
ways and who like to have a chat via
pen now and again.

Write to Ana Best,
Katikara RD4, New Plymouth.

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Targeting the Solo Mum
THE UNEMPLOYED - "WORLD AT THEIR FEET".
With words like 'freedom' and 'choice' the Government introduces benefit cuts and changes to industrial policy which reduce living standards for the poor even further.
Athina Tsoullis writes.
I listened to the National programme this morning with growing dismay. Prior to the election when people around me said, "I'm not voting for Labour, not after they have betrayed everything Labour has stood for... Anyway National couldn't do much worse". At the time I knew they were wrong! Listening to Richardson is enough to make one break out in hives. It is a shame that those at the lowest end of the economic heap should have to bear the cost of Roger Douglas's economic experiments and a disillusioned Labour protest.
A few weeks into the new regime and some of my worst fears have been realised. None of it should be a surprise. Richardson and Shipley made it quite clear how they felt towards beneficiaries, especially people on the DPB.
Richardson has a man about the house and a nice big salary to keep her. Heaven help women on the DPB - they really have sinned as far as Richardson is concerned. She shows a Thatcherite contempt and Scrooge mentality towards those in need. Why, as one National MP suggested, don't Richardson and Shipley concentrate on collecting more of the 1.2 billion dollars that fathers who abandon their families are supposed to pay? Why punish the women and children for the fathers' sins?
What long term health problems is this Government creating by making it difficult for these families to eat properly and have access to health care? Five dollars at the chemist may seem a reasonable amount to someone in the $70,000+ category, but not for those trying to live on a few hundred dollars a week.
While listening to the grim tale unfold on the National Programme, I almost choked (as did the interviewer) when Richardson dismissed concern that those under twenty five had to live on just over $100 per week. She said these young people are so lucky - they have the world at their feet. Then we had to listen to the tired old dole bludger argument - "I know an employer who can't get workers blah blah blah". Who is she trying to kid? Shipley does admit that it will take a few months for all these promised jobs to eventuate but in the meantime all you people can quietly starve while you're waiting. It sounds like a 'let them eat cake' attitude.
Richardson went on ad nauseum about people who earned less working fulltime than single people on the dole. She even placed her farm workers in this category. Now what I would have liked the interviewer to ask dear Ruth is why her farm workers are so poorly paid? Just because employers will pay as little as possible to their workers doesn't seem a good reason for the Government to incorporate this exploitative mentality into the Social Welfare System.
The answer, of course, to low wages is not to make the unemployment benefit so low that people are forced to accept poor wages. This, in effect, is what this government is doing. Despite its faults, the union movement has over the years tried to raise the living standards of workers. It is quite clear that the majority of employers couldn't care less about the quality of their workers' lives. Yet the Nats are clearly on the side of the employers.
Destroying the unions will ensure the continuance of a cheap labour pool which will scrabble over the few poorly paid jobs that exist. This is obviously the Government's intention in a free market. With protectionism gone, New Zealand workers will have to compete with the workers of Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong who are among the most exploited people in the world. Is this the kind of New Zealand we want, where the most vulnerable people not only have to do the most mindless jobs and are paid a pittance for doing them, so that companies can make bigger profits to employ more workers to exploit?
Capitalism breeds greed and self-interest, and big business has no compunction in holding the country to ransom. If they are forced to return some profits to the community they simply refuse to invest in New Zealand. They go to poorer areas such as the Pacific
and South-East Asia to find workers to exploit. Richardson knows this and that is why the unions are being destroyed and workers are losing the little protection they may have had.

The obscenity of this was revealed when I bumped into a Samoan woman, a solo parent of two children, who has been working for a university residential hall as a kitchen hand for the last fifteen years. She gets paid approx $16,000 pa fulltime and every Christmas she is laid off for about 10 weeks with 3 weeks pay in her hand. She has been told that she cannot apply for the dole until six weeks have elapsed. After paying her bills she has been left with $100 to see her through to the beginning of March.

This is the biggest attack ever on the welfare state. They either have no idea of what they are doing, or else they are evil. What has been created is a return to the nineteenth century workhouse situation. The repercussions of these cuts will be immense - crime, prostitution, abortion, suicide and addiction will increase. These cuts are pure right wing policies which will force desperate people to work for any wage at all. The women and children will suffer most. Economics, benefit cuts and unemployment are all women’s issues. Unemployed people, beneficiaries and supporters will have to be mobilised in the New Year. We will be calling on public servants to support us also”.

Groups or individuals who wish to offer support please contact The People’s Centre, Ph 399 482/399 682 or write to PO Box 3813 Auckland 1

Shirleen Casey, Union Secretary for the Combined Beneficiaries Union:
“I am shell-shocked, dumbfounded. The DPB has been slowly eroded under the Labour Government but this is the last straw. On the DPB it is a “hand-to-mouth” existence, with no way possible to save anything. I have no idea where cuts in those DPB budgets will be”.

The day after the announcement of the National Party economic cuts, Broadsheet contacted Sue Bradford, Coordinator of the Unemployed Workers Rights Union. She said:
“This is the biggest attack ever on the welfare state. They (the National Party) are trying to destroy it. One third of welfare spending has been cut in one hit. They either have no idea of what they are doing, or else they are evil. What has been created is a return to the nineteenth century workhouse situation. The repercussions of these cuts will be immense - crime, prostitution, abortion, suicide and addiction will increase. These cuts are pure right wing policies which will force desperate people to work for any wage at all. The women and children will suffer most. Economics, benefit cuts and unemployment are all

Broadsheet asked Jenny Shipley, the Minster of Social Welfare and Minster of Women’s Affairs this question:

How do you reconcile your role as Minister of Women’s Affairs whilst at the same time slashing DPB and cutting Family Benefit?

This issue is not a women’s issue in isolation. The intention of this package is to create employment opportunities. Currently there is a problem between the amounts people can receive on benefits and the amounts that they can receive in work. By altering the levels of benefits we believe that many beneficiaries, including those who currently receive a Domestic Purposes Benefit, will eventually look to the workforce for either part of their income instead of receiving a benefit. That is the Government’s intention.

The Domestic purposes Benefit, in the view of the current Government, is a short-term benefit that people are entitled to if their income earner leaves the family. The Crown acts on behalf of the non-custodial by providing a benefit, a Domestic Purposes Benefit, and it’s our intention to keep funding that benefit unconditionally until the youngest child is seven and from that time we hope that the caregiver or the children will start to seek either part-time or full-time work. In the meantime we believe it is proper that a benefit is paid that is sufficient to meet the needs of the caregiver and his or her children.

Family Benefit is currently paid to all families where children are present in their 18th year or under. When we looked carefully at what circumstances these families were in, we found that only about 30% of those families lived in households that earned less than $26,000 and indeed that 49% of those families lived in households that earned more than $39,000 each year. With the pressure that’s now on the current Government concerning expenditure, we felt that what money we had available had to go to low income families and we decided to take $160 million out of the area where we felt it could be afforded, while ensuring that the balance of family benefit payments would go to those families that needed it.
AIDS - AVOIDING BAD LANGUAGE
By Jenny Rankin

Changing the words about women has been one of the victories of feminism in Aotearoa. We have created new terms for experiences which didn’t have names, like sexual harassment. And we have refused old meanings which belittle women, like “girls” for 40-year-old women, and rape “victims”. We are reclaiming others like dyke and witch, although they are still used as abuse in some social groups.

These kinds of redefinition are essential to any social change movement. Medical language, which supports and describes a set of extremely unequal power relationships, has been very resistant to change. It has persistently stereotyped women as passive, hysterical and dependent, when they interact with doctors or hospitals.

People with disabilities, who have usually been defined initially in medical terms, have argued for language which recognises their humanity before their disability. They are people with epilepsy, rather than epileptics, women with cerebral palsy, not spastics.

The mix of three highly charged taboos – sex, death and drug use – in the AIDS epidemic has released a flood of moralist, blaming and distancing terms for people with HIV, the virus which causes AIDS. This reaction, in turn, has prodded a fertile wealth of feminist and other progressive writing on the language and politics of the epidemic. Feminists familiar with the harassment and locking up of women during the earlier campaign against sexually transmitted diseases have noticed similar moral themes emerging about AIDS.

Building on the work of feminists and people with disabilities, the New Zealand AIDS Foundation released AIDS language guidelines in December 1990. They attempt to provide alternatives to the words and phrases which blame, isolate and ignore people living with HIV.

HIV is a small, random bug, with no meaning or purpose. But it arrived in a world with already fixed power structures, and ways of giving meaning to epidemics, which happen to affect gay men first in some countries.

Judith Williams, writing in Metro, Australia’s magazine about the media, sees the language and frameworks of horror and melodrama used repeatedly about AIDS. “Where the stress is on the activity of the viral monster ... the discourse is closest to Gothic horror, and when it is on the passive (non-complaining) suffering of the “victims”, it moves over to sentimentalism”.

(And you thought horror movies had nothing to do with real life).

American writer Judith Wilson Ross, in an article about ethics and AIDS language, lists several images which are used to give meaning to bugs like HIV. War is one, whether inside the body’s immune system, or from a government and medical system using all its “weapons” to fight AIDS. Crime and detection is another image, where doctor detectives hunt for clues to the nature of the shifty virus.

Death images make the bug into an active killer, out “looking for prey”.

This is a summary of AIDS: Avoiding Bad Language. For complete copies write to NZAF, PO Box 6663, Wellesley St, Auckland 1 ph (09) 303 3124

USE
HIV
The HIV (antibody) test
AIDS
People/man/woman living with HIV
People with AIDS
Jane, who has HIV
People with the virus
HIV positive people
Injecting drug users
Heterosexuals/people who don’t share needles

AVOID
the AIDS virus
the AIDS test
full blown AIDS
killer disease AIDS

AIDS carrier
Spreading AIDS
Innocent victims
AIDS victims
AIDS suffers
AIDS patients
Addicts/junkies/druggies
General public
"claiming" victims. Sin is another metaphor - because conservative groups believe gay sexual activity is sinful, AIDS in seen as a just punishment. This sets up a hierarchy of "innocent" and "guilty" victims.

Some of these images are so common we take them for granted and use them without thinking. But they result in the people who have this random virus in their blood being the "enemy" in the war, the "criminal" in the crime, the "monster" the rest of us should be afraid of. These images create "AIDS carriers" out of people who simply have an infection. We, on the other hand, are the innocent general public - unless we inject drugs, are gay men, or lesbians, or sex workers.

The language about sin assumes HIV in gay men and drug users is self-inflicted, but all of us have the right to a loving sexual life, and few of us have never used drugs to get away from our troubles. As for HIV = AIDS = death, what about the people still living and well with HIV, 15 years after it was first identified in their blood? It is not known yet whether HIV always leads to AIDS, and to call HIV a fatal disease denies hope to all that find they have it.

People with HIV are extremely careful about their sexual and drug behaviour, lest they pass on this bug which has so changed their lives, to anyone else. But we don't catch HIV, we allow someone to give it to us by not insisting on safe sex. There are no at risk groups, just risky ways for anyone to have sex or use drugs.

We are all responsible for keeping ourselves safe, we are all innocent and we are all in the epidemic together. We have to change the language we use about AIDS so it reinforces this, rather than maintaining divisions between people with HIV and the rest of humanity.

BONHAM CENSURED, CARTWRIGHT FOLLOW-UP INADEQUATE
Pat Rosier reports.
Over two years after the publication of what has come to be known as the Cartwright Report, the official report of the Inquiry into the Treatment of Carcinoma in S itu at National Women's Hospital, Professor Dennis Bonham, who was head of the Post-graduate School of Medicine at Auckland at the time, has been censured and fined $1000. The Medical Council decided it was not appropriate to strike him off the medical register as recommended by the preliminary proceedings committee.

The finding, of "disgraceful conduct" was reached on evidence of serious dereliction of duty in his administrative role as head of the post-graduate school. (A position from which he has already taken early retirement.) The request for the inquiry came from the medical profession and the finding was that of the profession's own body - a point which I hope Jan Corbett, writer of recent articles in Metro, has noted. (Surely not even she believes that the women's health lobby has undue influence with the Medical Council.)

It's little enough, but it is a much-needed vindication of the Cartwright Report, which has been undermined by fairly constant, unsubstantiated attacks from some members of the medical profession and the likes of Metro.

During February - May 1990 Kathy Munro, then research officer with the Office of Women's Affairs in Darwin, Australia, spent an Anzac Fellowship in New Zealand studying the implementation of the recommendations of the Cartwright Report. In her - unashamedly feminist - report, The Implementation of the Recommendations of the Cartwright Inquiry and Related Women's Health Issues she gives yet more weight to the complaints of women and activist groups like the Auckland Women's Health Council about the process and (lack of) speed of changes. The conclusion of the report begins:

"I commenced this research project with genuine enthusiasm about the potential opportunity to observe the mechanics of the reform process in the New Zealand health system. My optimism was evidently founded in naivete because in fact what I learned was a great deal about the politics of resistance to both structural and organisational change. Many of the changes which have occurred could be described as cosmetic with no real transfer of power to the health care consumer. This is not to underestimate the value of change that has taken place but instead places it in the context of the original expectations of the judge and the public for genuine reform."

Kathy Munro is more optimistic, still, than I am. The attitude of the present National Government towards spending on social services does not bode well. The chances of having a Health Commissioner appointed (as Judge Cartwright recommended) may have looked slim before the elections, now it seems like a distant dream.

Kathy Munro's report, based on interviews around the country with government and Area Health Board officials and members of women's health groups, is available from the Secretary ANZAC Fellowship Scheme, Department of Internal Affairs, P O Box 805, Wellington.
Federation of Women's Health Councils

Early in December last year, Women's Health Councils and groups gathered in Auckland to discuss the formation of a national Federation of Women's Health Councils. Ruth Henderson reports:

The gathering was attended by 30 women from around the country, some coming from as far as Invercargill and the West Coast. The Auckland Women's Health Council was formed in 1988 and since then councils have sprung up in other areas including Hauraki, Hamilton, Napier, Tauranga and Wellington.

It was agreed to form the Federation of Women's Health Councils with the aim of providing a national voice on women's health issues and of supporting local initiatives. The federation philosophy supports a public health system which is accountable to women's needs, a woman's right to have autonomy over her own body and women's right to have access to abortion services. The Federation recognises the Treaty of Waitangi and is committed to working with women from all cultures.

Issues discussed during the weekend included funding for the National Cervical Screening Programme, RU 486, funding for polytechnics affecting nursing and midwifery courses and the Doctor contracts.

A core group was set up with representatives from the North and South Islands. The national coordinators for an interim six month period are Cheryl Hamilton and Judi Strid. Anyone interested in the Federation or in forming a Women's Health Council in their own area can contact Cheryl (09) 418 0659 or Judi (0880) 5507, or you can write to the Auckland Women's Health Council, 10 Carlton Gore Rd, Grafton, Auckland.

International Council of Women's Health Issues, was women as health providers within a context of culture, society and health policy. Over 400 women from around the world attended. While the majority were either from New Zealand or North America, women travelled from Australia, Denmark, Fiji, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Iran.

The papers and workshops offered, covered concerns ranging from violence against women to menopause, midwifery and Maori community health. As with any large conference there was too much to do, too many women to catch up with, and too much choice over sessions. Many agonising decisions had to be made over which sessions to attend.

Much interest was shown in the session on cervical screening taken by Sandra Coney and Ruth Bonita. The day the workshop was set up in 1985 to run for five years. At that time there was a commitment by some Government Departments to fund the project. Now time and money has run out. The National Core Group in Wellington believe the work of raising Pakeha awareness of the Treaty issues can continue through regional groups.

The main networking functions, including production and distribution of the National Newsletter will originate from Hawkes Bay, under the name of Network Waitangi. Through the new network, it is hoped links will be developed with other groups working on treaty issues.

The contact person for Network Waitangi is Karen Kenrick, Network Waitangi, PO Box 384, Napier. The phone number is (070) 835 8746. All Project Waitangi resources will be available from Development Education Trust PO Box 1905 (206 Barbados Street) Christchurch 1, Phone (03) 662 803.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO PROJECT WAITANGI?
The Wellington National Office of Project Waitangi was closed on 1 November 1990. Megan Fidler tells us why.

Project Waitangi was set up in 1985 to run for five years. At that time there was a commitment by some Government Departments to fund the project. Now time and money has run out. The National Core Group in Wellington believe the work of raising Pakeha awareness of the Treaty issues can continue through regional groups.

The main networking functions, including production and distribution of the National Newsletter will originate from Hawkes Bay, under the name of Network Waitangi. Through the new network, it is hoped links will be developed with other groups working on treaty issues.

The contact person for Network Waitangi is Karen Kenrick, Network Waitangi, PO Box 384, Napier. The phone number is (070) 835 8746. All Project Waitangi resources will be available from Development Education Trust PO Box 1905 (206 Barbados Street) Christchurch 1, Phone (03) 662 803.

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES
November 14 – 17 1990, Massey University, Palmerston North

Ruth Henderson of Fertility Action, Auckland attended the conference and reports back: The theme of the conference, which was organised by The International Council of Women's Health Issues, was women as health providers within a context of culture, society and health policy. Over 400 women from around the world attended. While the majority were either from New Zealand or North America, women travelled from Australia, Denmark, Fiji, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Iran.

The papers and workshops offered, covered concerns ranging from violence against women to menopause, midwifery and Maori community health. As with any large conference there was too much to do, too many women to catch up with, and too much choice over sessions. Many agonising decisions had to be made over which sessions to attend.

Much interest was shown in the session on cervical screening taken by Sandra Coney and Ruth Bonita. The day this workshop was scheduled, the National Government announced that the $4.5 million allocated to Area Health Boards in October, for the National Cervical Screening Programme was put on hold. A remit was later passed at the plenary session of the Congress expressing deep concern that the money had been frozen. The remit stated women's wholehearted support for the National Cervical Screening Programme and acknowledged the massive effort that has already gone into its development.

Highlights of the conference included keynote speakers Renate Klein and Phillida Bunkle, both of whom spoke with clarity and perception about current health issues for women.

Good use was made of spare time. One lunch break was used for a meeting of women working in women's health centres. The main topic of discussion was funding. It was interesting to note the difference in response from area health boards around the country to requests from women's groups. In the first session on Thursday, disquiet was expressed by lesbian women at the lack of visibility of lesbian issues. The conference organisers sincerely considered the criticism and it was agreed that a special call be made for papers on lesbian health issues for the next congress.

The International Council of Women's Health Issues was formed five years ago and aims to provide a forum for the study of women's health, and acts as a forum to discuss women's health at an international level. For further information about the council, or to obtain conference papers contact Marion Pybus, School of Nursing, Massey University, Palmerston North.
"EVERYTHING ISN'T FOR EVERYBODY:"

Some experiences of being lesbian in the workplace. Chris Atmore wrote a sociology paper of this title based on interviews with lesbians. Pat Rosier looks at some of what was said.

The full paper explains the methodology very carefully, but here I will focus on what lesbians said about their workplace experiences.

**Factors involved in deciding whether to come out at work.**

The lesbians interviewed weighed up the costs and benefits of remaining in the closet at work against coming out and for some, the cost seemed too high: "I'd have to be a full-time lesbian."

"The job was more important than being out."

"I would have got heaps for the rest of the season."

For others coming out was the more positive thing to do: "I thought I might as well be out and happy about myself ... because I've never fitted in anyway."

Correcting the assumption that they were heterosexual mattered to some, and "The type of workplace and the degree of control each woman felt she had over her work situation was seen to be important." Worries included prejudice from both clients and employer hierarchies and being judged on false stereotypes. One woman, who was out in her actual workplace but had a lot of dealings with the business world "feels that she has to present 'a reasonable front' and so does not generally bring it up explicitly."

For several of the women their views had changed. The time of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill had affected them.

"While some of the women chose to come out deliberately and used a variety of strategies for doing so, ranging from sitting a likely supportive person down and telling them directly, to jokes which revealed their identity and to wearing a pink triangle badge. Coming out at work was not perceived as an either/or situation, nor as a discrete event which would set future patterns, but as a continuous process. ... each work environment and even in some cases each new individual the lesbian comes across, presents a fresh choice, and each experience adds to the cumulative effect on perceptions of likely reactions."

In some cases there was no choice about coming out, people make assumptions "on the basis of information that is not willingly supplied by the lesbian."

**Perceived reactions to lesbian identity.**

"It seems that in these atmospheres where officially lesbian identity is stigmatised and women cannot choose the manner in which they come out, the consequences of identity revelation are severe." In some cases, the reaction resulted in loss of a job. Initial tolerance often proved to have limits. Even where the situation is one of liberal tolerance, there is usually silence and stereotyping. "Several women described getting support from members of ethnic minorities who they felt had similar experiences of prejudice and discrimination." Personality conflicts, or differences based on race or class could mean support was not always available from other lesbians at work and, "In a few cases closeted lesbians in positions of power were felt not only to be unsupportive but a source of some of the strongest discrimination."

Regardless of how accepting coworkers were, some lesbians still felt they were treated as lesser than heterosexual workers. Class and gender issues also affected the lesbians.

**Overall perceptions of the work environment and coping strategies.**

"While feelings about the actual work ranged from boredom to a high level of job satisfaction, all work situations necessitated some selection of appropriate techniques to minimise any negative aspects." Support from outside was always important. The most negative situation was one also affected by class issues where the lesbian felt trapped in a place she hated because she needed the money. Where the lesbian enjoyed her work she still felt her lesbian identity could not be integrated with her work life. One woman used a platonic relationship with with a male worker as a cover-up.

The ideal work situation and directions for change

"The way in which each woman sees her work environment, her coping strategies, her hopes for future work situations and how she thinks conditions might be improved for lesbians in the workplace are all linked to her lesbian identity and her political beliefs." The women's comfortableness in their lesbian identities was linked for them with political beliefs which "enabled them to view their lesbianism within a framework which did not label them as the problem, but society as a whole."

Most thought that legislation to make discrimination illegal and affirmative action policies would have a "symbolic but limited effect." Jane thought that much discrimination was subtle - like her not getting a job where she was well qualified for - so "there's nothing you can actually put your finger on."

For Ann, anti-discrimination might benefit some professionals but she did not have the "middle class qualifications to be a 'token gay person'. She compared such reforms to equal pay legislation which had not given women economic equality with men - 'they can make your life miserable without sucking you'."

Changing people's attitudes through public education was seen as important. For Tracy being out was part of this educative process. For others, change was unlikely, and survival the key. Kathryn said, "...we've just got to do what we can to survive and look after ourselves and make sure that we don't shit on other women in the process." For Ann it means, "... coming to terms with some kind of existence that means you don't compromise too much, are punished too much, and don't get left with too much of a bitter taste in your mouth at the end of the day ... working ... to change the awful things about the world in which we live ... and getting on with your life."

The complete 57 page paper is available from: The Department of Sociology and Social Work, Victoria University of Wellington, P O Box 600, Wellington, for $10.
**PHILIPPINE PEACE PEOPLE**
The 6th Nuclear Free and Independent Conference was held in New Zealand from 31 October - 8 November 1990. The conference was held at Tahuna Marae and Reretewhioi Marae, Waiuku, Megan Fidler had the opportunity to speak to Rita Baua from The Asia-Pacific Peoples' Forum on Peace and Development, and Corazon Valdez-Fabroz from The Nuclear Free Philippines Coalition, about the concerns of women in the Philippines.

There are two major military bases in the Philippines - Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base which covers an area of 36,000 acres, the largest naval base west of Hawaii. According to the Washington Centre for Defence Information, there are nine other US bases and facilities in the Philippines. Around each of these bases has grown a huge “hospitality industry” which exploits the plight of desperately poor Philippino women. Olongapo, a town of nearly 200,000 people, the site of the Subic Bay Naval Base, is the working ground of 16,000 prostitutes. Aside from economic and sexual exploitation, there have been incidents of violence and death reported. The whole economy is built around the base. Infrastructure projects, commercial expansion, and city plans, all have the base, not the Philippino community, as the primary consideration.

Gabriela, the Philippino feminist coalition, with a membership of over 40,000, promotes the development of a strong and dynamic women’s movement. They have a campaign against the nuclear bases, concentrating on the social effects on the women and children. Aside from this campaign, according to Rita, “Gabriela are getting into alternative systems and projects that will help our women to see they can support themselves economically”.

In the Philippines, it is estimated that only 15% of the population survive above the poverty line, 85% of the urban population live in slums, and 70% of the population suffer from malnutrition. Aquino’s government which was initially seen by some as a panacea, has made no essential changes in improving the conditions of women, workers, peasants and migrant workers.

Rita talked about the number of women the Philippines exports because of the economic crisis, “We have so many domestic workers in Europe, entertainers in Japan, mail order brides in New Zealand and Australia, and medical and domestic workers in the Middle East ... also when the men leave to work, the women are left behind, alone with the burden of daily care of children and home”. The bulk of migrant workers are women. Most have secondary, and one third have tertiary education. Of mail order brides, Rita says, “the women are forced to marry very old men, some are beaten. The economic conditions are bad enough for them to do this. The women want to help their families and the only way they can solve the economic problem is to get married to a better off Australian or New Zealander”. This year, in Melbourne alone, four Philippino women died from domestic violence.

Rita and Cora’s message is that to improve the position of women in the Philippines, the US Nuclear bases which promote violence in a myriad of ways, need to be removed. If you are interested in finding out more or supporting the Philippine people contact: Keith at Philippines Solidarity, 74 Pitt St, Auckland, Phone 732 004. □

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**CO-MADRES – THEY DANCE ALONE**
Megan Fidler
The ongoing civil war in El Salvador has cost 75,000 lives since 1975. The detention-disappearance of civilians as a method of repression became the policy of the El Salvador government during the reign of Colonel Armando Milano (1972-77). In 1977, when General Carlos Humberto Romero came to power, the detention-disappearance tool of repression became even more widely used. There have been 87,000 “disappearances” in the last 15 years.

In 1989, the ARENA party which is linked with the “death squads” came to power. An Amnesty International News release (24 October 1990) reported that “death squads reportedly killed at least 45 people from January to August this year (1990) – more than double the figure for the same period last year”. Bodies of victims have been found mutilated, some with their faces completely destroyed and others with signs of having been brutally tortured. Unarmed civilians have been executed by the army. A young pregnant woman was shot dead in July as she was walking home, and a church workers OFELIA LOPEZ was killed in late August on his way to deliver medicine to his newly-born daughter. Detainees have been tortured in police or military custody and outside official detention centres. In July, a woman was raped several times by soldiers, in front of her daughters. Thousands of human rights violations committed over the past decade have never been investigated or those responsible brought to justice. Witnesses and victims are often warned they will be killed or “disappeared” if they report human rights abuses.

The Committee of the Mothers of the Disappeared and Political Prisoners of El Salvador was formed in 1977 by a group of nine women fighting for the defence of human rights. These women, like many others in the world, have lost their children, husbands, mothers and sisters, at the hands of the regime they live under. Today, the mothers of the disappeared CO-MADRES have more than 500 women members. Apart form practical support and assistance to
Broadcast

political prisoners, (including finding out where they are), and their families, a large part of the work of the CO-MADRES, is to expose the repressive situation in El Salvador to national and international human rights organisations and to the women's liberation movement around the world.

In November 1990, Ofelia Lopez, the CO-MADRES representative for Australia and Aotearoa, visited Auckland. Ofelia, who is 29 years old, has already lost her father and brothers to the war. She worked as a health worker in El Salvador, before being imprisoned for over two years, as a political prisoner. This is part of her story:

"I was working as a health worker in the rural areas, working with the women and children, helping them escape from persecution from the armed forces. That was the crime I committed ... they put me in jail when I was looking for material resources, clothes, food, medicines. I needed these things because it's not easy to bring a new child into this world without anything, not even a piece of material to roll him up.

They (the death squad) used torture on me, psychological and physical. The immediate physical torture was to blindfold me and tie my hands to my back. After two weeks they sent me to prison and in prison one of my daughters was born. Many of the women who came into the prison were pregnant. We demanded a psychologist and a gynaecologist to look after the pregnant women who had been tortured, and for those women who had nervous breakdowns. The response from the director of the prison and the security guards was repression — they opened fire against us because we were demanding our rights — they are not privileges — they are rights. I got shot at around 9 in the morning and I didn't receive any first aid until 4 (pm). The other political prisoners kept fighting to get me to hospital. I think I went to sleep or I fainted — I don't know what happened. The other women called the International Red Cross to set up a dialogue with the director to agree to take me to hospital. Finally they made a deal, an agreement, and they took me. I spent three months in hospital.

I was under security, by the hospital guards and very often I was interrogated by the national police people. They came to the hospital and they would ask "where is the guerrilla woman?" The prison guards would say "there she is" and they would point to me.

My mother came to visit me. She made a very big effort to come to visit and she was crying when she saw me in the bed and I couldn't walk. For one year I couldn't walk. A year (after leaving prison) I couldn't walk properly. I decided to come to Australia. Now I am looking for ways to go back to El Salvador, perhaps not to stay but to see how the situation is...".

In El Salvador, women make up 60% of the population. Most of them are illiterate, trying to educate and support themselves, and bring up their children. 73% of their children are malnourished, 25% die before they are five years old. Four hundred children are dying each week from malnutrition. The women and children of El Salvador need support — moral and financial.

The New Zealand contact for the CO-MADRES is ADEC — Auckland Development Education Centre. ADEC was set up to help New Zealanders understand the causes and effects of world poverty and affluence, to see the links between peace, development and the environment. ADEC believes that to tackle the problems facing the world, the promotion of "global literacy" is necessary. To find out more about the situation in El Salvador, the ADEC address is PO Box 68558 Newton (74 Pitt Street), Auckland, Phone (09) 302 3194, and Fax (09) 775 541. □
One of the most interesting questions I was ever asked on a Writers-in-Schools visit was “Why are so many children’s books written by women?” In my six or seven years of visiting schools it was the first and only occasion this feature of the genre of books for young people has been raised. I said I had some theories, but perhaps the class would like to give their ideas first. A small boy at the back with studious glasses put up his hand with an air of great certainty. “Women write books,” he said firmly, “because they have lots more time.”

By the time the teachers (all female) had stopped laughing I never did answer the question. What would I have said? It’s women who have the children, love them and cope with them day in and day out, soothe and excite them with stories, and later come to care what they read, enough for those of literary bent to add their contribution to the literature. Perhaps women get their stories published because they write better, or juggle their time better to allow for writing? Perhaps they have husbands who, believing that writing for children is important, support them in the early years of full-time work for laughable financial reward? Or perhaps more women write for children because they know the dangerous power of language and stories to influence young minds.

Why girls should read is so self-evident to me, and I suspect to most Broadsheet readers, that I don’t want to do more than remind you of Spender’s maxims that historically men have been very interested in suppressing women’s writing and that books by, for and about women have been the great success of the mid-20th century feminist movement.

I see reading as a crucial underpinning of the drive towards freedom and equality of opportunity for women. At the recent world congress of the International Reading Association I attended in Stockholm, the American writer Katherine Paterson said she felt literacy was now a prerequisite to freedom and peace: “If you do not learn to use language, it will be used against you.” Coming from a woman, that statement carries a peculiar poignancy. Today’s girls are growing up in a literary scene where the energy, originality, commitment and success, across the whole spectrum of publishing, is coming largely from women writers and publishers presenting for the first time a female perspective of significant weight. This alone makes me optimistic that, women now having won some real power and autonomy in the world of ideas and thought, the so-called feminist movement has gone deep into the heart of society where it matters most and this time is here for keeps.

But the image of girls in contemporary fiction? The more I think about this, the more it bothers me. I don’t want fiction to be giving girls images. I want them to be getting substance, ideas, excitement, provocation, and even that concept first enunciated in the seventies – role models.

“In the fifties I grew up with no role models other than the selfless “homemaker” I was expected to become, or the selfish “career girl” it was hoped I would not.”
scene. Our children’s attention span is said to be shrinking rapidly. So teachers employ visuals, everyone takes pictures, letter-writing is on the decline. About-to-be fathers turn up in hospitals armed with video cameras to capture the child’s birth. A real, do-it-yourself live birth starring your own wife. The plastic image of the event becomes more important than the wonder and moment of the event itself.

Even writers are expected these days to create an image for themselves. At the International Writers’ Week in Wellington last year, English writer Ian McEwan spoke of the need to invent himself as a writer, one who goes on the road and gives meaningful answers for in-depth interviews. At the congress in Sweden by far the best-attended author session was one given by an American husband and wife picture-book team. Don and Audrey Wood. It was literally a song and dance act. They put the text to music and projected the pictures on a huge screen. They used flashcards and funny hats, and alternated voices just like Richard Long and Judy Bailey. It was slick, clever, funny and commercial, and told me little about the way they worked and nothing about their careers, their attitudes towards children or picture books for the very young. It was ultimately, in International Literacy Year, unworthy of an audience of international educators. Am I out of step? The mostly American audience lapped it up.

"I see reading as a crucial underpinning of the drive towards freedom and equality of opportunity for women".

However successful a writer is at projecting an image, however many strategies she develops to cope with 160 primary school children squashed into a library, or the ultimate test, high school assemblies, in the end it’s what’s written on the page that counts. It’s the substance of the story, the resonance of the language, the energy of the characters and the passion of the storyteller on paper that add up to something lasting and worthwhile.

So, avoiding images, looking for substance, I began to look specifically at the female characters of recent New Zealand novels for children and young adults. There were certainly more female characters and the passion of the story, the resonance of substance, I began to look specifically at the female characters of recent New Zealand novels for children and young adults. There were certainly more female protagonists around in the 1980s than in earlier decades. Women writers have long written about boys, but now we have Barry Faville, Jack Lasenby and William Taylor with female protagonists.

Overall, I was agreeably surprised at the diversity and independence of the girls portrayed, the lack of stereotypic girliness and so-called traditional girlish preoccupations. Cowley’s Biddy in Biddy Alone defies her father and takes her cat to live at Little Barrier’s bird sanctuary. Barry Faville’s Robbie in Stanley’s Aquarium gets a lawn-mowing job and doggedly tracks down the mystery of the sinister fish tanks in the Taupo garden. Rachael in Maurice Gee’s Under the Mountain, Henrietta in Judy Corbalis’ Oscar and the Icepick, Lesley in Janice Marriott’s Letters to Lesley and Diana in Caroline Macdonald’s The Lake at the End of the World, all operate as lively, risk-taking and independent equals to the boys in the stories. Anne in Alan Bunn’s recent Water in the Blood is an expert canoeist and surfer, Ilsebeth in Sheryl Jordon’s just published Rocco is expert archer, Lav Gibson in William Taylor’s Worst Soccer Team trilogy plays in a mixed soccer team and is the formidable feminist, just short of caricature. Margaret Mahy’s Troy in The Haunting and Harry in The Tricks are vulnerable, powerful and uncompromising characters working out their private demons.

Interestingly, those characters who worked least well for me were the victims of incest and violence: Jack Lasenby’s Ruth in The Lake, William Taylor’s Jessie in The Kidnap of Jessie Parker and Rosie in Possum Perkins), even though both writers were clearly at pains to show girls reacting strongly to untenable situations. At the risk of being accused, in this hard and aggressive age we live in, of being head-in-the-sand, I’ve grown tired of girls being portrayed as victims. God knows there were enough in the adult “problem” novel which took hold in the 1970s and 1980s, and they continue as victims in many Hollywood films of the 1980s. As a child I loved the risk-taking achieving girls of the many horse stories I read, of Noel Streatfield’s ballet stories, Anne of Green Gables and unrepentant Alice, even Jo in Little Women despite her creator’s loss of nerve at the end. I wish I had as a child known the indomitable Pippi Longstocking, who since her creation in 1945 has influenced two generations of girls, or the female dinghy sailors of Swallows and Amazons.
A writer I did know far too well was Enid Blyton. I’ve only recently understood my deep adult dislike for all her work, with its shallow characters, its exclamation marks, which according to a writer in Punch are “a sign of failure … the literary equivalent of a man holding up a card reading LAUGHTER to a studio audience”. Then there are her unforgettable formula plots, her tiny vocabulary, her lack of research and therefore any credibility. I especially detest the Famous Five. Perhaps is was that television send-up a few years ago. Of all her stereotypes, her portrayal of girls and their mothers was the most narrow and dangerous, insidiously perpetrating 1950s sexist stereotypes. There is the tomboy George and there is the sipping Anne and there, in the succinct words of one of my daughters, …“no normal female”. Of all Blyton’s characters, the ones most remembered - the only ones remembered? - are George, the tomboy set in concrete through eight books, Noddy and Big Ears. It’s hard to say which is the more ghastly.

But however much we are told that there is a growing audience in schools and libraries for New Zealand books, and however many wonderful books with strong female characters are being published overseas by superb writers such as Jill Paton Walsh, Katherine Paterson, Anne Fine, Jan Mark, Robyn Klein and Gillian Rubenstein, it is wise to remind oneself frequently that Enid Blyton is more likely what our prepubertal and pubescent girls are still spending much of their time reading. Along with Roald Dahl, Judy Blume and Paula Danziger, the Nancy Drews and the Trixie Beldons, Sweet Valley Highs, Babysitter Clubs, Mills and Boon, and graduating to Virginia Andrews, Shirley Conran, Jacki Collins, Wilbur Smith, Stephen King and Desmond Bagley. In other words, formula books, imported in bulk, superbly marketed and distributed, and perpetrating in varying degrees fantasies of romance, adventure, horror, violence and sexist stereotypes.

At this point, I sigh rather deeply and reassure myself that at least our young people are reading. Baring actual pornography or an unhealthy interest in horror or violence, they need diversity, the light romances as well as Margaret Mahy, the school and adventure stories as well as Lewis Carroll. As a parent of daughters, I’ve seen it as my job to fill the house with good books to balance those they pass around at school; to create an environment where, in books as in everything else, the learn to discuss and assess quality, reject stereotypes and false images, to know marketing trickeries when they see them, to appreciate the marvles of an imagination like Margaret Mahy or Katherine Paterson presented so accessibly in the pages of a $6.95 paperback.

As a writer, I also sigh rather deeply when I go into a major book chain and find dump bins of Dahl, miles of Mills and Boon, shelves of Sweet Valley Highs, battlelines of Blytons and not a New Zealand book in sight. Well, perhaps one Mahy, a TV-connected Maurice Gee, a Lynley Dodd or two, certainly not a separate section of our own country’s offerings.

As a writer, I can only make my own small contribution to counter-balance the tide of formula books. Others of like mind will make theirs. Together we will make some sort of impact. But as a Writer-in-Schools, I know that the major thrust promoting fiction valuable to young women is not being made by the book supermarkets, but in the schools, and I know that my character Alex is part of it.

In the three years since Alex was published, I’ve visited schools in Taunanga, Napier, Hastings, Christchurch, Balclutha, Nelson, Gisbourne, Rotorua, as well as many around the Auckland area. I’ve listened with some amazement to teachers and students telling me that it has become something of a cult book. The reprints of the hardback and continuing paperback sales, as well as the letters I receive from students, bear that out. It is a set text in many high schools, including traditionalist boys schools. It has gone into four languages as well as America, England and Australia.

I have, as I struggle with the third book of Alex’s story, asked myself why. is there a thirst for books about girls who take risks, who stumble and fail and dare again and finally achieve in the way of those symbolic characters we have always called heroes. She is not a victim, she is not a heroine. She is forthright, single-minded, vulnerable, has a keen sense of the ridiculous, does not accept advise, is hard on herself and others, and even selfish in the way that male heroes have long been permitted to be. Her perceived selfishness has been noted, and with some chucking of the teeth in all American reviews and none of the New Zealand one. Alex in Winter was rejected by my American publisher mainly because they feared readers would loose sympathy with her. Some adult reviewers here have voiced the same concern. Teenagers themselves tell me that it is precisely her ego-centric searching for solutions to her problems that make the book real for them. I suspect that to adults she behaves rather too like a real “warts ‘n all teen”, and rather too like a boy.

If she has come to be seen as a hero figure in the eyes of our teenagers, I have to admit some amazement at my success in creating such a character, the real personality behind the image of the champion, the sporting hero. It seems certain that she comes across as a far more interesting teenager than I myself ever was - despite the similarity for swimming and things musical - or claim to be now as an adult.
I am frequently accused that she is, of course, autobiographical. I've been called Alex more than once by some teachers and librarians, who appear to have been rather overwhelmed at meeting me, her creator, in person. As I've said, I'm flattered but I know it's not true. She's a combination, a mix of about five or six people from my childhood, my daughters, my friends and my friend's daughters, and myself. The story is invented, or as I later found out from my old swimming coach, includes some half forgotten incidents from the swimming community in which I grew up.

One last thought I put forward with some difidence and draw no conclusions. I imagine we all have our own private lists of female heroes, role models, mentors, whatever you call them, people from history and of today whose lives inspire and intrigue us, but one who would I think appear on most lists would be Joan of Arc. I remember being entranced by Shaw's play about her at school, and already enough of a student of her character and life to be dismissive of the glamourised portrayals of both Ingrid Bergman and Jean Seberg as a teenager.

Joan, of course, stands as uniquely herself, blessed with a genius for creating her own persona using the symbols of a soldier of God and country, driven by the highest possible motives of her faith, her voices, her love of her country and her heretical insistence that individual conscience is more powerful than the orthodoxies of church and court. In the 20th century we accept the principle of freedom of conscience, but Joan died for it. "What other judgement can I judge by but me own?" she cries, the climatic and most important line in the play.

Quite recently, some time after Alex was published, I came across Marina Warner's superb 1981 biography of Joan of Arc. Her chapter on Joan as Amazon set me wondering again about what Margaret Mahy describes as writers "joining the network". Having decided that Alex was to be notable tall and strong, I chose Archer for her family name because I liked the connection with the play. The symbol of the arc, of the bow, has been connected with strong-minded fleet-footed women since antiquity: Artemis and Diana, Atlanta and Hippolyta of the Amazons, and later the female warrior knights of the Renaissance fantasy which gripped the European imagination for several centuries. Joan's usually accepted title, says Warner, is an invention of history, "a fascinating, even disturbing example of how culture works on history to recreate its protagonists in familiar forms". Joan the Maid, born in 1412, with the Renaissance already under way in Italy, never called herself "of Arc". "Her exploits", says Warner, "were so extraordinary that in order to grasp and interpret them, writers relied on earlier more familiar formulae".

I would understand if you thought I might be drawing, as they saw, a very long bow to even mention Joan of Arc and Alex in the same breath. However, when Margaret Mahy talks of "the awareness that by speaking, by describing, relating one event to another I could join myself into that network, invent stories and invent myself at the same time", she provides me with a glimmer of understanding of the profound and powerful cultural influences that were mysteriously at work when I wrote Alex, and that are at work every time a writer sits in front of a keyboard to begin a story. If, as Warner says, "culture works unconsciously on history to recreate its protagonists in familiar forms", then I think the reverse might be equally true: that history also works on culture to create new protagonists in forms that seem contemporary and fresh but really belong to that whole imaginative and endlessly recycling world of histories, biographies and fictions we call stories. Perhaps this goes some way to explaining why the larger-than-life figure of Alex seems to have struck a chord with young people growing up in an age of uncertainty and pessimism about the future. Although she will end up taking three books to sort out her priorities as she passes from childhood to maturity, she was from the beginning very secure in her sense of nationality, her sense of being female, confident of her talent and her ability to achieve whatever she sets out to achieve. These things, at least, she shares with Joan. Women, and especially young women, are still crying, "what other judgement can I judge by but my own?", and one day soon the planet, if it is not already too late, will hear their voices. Stories, role models and language provide the fundamental tools to develop judgement. It is said we are what we eat, but we are also, ultimately, what we read, and especially what we have read as children. I can think of no more fitting reason to offer as to why girls need to read and why they need as nourishment both the image and substance of themselves as heroes. □

**ALEX IN WINTER**

**TESSA DUDER**

The latest work from Tessa Duder, and winner of the 1990 Aim Children's Book Award, *Alex in Winter* is the stirring tale of the personal trial and triumphs of Alex Archer as she strives to represent her country at the Olympics.

"... Alex will be an enduring heroine in local children's literature."

**CELIA DUNLOP - NEW ZEALAND LISTENER**

Available from booksellers $19.95

**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**
The philosophy of the Kohanga revolves around the desire of Maori people to “stand tall” and overcome adversity by producing an era of bilingual and bicultural children who are capable of interacting in the Maori and Pakeha worlds. Within this framework the primary kaupapa is the promotion of the Maori language and Maori whanau values in a secure and caring environment where children are lovingly embraced by Maori speaking persons. For the child, the ability to speak Maori is seen as stimulating a pride of race, a growth of personality, character, morals and identity, as well as a positive self image.

It has been argued that Te Kohanga Reo has a distinct Maori pedagogy (learning and teaching philosophy and style) where practical skills of the child are developed at the social and cognitive level, and that this will facilitate entry of Maori children into school on an equal basis with their Pakeha peers.

At present, provisions for Te Kohanga Reo graduates going to school vary. Children will move into several types of classroom environments depending on the school philosophy. They may go into bilingual classrooms or units or new entrant classrooms with varying degrees of emphasis on Taha Maori from nothing at all to that where the teacher recognises the Taha Maori resource kit available from the then Department of Education.

The disparity in educational achievement between Maori and Pakeha is an ever present and continuing challenge to Maori educational initiatives. Before Te Kohanga Reo this led, in the 1970s, to the emergence of bilingual schools. There too the focus was to retain te reo in an environment which adopted an appropriate methodology in which Maori children would feel comfortable and hence achieve. They provide one set of “transition” classrooms. Up until December 1989 the range of “ordinary” state school classrooms provided the only other choice within the fully supported state school system.

Now we have Kura Kaupapa Maori and the question can be asked, “Are there distinct management and pedagogical patterns associated with kaupapa Maori learning?” When applied to the
Specific operation of Te Kohanga Reo this becomes two quite specific questions:

a) Are there identifiable Maori pedagogical patterns in Te Kohanga reo?

b) How do different new entrant classroom settings match these patterns?

Joan Metge has argued that the English language and western educational theory make a clear-cut distinction between learning and teaching and between teacher/learner/pupil/student, for example, by using different words. By contrast, the Maori language uses one word, “ako”, to mean both “to learn” and “to teach”. It is converted into a noun meaning learner (akonga) by adding a noun ending and into one meaning teacher (kaiako) by a prefix indicating actor.

Metge’s argument is that a Maori approach stresses the unified cooperation of learner and teacher in ways in which classroom (eg., Te Kohanga Reo) discourse takes place. For example, who has the right to initiate a conversation would be different from typical western educational situations. (It is usual in western early childhood educational settings for the teacher to control exchanges and initiate the bulk of them.)

A second area of difference involves who teaches and when teaching takes place. If the teaching and learning roles are fluid, control of teaching sequences themselves might sometimes be shown by the children. In curriculum terms this is a clearly stated element of Ataarangi (Learning and teaching Maori language process) as expressed in the Ataarangi kaupapa, where children are expected and trained to take a leading role in instructional sequences. Logically this also means peer teaching is a frequent activity.

Also, given the kaupapa of Te Kohanga Reo that management and instruction occur from the basis of such tikanga as whanaungatanga, it could be expected that the grouping of the class would be a fundamental organising principle, as would taking responsibility for other members of the group, including one another’s learning. This would lead to significant peer teaching and demonstration.

There are also implications in Metge’s writings relating to concepts of whakahihi (needs to ensure positive self-esteem and progress), which introduce the role of non-verbal communication. Metge, in Talking Past Each Other, has argued that a lot of miscommunication occurs between different cultures because the parties interpret each other’s words and actions in terms of their own understandings, assuming that these are shared when in fact they are not. Metge says all groups of people talk with their bodies as well as their tongues, but that Maori emphasise body language more and verbalisation less than Pakeha. Pakeha who define communication primarily in terms of verbal expression typically find Maori unresponsive and of thinking about interpersonal relations which is different from that expressed in and reinforced by the English language.

Whakahihi is a similar concept, that cannot be matched with one English word but covers a range of meanings that are divided among several concepts – boastful, proud, exuberant.

While whakama and whakahihi have a variety of immediate causes, underlying and linking them all is concern about mana, a concept of pre-European Maori origin which has been affected by a hundred and fifty years of involvement with Christianity and today means different things in different contexts and to Maori of different backgrounds. For one’s mana to remain intact concepts such as whakama, whakahihi and whakaiti must be clearly understood. In doing so, the principles of aroha o te tangata mo te tangata (Constant caring and loving from one to another.) must prevail.

These concepts are concerned with problems and feelings common to all people, but they offer a distinctive cultural way of looking at, thinking about and dealing with them. This is an integral part of the Kohanga Reo operation – depending on whanau principles for their implementation of a pedagogy that is specifically Maori. This highlights the vigour Maori people have in striving for Mana Motuhake (self determination).

What does this mean for the transition from Kohanga Reo to school?

Learning is facilitated if the child’s home and other settings are matched, with interconnections between those settings in which the child actually participates such as the home, daycare centre, preschool, Te Kohanga Reo and school. To do this is to enhance the developmental effectiveness of each.

It is also argued that language competencies developed before school (including the pragmatic aspects of language, like how and when and for what purposes language is used) and forms of socialisation can be well or poorly matched with standard classroom processes. A study of families in the Unites States claims that teachers ask their students questions which have answers pre-specified in the mind of the teacher. Students then respond and teachers provide feedback, usually in the form of an evaluation. Such classroom procedures are well matched with the experiences that some students bring to
school and poorly matched for others. The degree to which classrooms match the skills students have acquired, and the degree to which families are involved in schooling will influence language development. What then is the result for children if the settings are mismatched in the specific case of Te Kohanga Reo children?

School lessons are typically very restrictive in the opportunities for speaking that children are offered. Teachers give directions and children answer them, frequently with only a word or a phrase. These roles tend not to be reversible: children seldom give directions to teachers and questions addressed to teachers are rare, except for asking permission. These characteristics appear to be nearly universal in standard lessons conducted in western style schools. The only classroom context in which children can reverse roles is with their peers.

But with Te Kohanga Reo the tuakana/teina relationship suggests the shifting of roles between teacher and learner and the total acceptance of the responsibility attached to the newly acquired role. Following on from this is the significance of accepting responsibility for each other in the whanau. The concept of “awhi” and “awhina” – to nurture and assist one another in order that the whole whanau progress – is the core of whanaungatanga.

Non-verbal communication is a significant feature of Te Kohanga Reo and Maori children’s experience. The only way non-verbal communication is learnt is through the total communication involvement of another adult, whether it is parent or teacher, with the child. It involves a mutual interaction, with the child receiving corrective feedback.

The problem for a society such as New Zealand is that children from minority groups taught by Pakeha teachers could well not learn the appropriate non-verbal cues since they and the teacher may be using different communicative codes, which often leads to mis-understanding.

Experimental research on this notion of mis-match has been done in the Kamehameha Early Education Programme (KEEP) in Hawaii. In this programme a change in interactional patterns in classroom instruction took place. It involved changing turn-taking rules to allow children to speak out without being called on – and to chime culturally patterned ways of speaking that do not match the cultural expectations of those with whom they are interacting. A case has been cited of Alaskan native children in which the students did much better academically than their typical native village school counterparts. Everything in the school was culturally mainstream except for the pattern of social relations the teachers used. The teachers used means of exercising social control that were more indirect than those usually employed by non-native teachers. They used ways of not putting children on the spot (similar to the avoidance of whakama) that have been identified among various native American groups in studies of child rearing and home-school experience. In short, the content of instruction was standard, but the process was non-standard in subtle ways that meant it was congruent with the patterns of social relationships found in home and community life in the village.

This and other evidence indicates that when settings are well matched learning improves. Teachers do not communicate and develop exchanges with Maori children as well as with other children: the potential for mismatch is present even when another child was speaking. (This, the “over-lapping turn structure”, is described as common in ordinary Hawaiian Polynesian conversations.) In the classroom this occurred as long as the content was relevant to the teacher-chosen subject.

This new lesson form was analysed by KEEP research staff as a bicultural combination of indigenous conversation style and teacher-guided content. These particular modifications were helpful to Polynesian children from one particular cultural background.

Sociolinguists have been concerned with what happens when people use The philosophy of the Kohanga revolves around the desire of Maori people to “stand tall”.

research on the relationship between cultural variables inherent in the Maori home matching the routines and expectations of the school.

I argue that in order to maintain and enhance the developmental potentials established in Te Kohanga Reo, more than just some Maori language or some taha Maori is needed. The presence of a strong Maori educational endeavour that is successful in Maori terms raises issues of power.

The significance of the status of te reo and Te Kohanga Reo is to be seen in the history of te reo in colonial times, which has led to the blaming of everyone except the system under which Maori children were being educated.

While Te Kohanga Reo exist to teach preschoolers the Maori language, the unforeseen side effects extend to the many young parents who are not only learning their own language with their children but also becoming politically active as they grapple with constraints imposed by Pakeha bureaucracy for an equitable distribution of those resources required to attain their goals.

As children leave Te Kohanga Reo, parents shop around for schools, seeking out those that offer bilingual continuity.
Standing tall

Where no bilingual programme is offered many parents hold back their children in Kohanga for a further year. It should be noted that as we enter into the era of declining rolls due to the falling birth rate, primary schools will be forced to become bilingual to attract Kohanga children and maintain their grading and staffing levels. The seizing of power by Maori parents in this area will spread to the rest of education and we can already see this with the advancement of Kura Kaupapa Maori. Te Kohanga Reo serves as an expression of current Maori aspirations for self-determination.

The major implication for schools rests with the disparity, so eloquently highlighted by the Waitangi Tribunal, between the official line and actual practice. In New Zealand we proclaim a society based on equality of opportunity, “the right of all people to advance socially, economically and politically, according to their specific talents and abilities, without impediment to this advancement”. The reality is very different. Schools will have to change.

A more recent development to Kohanga is Kaupapa Maori schooling, which uses the same pedagogy as Te Kohanga reo and is spear-heading the Maori educational scene.

In June 1987 the position of the Treaty of Waitangi changed: its original status as a legally binding document is becoming recognised. The implications are enormous. It forces the Pakeha majority to address the issues implicit in the Treaty and to honour that kaupapa, which includes partnership between the tangata whenua and manuhiri, power sharing, and a redistribution of resources to enhance self-determination for te iwi Maori.

At a more personal level, an acute awareness of this cycle has enhanced my understanding as a Black woman of the enormous effects and implications of colonisation, as experienced through a monocultural education system, on several generations of my family: colonisation of their lands and of their minds. I understand why it has taken four generations for a native speaker of Maori to emerge in my family. I have endured a great deal of pain on coming to this understanding and yet all this has increased my determination to present another perspective and given me the strength to work with the Pakeha majority in trying to address these issues.

The cultural basis for Te Kohanga reo and Kura Kaupapa Maori which are illustrated in this paper have implications for teacher training. Conventional preservice or inservice teacher training would not produce the necessary learning to equip teachers to construct appropriate environments for Maori children coming from Te Kohanga Reo. Teachers obviously have to be fluent speakers, but also expert on the appropriate pedagogical forms.

We as educators must validate and legitimise all forms of Maori knowledge. The processes of Maori culture must be given appropriate status by conventional academic and educational structures, in accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi and educational reform. As educators is it not desirable for us to want to see Maori children achieve and be successful in education?

Then, the major task ahead is to no longer argue that there are merely “seen” Maori patterns of learning and teaching, but to allow Maori people access to resources further develop a distinctly Maori educational pedagogy. It is already evident in Te Kohanga Reo and is now being transferred to Kura Kaupapa Maori. Maori people must be afforded, without interference or domination, the time, resources and courtesy to attempt these outcomes, as have earlier educational theorists.

The reality for Maori people is that for 150 years we have been written about by the perceived educational experts who have yet to provide viable solutions to reduce Maori failure in education. Maori are still being marginalised. Maori people have the expertise and passion to write about themselves, to find answers which work for us. One of these answers is Te Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Maori. We are taking responsibility for our own learning, which in the long term stands to benefit the entire nation.

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Pinky Agnew and Therese O’Connell are Glory Box. They work out of an office uncannily resembling a glory-hole from which they attract and dispense humourous glory. This unique comic service has taken off in Wellington. Their fame and bookings have spread beyond their huge circle of friends and acquaintances to complete strangers, bringing them about two gigs a week.

The blatant talents of the two feminists and former trade union activists extend to skits, compering, half-hour shows and Rent-a-fan. Their rates vary depending on the show and the relative wealth of the client, though Rent-a-fan has a set rate of $80. “...Which is actually very moderate,” Therese says. “We write a song. A different song every time. It’s not just a formula song we fit names into. And there’s two of us and...”
also we make so much noise, it’s amazing.” Pinky describes it as a “kinda sick service”. “It is basically a fan service for anyone who wants it. If it’s someone’s birthday or whatever we’ll come screaming into the restaurant.”

Glory Box began in June 1990. Pinky, 35, was on the unemployment benefit and Therese, 39, the sickness benefit. “We’d sort of talked about the idea of doing a show and putting it one the road. It was like a fantasy thing really – ‘girls like us don’t really do things like that, of course we’re not really professionals’, all those self-doubt sorts of things,” Pinky says.

With some encouragement, the pair went to talk about their ideas with an employment officer and ended up on the Job Opportunities Scheme for six months. At $200 a week each, they were earning more than they had in months.

Their first gig was a half-hour show for the Distribution Union’s conference. “We wrote stuff about them and that was one of the things that’s really important because we’ve had a bit of experience, a lot of knowledge, about meetings, the union movement, bureaucracy, we’ve got an eye to the ridiculous,” Pinky says. “They went to talk about their ideas with an eye to the political and an eye to the ridiculous,” Pinky says. “We research. There’s a lot of work to it and we’re still working in this six months that we’ve got on what is viable for us. You actually put an awful lot of work into something that, in the end, might only take 15 or 30 minutes to perform and then you might not use the stuff again.” In mid-December, with the JOS scheme ending at the end of January Glory Box was all set to continue. “We’ve got enough work to keep us going all the time and plenty of prospects,” said Therese.

How did two nice girls like these end up hawking their comic selves for money in front of crowds of people, and is Pinky her real name (“Even my mother calls me Pinky now.”)?

Part of the answer to the first part of the question lies in the Complete Works Of William Shakespeare.

Pinky: “I was born in Port Chalmers, the port of Otago. I first started fooling around at school and writing songs. Even though I had no musical ability whatsoever (Therese: “No, that’s not true.”) I’ve got a good knack for writing funny songs about things that are going on.”

“I went to Otago Girls High School which was a drama-mad school. It was mostly Shakespeare. They were crazy about Shakespeare and we used to celebrate Shakespeare day every year with this orgy. Every class would put on an act of a Shakespeare play and it was then I first discovered (pause) that I wasn’t pretty. I was always Friar Tuck or the nurse, even though I was the best actor in the class. The pretty girls were Juliet and the tall handsome girls were Romeo. I got a chip on my shoulder ... well, actually I might have got it before that – I wasn’t allowed to play in Susan Kendall’s house.”

Therese: “We’ve actually ... had similar backgrounds in that we’ve both come from working class families. Her from the south and me from the north, from the port of New Plymouth. I went to a Catholic school, coming from a Catholic family ...”

Pinky: “I came from a Presbyterian family. I’m sick of people thinking I’m Catholic because I hang around with you.”

Therese: “With a name like Pinky Agnew you certainly aren’t Catholic, don’t worry about it.”

After she left school Pinky “kind of mucked around in various things” like kitchen and clerical work. She got married, had a dog, got divorced and became active in the clerical workers’ union. She glided up the ranks, becoming president of the Otago clerical workers union. But Dunedin had started to look small. “I packed up my traps and came up to Wellington (1981).”

Through the women’s sub-committee of the then Federation of Labour’s trades council, Pinky made new friends, including one Therese O’Connell. She did clerical work, which she says she loves, and got a job as an organiser and later education officer with the Bank Officers Union. She was also involved in the trades council’s women’s choir and a show they put on at the old Caltex Lounge, now Paisley Park nightclub.

Therese’s high school also suffered from something of a Shakespeare obsession. “Maybe it was the era?” And Therese didn’t score the pretty parts, either. “I always got to do the male lead and I always thought it was because I had such a loud voice. Coming from a large family (of six children) you learn to throw your voice miles without having to shout.”

It was at school her feminist consciousness was born. She and other students from Sacred Heart Girls College had to attend the “brother” college for some classes and, of course, the

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VIEWS

On the current state of feminism
Pinky: When you’re in the trade union movement you really think that trade unionists are the vanguard of the feminist movement “ and it’s good seeing younger women being so staunch.

On women friends
Pinky: You just die without them.

On writing comedy
Therese: It’s just putting words that I talk - and I’m a talker from way back - on paper.

On comics
Therese: We both actually like to same ones. Victoria Woods is wonderful and we both like Billy Connolly enormously. I’ve always liked anal humour myself. We think each other is really funny and that’s really useful.

On fat
Pinky: We had a skit called obese-i-cise which we did with another big woman. We thought it was excruciatingly funny and we’ve done it twice and both times we’ve had some negative feedback from thin women who felt oppressed by what we did. Fat people, particularly fat women, are an oppressed group. They are oppressed by society and they are the butt of a lot of prejudice

On trying to please everybody
Pinky: You’d be bloody Lindsay Yeo and buzz-o-bumble.
Therese: You’d be totally sanitised, that would be the most terrible thing.

Any other topic you want to traverse?
Pinky: We haven’t covered the economy.

It was too much, I needed a break so I decided to jump off the edge, try and get fit and well and I left the union movement as an official”

Therese says Glory Box is active in its own union, the Performance and Entertainment Workers Union. “We have become that most dangerous of unionists – the informed and highly suspicious plain and purl members (the new feminist version of “rank and file”).”

Meanwhile, Pinky left the Bank Officers Union, took a holiday with her dog and VW, came back “all renewed and invigorated” went to work for the Distribution Union as a clerical worker and got Occupational Overuse Syndrome (or Repetitive Strain Injury). Another break was forced on her, one she spent at Motueka. She came back and last year did the Wellington Polytechnic journalism course. Print journalism was not an option because of her OOS and she couldn’t break into radio in Wellington so she ended up on the unemployment benefit.

Two women with time and talent on their hands simply had to end up together. End up together they did – as Glorybox. □
Linda Hill explores the implications of the way we understand “work”.

One thing that feminism has achieved over the last 20 years is to widen the meaning of the word “work”. In the 1950s work was frequently seen as a trade off between wages and leisure. “What wages?” said Mum of the 1960s as she struggled to the supermarket with three toddlers and no car, then rushed back to Aunt Daisy’s cookbook and the unironed sheets. “What leisure?” said Super-Mum of the 1980s as with split second timing she juggled her unequally paid job with ferrying the kids to their opportunities for social development, rushing back to The Enchanted Broccoli Forest, to sorting out the socks and Tomorrow’s Schools. “Just because the men don’t do it”, said the feminists, “doesn’t mean it isn’t work – house WORK, childcare WORK, emotional support WORK, community WORK, career, job, or part-time-pay-the-mortgage WORK.” By now that one is clear – to us women at least. And throughout there are the women who have always worked for low pay, and done the domestic work, and taken care of the kids and the sick relatives...

There have been various feminist analyses of how women’s paid and unpaid work fit together and into patriarchy or capitalism. For liberal feminists it’s a matter of individual choice: women should not be confined to one role but have equal opportunity for work outside the home, and equal partnerships within it.

In the domestic labour debate of the late 1970s marxist feminists tried to fit feminism into a traditional marxist framework by pointing out the benefits to capitalism of unpaid domestic labour in “reproducing” the worker for HIS next day’s work and reproducing the next generation of workers. Radical feminists believed that men benefit directly from women’s domestic, childrearing and sexual services. Male control of women’s sexuality in the heterosexual family is the key mechanism of patriarchy, enforced by violence they said. Radical feminists have demanded a re-evaluation of women’s nurturing qualities and skills, and are building feminist alternatives to the nuclear family. Recently socialist feminists have started exploring how patriarchy at work keeps even working women financially disadvantaged and subordinate at home, how male workers collude with bosses to keep women out of the good jobs and corner the new technology for themselves.

We are all right of course. It’s different angles and different pieces of the same puzzle - how patriarchy and capitalism, the bosses and the boys, work together to subordinate, oppress and exploit women. The centre of it is women’s work, widely defined as all the socially beneficial things women do every day, including housework, childcare, parentcare, emotional support, mediating, and paid and voluntary work.

It’s the men who benefit from the never ending housework. Every service
she provides that is more than half the housework load is directly working for him. Capitalism benefits too since the unpaid work of women keeps those well fed and freshly dressed workers coming at a minimal cost. But as Australian Suzanne Franzway points out, why would capitalism care “who does the washing and cooking, with the laundromat and Colonel Saunders on the corner. And why is there not a full day childcare centre on the next corner?” Capitalism, run by men, doesn’t cut across the interests of the patriarchal system.

Again with childcare, women doing more than 50% of the work is working for him, since he is a parent too. Just because women are able to bear babies and breastfeed is no logical reason why they alone should be responsible for child-rearing. Change is beginning among young men, they are beginning to pick up on childcare, especially the fun bits, perhaps because we women now have alternatives to financial dependency within marriage. Marriage isn’t an institution for the support and protection of women and children, as any refuge can tell us. Marriage is an institution invented so men could get access to their kids.

No sooner are the kids grown than it’s the old people needing looking after. His, just as likely as hers, but she usually does it. And the keeping in contact and the Sunday lunches and letter writing and birthday remembering... Ann Ferguson calls this “sex/affective work”. The “sex” part is clear enough. In these post-sexual revolution times, this hopefully is a reciprocity not a service. The “affective” part is ego support. This appears to be the last area of heterosexual partnerships to become reciprocal, even amongst the most progressive couples. Smoothing out family egos and relationships is women’s work.

Another of the unpaid jobs women do for the family is mediating between it and the outside world. Women see the teacher, take the kids to the doctor, make them do their homework, go to the Housing Corp or the DSW, are there when the phone or stove needs fixing. Much of this mediating is for the welfare state. The state makes sure we are only working part-time and able to do these things by dumping the kids back on us by 3pm.

Despite unemployment, over 50% of all New Zealand women over 15 are in paid work. Women are heavily concentrated in eight “women’s work” occupations which are generally low paid and dead end. Our jobs aren’t hobbies or for “extras”. The old idea of a “family wage” for men, with women being paid “pin money” has been eroded by inflation and recession. The social wage of welfare state benefits is being eroded too. The one income family is hardly visible these days. Childcare costs get calculated against the female parent’s low wage so that the job becomes “uneconomic” and she stays home with the toddlers. In hard times we can afford frigates and Commonwealth games but not cheap childcare and pay equity.

Society For Research on Women research shows that as the major breadwinner, real or ego-supported, the Kiwi male still has control over the family budget.

So now capitalism gets 60 plus hours work for a nuclear household income, ie, to make ends meet most families need a full-time wage plus at least another part-time wage. Men get wives who are still expected to earn their own keep and still do the housework. And there’s no real competition at work from all those exhausted working mums, usually safely segregated in “women’s” occupations anyway. Capitalism uses pre-existing patriarchy and transforms it into a new family form that keeps both capitalism and patriarchy going. Capitalism is just as happy to use racism as patriarchy, or more profitable still, both together. Maori and Pacific Islanders are getting the worst paid jobs and have the highest unemployment among New Zealand women, as their menfolk do among New Zealand men.

Voluntary work is unpaid work women do which benefits society as a whole, not just the immediate family. It is the publicly visible part of socially productive activity that women used to do more of before we all had to be Super-mums.

The Ministry of Women’s Affairs is carrying out a time use survey to estimate women’s unpaid domestic and voluntary work for government policy and support purposes. The International Labour Organisation estimates women do 90% of the unpaid work of the world. The beneficiaries of all this free work are not necessarily the direct recipients but rather those who would otherwise have to bear the load to make society tick over.

For women the difficulty is juggling the demands of paid and unpaid work - demands of time or just plain demands. When they conflict, as they often do, we are seen as less adequate, less devoted workers or wives and mothers, and therefore start to depreciate ourselves instead of recognising our hard work and highly developed management skills.

Voluntary work is perhaps where the close connection between women’s unpaid work and the welfare state is most clearly revealed. Many voluntary organisations run by women are the collective, social form of the services women would otherwise perform as individuals in the family - care of old people, helping the sick or the disabled, organising children’s activities and sports, charitable work perhaps from a religious or political perspective.

Some forms of work once done as part of “women’s role”, or as voluntary work were taken over by the welfare state set up in New Zealand at the end of the 1930s. The Welfare State is a major employer of women. As nurses, teachers, social workers and in the host of ancillary services that support the health, education and welfare systems. Franzway suggests that different institutions of the state embody patriarchy or capitalism in different degrees. This concept allows for some interesting characterisations of New Zealand state institutions. The armed forces, police and prison service are obviously macho. Treasury, giving direction to the State Owned Enterprises, epitomises capitalism and perhaps also new middle class masculine values - efficiency, rationality, drive. Railways and the Ministry of Works have more working class masculine images. All are heavy employers of men. Despite Equal Employment Opportunities, the restructured State Owned Enterprises have not provided more equal
opportunities for women. Their capitalist
aspects have been made more efficient,
"feminine" serving aspects dispensed
with, ready for fully fledged capitalism
through privatisation.

The major employers of women are,
not surprisingly, institutions of the
welfare state embodying other values -
caring for health and sickness, educating,
cleaning up the messes made by
capitalism and patriarchy. Typically
"women's work". These areas of socially
productive but non-profit making activity
by the state are being cut and pushed
back on the "community", ie, women's
unpaid work. Instead of having jobs
doing things we know are socially useful,
if badly paid, we will be back isolated in
the home trying to cope with problems
best dealt with at a social collective level,
or struggling to keep small voluntary
groups together so we don't have to go it
alone.

I don't want to overstate this
caricatured distinction between "mas­
culine" and "feminine" organs of the
state. Not least because feminists are
keen to deconstruct notions of
masculinity and femininity into a free
range of available virtues. But it certainly
does shed a different light on what is
going on in New Zealand society with
major changes in the role of the state.
These are New Times we are told. The
Keynesian welfare state must give
way to consumer choice. But what we
are getting is budget cuts, not choice. We
will have to do something. How can we
manage the welfare state, especially the
budget, as well as just working for it and
relying on it? Imagine the possibilities
for really reorganising the health service
along feminist women's health centre
lines if we had adequate resources.

This is important because we deserve
our services and we deserve our jobs.
But in protecting the welfare state we
have worked for, there is a danger in it
becoming a tussle simply between
women and the state. Men and capitalist
beneficiaries have always slid out the
door while we and the welfare state got
on with the work. A major reason for the
change in the state role is that private
enterprise is now interested in expanding
into some of the profitable bits of the
welfare state, and resents money being
spent on the "inefficient" other bits,
which usually means us. For all those
men that aren't benefiting from
capitalism these days their "home
comforts" become all the more
important, with extra pressure on
Supermum in her paid and unpaid work.

There are two small but insufficient
strategies already being tried to break the
ever diminishing circle of women's paid
and unpaid work. One is the Pay Equity
legislation which promises to improve
the financial position of a large number
of badly paid women, if only slightly.
Unfortunately the present act seems
designed to be ineffective. At the end of
a long process of claims and carefully
established comparable worth assess­
ments, we will still be expected to
negotiate it all with the bosses who
employ us. Justice and equality on the
drip feed.

The second, already mentioned, is the
Ministry of Women's Affairs time use
study of unpaid work, estimating its
value to society. Even if this is done at
unequal "women's work" rates, it is
likely to show that the cooking, washing
up and laundry we do is worth more to
the country than all those sheep, cows
and kiwifruit put together. Then let them
tell us it's not "real" work and try to get
out of their share! □

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Saturday 4 May, 1991

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About
Hysterectomies and Were Afraid to Ask
Saturday 27 April, 1991

CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION
University of Waikato
Te Whare Wananga o Waikato
Megan Fidler discusses how the testing, development and distribution of RU 486, the new “contragestive” pill, illustrates the conflicts and links between science and religion, multinationals and development. Women’s well being could easily get lost in the uproar.

RU 486 is not available in New Zealand. This new hormone pill was developed in France where it has been in full commercial use since 1988. RU 486, an antiprogesterone steroid, blocks the receptor cells in the uterus from receiving the hormone progesterone which is needed to mature the uterine lining in order to support a fertilised egg. In the absence of progesterone, the body is tricked into doing what it would normally do at the end of a menstrual cycle in which no egg had been fertilised - it sheds the lining of the uterus. Within 48 hours of the first dose of RU 486, uterine bleeding begins expelling the fertilised egg with it.

Under the trade name mifepristone, RU 486 is administered as a tablet followed by a small dose of prostoglandin 36 -48 hours later, which increases the frequency and strength of uterine contractions needed to expel the embryo. The success rate of this combination treatment is 96%.

In September 1988, RU 486 was officially approved for use in France and China. At the same time, World Health Organisation (WHO) sponsored trials of the drug were under way in about a dozen countries. Sweden, Britain and the Netherlands were expected to approve the drug for marketing in early 1989. But in October, just a month later, Roussel suspended distribution for reasons that are still unclear.

Roussel’s executives say the company had received threats that if they continue to manufacture the drug they would be bombed. Profits may have been more important than personal intimidation in Roussel’s decision. Anti-abortionists and Catholic hospitals served notice that they would stop buying any product by the giant pharmaceutical company Hoescht, (which owns 56% of Roussel), or any of its international subsidiaries if it continued to market RU 486.

Within 24 hours, 1000 physicians had petitioned Roussel against taking RU 486 off the market. The developer of the drug, Emile Baulieu called the decision, “morally scandalous”, and WHO “regretted the move”. Two days after the withdrawal of the drug, the French government, which owns 36% of Roussel, ordered the continued distribution in France, “in the interests of the public health”, and because the drug was “the moral property of the women”.

Since 1988 when RU 486 became available in France, 50,000 terminations have been performed with the combination of RU 486 and prostoglandin. Between a quarter and a third of women who decide to interrupt early pregnancies chose this chemical approach over standard surgical procedures.

A study of 2,115 women, has confirmed the 96% success rate. In 4.5% of women in the study, bleeding was heavy. In some cases surgical intervention was needed to stop the bleeding, and in a few instances a transfusion was required. The average bleeding time was nine days. The time to expulsion, the duration of the bleeding and the intensity of the pain (caused primarily by the contractile effects of the prostoglandin), varied depending on the dose of prostoglandin. A high dose was associated with faster expulsion but also with more prolonged bleeding and more intense pain.

Outside the study, physicians have reported that two of the women who received RU 486 have had severe disturbances in heart function after receiving the prostoglandin. Both women survived, but their difficulties suggest that prostoglandin should be administered cautiously in a woman who has heart disease or is at a high risk for it, as in the case of heavy smokers.
"The feminist conviction is that women have the right to decide their own fertility\".

The procedure for a woman requiring RU 486 is elaborate and time consuming, involving a total of four medical visits. As soon as possible after missing her period, the woman must request an abortion through her doctor. It is crucial if a woman decides to use RU 486 to terminate her pregnancy, that she requests the abortion within two weeks of her missed period. Under French law there is a "cooling off" period of five days between requesting an abortion and having it. This, together with the fact that mifepristone can only be taken up to 49 days after the first day of the woman’s last period, means she has to move quickly.

The woman then makes an appointment at a hospital or clinic, taking the results of her blood test and her doctor’s letter. She will undergo an ultrasound exam to check the gestation of the foetus, and to ensure the pregnancy is not ectopic, be questioned for possible contra-indications (eg, asthma, cardiovascular problems), have the procedure explained, sign a form agreeing to a surgical abortion in case of method failure, and then swallow three 200 milligram mifepristone (RU 486) pills.

Two days later the woman returns to the clinic to receive an injection of prostoglandin. She stays at the clinic for three or four hours until pains and contractions have ceased. 10 - 15 days later she returns for a compulsory check-up, with either a further ultrasound examination or blood test to ensure that the abortion has been completed.

Despite the pain and inconvenience, many women find RU 486 less traumatic and preferable to surgical abortion. Comments from women who have used RU 486 include: "It’s a long process which required time and supportive clinic staff, and which is exhausting (my bleeding continued for about a month) - more exhausting than vacuum aspiration (which I have also had)... still I think it’s the least traumatic method in the long term". Other women say, “certainly less frightening than vacuum abortion, but very, very painful”, and “I think its a fantastic method. It considerably reduces anxiety and trauma”.

From a small qualitative study of 10 women who undertook trials of RU 486 in May and June 1985 (without prostoglandin), conducted at the Matenite des Lilas, Chartel Birman, midwife, states, "RU 486 is a new method of abortion whose originality offers many advantages, but also suggests some anxieties". She believes RU 486 can humanise abortion by making it less aggressive and more of a private decision, allowing a move toward greater individual autonomy and freedom. Ms Birman suggests RU 486 could lead to abuses, even to the point where a woman is given an abortion without her knowledge.

It’s no surprise that RU 486 has caused a great deal of controversy. From the start, groups opposed to abortion under any circumstances were calling RU 486 the “death pill". Because some define RU 486 as a contraceptive and some as an abortion pill, the abortion debate is destined to become further confused. Although widely thought of as an abortion pill, it’s discoverer Baulieu questions that terminology. He calls it a contragestive, derived from contragestation, just as contraceptive, is derived from contra-ception. RU 486 is not technically a contraceptive because it does not act to prevent the union of sperm and egg, but, rather acts to prevent the implantation of the egg in the womb once it has been fertilised. If the egg is already implanted, it will be expelled. In other words, it induces abortion. Because RU 486 works early in the gestational process, it is less likely to seem to most of its users like abortion. This prospect has the "pro-life" forces on edge. Public acceptance of RU 486 as a legitimate birth control is likely to blur the edges of the debate over when life begins.

The NZ Family Planning Association supports RU 486. Dr Christine Roke,
medical spokesperson says, “Family Planning believes that the medical abortion made possible by RU 486 is safer and preferable to the current practice of surgical abortions we have in NZ ... it is a breakthrough because it avoids the risk of surgery, and it allows early abortion”.

RU 486 has been used in France for just over two years. A great deal of the information we now have about the detrimental effects of the contraceptive pill have only been discovered after 20 years of women using it. Women health activists in New Zealand seem to be treating RU 486 with a healthy cynicism. Di Cleary of WONAC is “reasonably impressed” and thinks RU 486 “looks like it is worth pursuing”. Dr Margaret Sparrow, a medical doctor and director of ALRANZ says, “RU 486 is not yet perfect and should still be monitored. We have a lot to learn, we are in a new era of fertility control”. Judy Strid of Auckland Women’s Health Council believes, “RU 486 is worth looking at but needs to be treated with caution”. It is necessary to balance the advantages and disadvantages of specific methods of birth control. We need to be rigorous in evaluating and presenting information.

Within feminist debate, women of colour have raised criticisms about contraception. The problem lies not only in the physical dangers of specific methods, but in the social power that decides how technology is to be used. This is not only the power of men over women, reflected in the institutional hierarchy of the health service, but also involves power of race and class which work to determine who should reproduce. The pill was tested in Puerto Rico and Mexico in the 1950’s and 1960’s, and Depo Provera was tried out by the American drug company Upjohn in Thailand. Although Roussel’s head of clinical research, Dr Andre Ullman, says that there is no possibility of using RU 486 as it is used in France in developing countries, “Wherever abortion is clandestine, women are swallowing herbs and potions, chemicals and solvents, and injecting high-dose oestrogen and progesterone drugs in order to cause an abortion: these oral methods often cause incomplete abortions and haemorrhage which require treatment. In addition they are often not effective as abortifacients with the result that women do not succeed in terminating their pregnancies. The extent of damage to the health of children born is unknown”.

There are potential problems specific to RU 486. The method consists of two different drugs; one in a pill form and the other by injection or vaginal suppository. Women may well get one or the other of the drugs and overdose or underdose with either. Even with access to both drugs in the correct quantity, women may not use them within the 49 day limit or in the right order, or may not wait 48 hours before using the prostoglandin. Much higher rates of incomplete abortion and haemorrhage will occur than with controlled use.

Problems of limited access to information and support are also relevant to first world countries. Picture a young woman desperate to terminate her pregnancy, taking RU 486 at four months pregnant. The results could be disastrous. Illegally obtained pills used improperly and bearing Roussel’s trademark could become a corporate nightmare if they cause injury or death.

The feminist conviction is that women have the right to decide their own fertility. This will not happen until women are the major developers, distributors and controllers of contraception and abortion. The demand for abortion is just one aspect of the wider contention of the women’s liberation movement that the personal is political. Abortion as a political issue challenges the scope of existing theories about the demands of right, individuals and society, and social need. In Kathleen McDonnell’s words: “Our ‘politics’ cannot afford to be divorced from our authentic feelings no matter how vague or contradictory they may seem. Our real task is to search out and find ways to reconcile the two”.
This year the Auckland Rugby Union agreed to affiliate the city's rugby association. It was a major breakthrough for women involved in the game, but there is much hard work still to be done.

Women have never been completely welcome in the world of sport. The media begrudgingly give us the minimum of coverage, professional sportswomen still receive less prize money than their male counterparts, and a general attitude that women are "Not as good as men" in any given sport remains pervasive.

Historically, women and sport have been viewed as mutually exclusive. Sport has been, and sometimes still is, described as unsafe for the "delicate" female body or deemed unladylike and immodest. Physically active women threaten the way society perceives women. For instance, at the turn of the century "lady cyclists" were criticised for wearing bloomers and their behaviour was dismissed as immoral and inappropriate for women.

Today, many people have the same reaction against the idea of women playing rugby. It seems inappropriate - rugby is a man's game after all. Of course this same premise is used in arguments against women in non-traditional occupations: being a politician/judge/mechanic/engineer/architect/builder is a man's job, women are neither clever nor strong enough.

Caroline Sione and Jo Matthews play rugby for Roskill Districts. Their team came fourth in last season's eight team women's competition. Caroline started playing two years ago after seeing a touring English team. Jo was roped into the game when she had to fill in for a player and was bitten by the rugby bug. However she and Caroline had both

**Playing The Field**

*Why on earth do women want to play rugby? Lisa Sabbage caught up with Caroline Sione and Jo Matthews.*

"I'm going to be an All Black," Claire told her brothers.

"Girls don't play rugby," her brothers sniggered. "They're not strong enough".

"I'm going to be an All Black," Claire whispered to her friend at ballet class.

"Don't be silly," her friend whispered back. "Only stupid boys play rugby".

*Claire's Dream*, by Lynne and Sally McAra (Random House).

Above: Caroline (Roskill Districts) goes for the Te Atatu goal line.

Photos: Evelyn Kirifi
played rugby league and touch rugby before deciding to play rugby. Jo says she wouldn’t have dreamed of playing without the skills she learnt from the other games.

Generally, the response the two women get when people learn they play rugby is fairly close to the reactionary criticism of “lady cyclists”.

Caroline gives an example: “I overheard a conversation between one of our players and a man who said ‘It’s not a women’s game, why don’t you play netball?’ My answer to that is that rugby is a technical game, tactical, skilful and challenging. Men go out and display their skills, I like to display mine. A lot of men play netball, it’s the same thing.”

Jo adds that rugby is a sport - why should it be strictly for men only?

In New Zealand, the game of rugby has become more than a game. To many it is the last bastion of the kiwi male, where men are men, beer is beer, and politics has something to do with South Africa. For women to play the game, to know its rules, to become skilled in its strategies, represents a real threat to this bastion. Some men identify the game so strongly with masculinity that they assume women rugby players want to compete with them, want to be like men.

“We’re not trying to play with men, yet that’s one of the biggest fears some of these men have,” says Caroline, “One guy said ‘it’s a butchy thing isn’t it?’ That’s when you have to laugh”.

You have to laugh because it is such a typical homophobic reaction to all sportswomen, not just women rugby players. Active, determined women with muscles, competitive and sweaty women do not fit into the traditional stereotype we are supposed to squeeze ourselves into. There is still a tendency to view those of us who play team sports, who don’t mind getting bruised and dirty, as unnatural - and by implication as lesbians. Of course there are lesbians who play rugby, as many as are involved in any other sport or sphere of our society. What is really at issue is power.

“It is a very skilful game once you get into it … It’s a thinking game. Men have played the game since they were boys, women find it a challenge to play something they have no idea how to play. They’re on their own, dependent on themselves and each other. Rugby teaches women how to look after themselves, they become more assertive in certain ways.”
Footie

Russia, China, Japan, Yugoslavia, the United States and Canada competed for the world title. If you were lucky, you may have seen the five minutes broadcast on television.

The Auckland association is nearly seven years old. The competition is run by a committee consisting of the managers of each of the eight teams. This year, after three years of lobbying, the Auckland Rugby Union finally agreed to affiliate the women's association.

“They had to sit up and take notice because of the world tournament. The Wellington and Taranaki competitions have been affiliated to their union for the past four years. Auckland has the biggest women's competition and the best rep team, yet it wasn't affiliated. It wasn't until the New Zealand Rugby Union turned around and asked the ARU why it had a women's competition which wasn't affiliated, that it did something. Otherwise,” says Caroline, “we could have been lobbying for another five or ten years.”

Caroline believes the ARU resisted recognising the women's competition because the administration thinks rugby is a man's game that women cannot play.

“They think we're trying to compete with them. We just want their help to play the game to the highest standard.”

Women players wanted to affiliate with the ARU for two reasons. The new Accident Compensation legislation means that any women injured playing rugby will receive no compensation unless the team comes under the umbrella of the ARU. Second, Jo and Caroline are adamant that the women's game could not develop without the unions help. Access to coaching clinics, qualified coaches and referees, goes hand in hand with the union. Some men have already been supportive. Roskill Districts have benefited by the assistance of two senior players from the club. However, Caroline is concerned that not just anyone should be able to coach a women's team. Women are no less deserving of proper correct teaching than are men.

Affiliation has also meant some organisational improvement, a constitution and guidelines on how the competition should run. The problems haven't ended with affiliation however.

Caroline is disappointed with the response of the ARU so far. “I feel that we are on show. We have to prove we are functioning well, that we can play properly and PR well. Their main concern seems to be the rep team. To me they should be focusing their attention on the actual competition and the way it is organised. The women's game needs the union to focus on the skills of the players rather than emphasising the rep team because they think it displays rugby union”.

Although the standard of refereeing picked up this year, Jo and Caroline believe there is still a shortage of quality referees for their games.

“A lot of injuries came from bad refereeing. The game flows more and is cleaner with good referees. But because we're women, there is a bit of a she'll be right attitude,” says Jo.

“The ARU would like to see more women refereeing but that raises the question of whether the union will let them referee top grade games,” adds Caroline.

The ARU have affiliated the women's rugby competition, but perhaps it has yet to take it seriously. There is no question that the union's priority is, and will continue to be, the men's teams. The union has paid directors, managers, a draws officer and publicity officer. The women's association runs entirely on a voluntary basis. No one is paid. While a representative from the association attends ARU meetings at Eden Park, the union has yet to send someone to one of their meetings.

“The teams are doing fine,” says Caroline. “But we are striving to have a competition which is better organised. Financially the Auckland women's association cannot stand on its own, we have to start charging union affiliation fees. The committee has to become stronger, we have to become more boisterous in the ARU. At the moment the women's presence is still quiet with much nodding of heads.”

Ideally, the association would like a paid position to promote and co-ordinate the women's competition.

Regular media coverage would be nice. But Jo and Caroline are realistic - "any coverage is good."

“I've rung the Herald office,” says Caroline. “But they're not really interested unless John Kirwan's girlfriend or Grant Fox's wife is playing.”

This is in spite of having Auckland representatives and a New Zealand representative on the team.

Here, women's rugby is up against the media's attitude to women's sport as a whole. Next to no coverage and if it can be glossy and fluffy, all the better. That way everyone knows it's not serious.

Caroline and Jo are optimistic about the future of the women's game. Jo believes it will go from strength to strength. And it seems that many young women agree with her. Thousands of schoolgirls now play New Image or Walla Rugby, a modified version of rugby which emphasises running, handling and support play. Moreover, with the growing popularity of touch rugby in summer, many women are choosing to play rugby in winter.

“I think it has a lot to do with training and socialising with other women after the game. For some women it's the only chance to get out without the kids.”

Sport and recreation are seldom considered political issues, yet they have a strong relationship with health and equity. Sport, whether rugby, netball or waterpolo, fosters fitness and well-being. It combats a lack of involvement in the community and gives us access to the outdoors, more difficult in an urban environment. Sport brings with it social and personal benefits - social interaction, excitement, a sense of control over one's life, body and strength.

As women we have as much right to sport and its benefits as any other group. We also have the right to exercise choice over what sport we play. Ninety years ago, cycling was considered inappropriate for women. This year, Madonna Harris won a gold medal for cycling at the Commonwealth Games.

Claire dreamed of playing rugby. Her brother told her she wasn't strong enough, her friend told her it was a game only boys can play. It didn't stop her from dreaming. At the end of the story, Claire's parents presented her with a pair of rugby boots. She is strong enough and there is no game for boys only.
Rachel McAlpine talked to Pat Rosier about writing *Farewell Speech*, a novel based on the lives of her suffragist great-grandmother, Ada Wells, and suffragist Kate Sheppard. Ada and Kate were both important figures in the fight for votes for women in New Zealand, achieved on 19 September 1893.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Rachel’s family was full of stories about Ada Wells. “The whole family vibrated with this former matriarch and as a writer I really wanted to understand her more. Most people didn’t have any sympathy with her at all. My big sister for instance, when I came along with my latest bit of news about Ada Wells, said, ‘I’ve heard all I ever want to know about Ada Wells. I don’t want to know any more.’

“There was a very dark side to her character, a sort of sadistic side that was very real. My mother hated Ada, her grandmother, because on Saturdays she had to sit inside and learn Latin and she would be hit on the head very hard with the book if she didn’t concentrate. It really mattered to Ada that the girls got an education. The other side was with the massage. Some people said that Ada had healing hands - and that was in her obituary. I’m sure that was true, I’m sure she was a healer, but she was also very impatient with people. If they didn’t agree with her, that was it, they were out, she’d cut them off. She was very arrogant. I’ve heard that if she was massaging - this is another family story - and the person massaged happened to agree with conscription for example, she would do things like dig her thumbs in very hard in very sore places, saying, ‘How would you like a bayonet going into you like that?’ Also, the pretext for sacking her from St Alban’s School was excessive flogging of boys. It is in context, it wasn’t unusual for the time, but she was a pretty tough cookie.

“So I wanted to find something I could love in her and know what made her that way. Partly she was born very special – strong, determined and clever. I did find out more about her and did grow to care about her a lot. I feel much, much warmer about her having realised all the things she was too proud ever to talk about. She would never have said ‘I need reforms because my husband takes all my money and he beats me up.’ She was far too proud to admit any of that, but she could do it for other women, so I understand her motives, and I celebrate them.”

I wanted to find something to love in her and know what made her that way.

The character of Ada was illuminated for Rachel McAlpine by its contrast with that of Kate Sheppard. Rachel is careful to explain that the one aspect of the book she invented was the relationship between Ada and Kate. “Of all the stuff that is in the book, ninety-nine percent is as true as I could get it from gossip and publications I read until they came out of my ears. All the facts and semi-facts I’ve got I’ve used. I tried to get it right.

“But one thing I knew nothing about was how Ada related to Kate. They worked together. There are speeches - Ada was the first to give one on the economic independence of married women and the next year at the National Council of Women conference Kate Sheppard gave a speech that overlapped a lot. They obviously talked together and nutted things out together and shared ideas often. For instance Kate would be president of an organisation and Ada would be secretary. Another clue was the famous photograph of Ada sitting at Kate’s feet. Ada was a lot younger and under-privileged, whereas Kate was privileged and older, so Ada would admire her and want to be like her and eventually compete with her.”

There is a section in the book where Ada recognises she has strong feelings about Kate, sexual feelings even. That is more than Ada, the character, can cope with, and she never declares these.
After the achievement of votes for women Ada remained politically active.

feelings to Kate. By 1900 they went different ways. Ada was an uncompromising pacifist, and during the Boer War, when patriotism was rife, her stand was not popular. She upset people. Kate, on the other hand, "was tactful, a politician, and peace wasn't her primary concern." Kate had by this time outraged Christchurch society by going to live with the Lowell-Smiths, a family whose patriarch, William, was her lover. (After the death of William's wife they married.) This meant that she was not in a position to lead "causes" any longer. Such was the power of public "disgrace" at that time.

“In a way the information I have about the relationship between Kate and Ada is very flimsy. I just tried to get into the minds of both of them and figure out how they would have related to each other. That's why I wrote it as a novel.” By the end of their lives Kate and Ada were not in contact. Kate did not go to Ada's funeral, and wasn’t on the list of people who should come and visit her to say goodbye. Ada was extremely ill with cancer and decided to die by euthanasia.

After the achievement of votes for women, for which Ada “worked and worked and worked” she remained politically active. Organisations she was involved with included the Christchurch Women’s Institute, “which remained very radical”, and The National Council of Women. “She worked for peace very actively and aggressively - she was called aggressive by people – she worked for better conditions in orphanages, she was the first woman city councillor in Christchurch – probably one of the first in New Zealand – 1917 she got in. She was only in one term and got in on proportional representation. She was a minority voice and when she was on the council one thing she wanted was a clean milk supply. She didn’t manage to get that through but for years she worked trying to get milk in bottles rather than have the milkman drive the horse, deal with the money, dish out the milk, it was totally unhygienic.

“She didn’t have a lot of success but she certainly had an impact on the orphanages. She was very fearless, she tackled head on the very board she was on, the Charitable Aid Board, and it had an impact, but in the end the orphanages got bigger, not smaller. She had this dream of cottage homes.

“Ada was usually right! And most of her ideas hold up even now. There was a lot of real common sense, like you shouldn’t drive a horse and dish out milk without washing your hands in between. And she’s right about war, it’s a stupid bloody way to behave. But I think one thing that’s utterly different in her from me or almost anybody now, is that it’s very rarely now that you can get hold of an issue and know that you are absolutely and totally right, you don’t need to spend even a second thinking about the other person’s point of view. That was her strength, that she had that very clear vision, but it was also a difficulty too, because she antagonised people right left and centre. Her lack of charm - heterosexual charm in fact (unlike Kate) – limited her impact.”

It took a lot of digging to uncover what motivated Ada to political action, “because her own needs were so hidden though pride and gentility and all that.” But Kate Sheppard actually told everybody. Somebody asked her in an interview soon after the vote was achieved for women what started her off.

“She started late, she did a lot of swanning around having soirées with gentlemen before she got stuck into this.” In fact, it was something like pique. A small group that Kate was part of had sent a petition to parliament opposing the sale of liquor to children and the employment of barmaids. And it was turned down in a very dismissive tone. “That riled her so much it really got her going.”

One of Ada’s daughters, Bim, is also part of Farewell Speech. “Bim was my great-aunt and a real story in herself. She was filled with anger, Bim, but many people really liked her because she had a great sense of fun. It made a terrible mess of her life, having an illegitimate child. I wanted her in the book partly because she said things that Ada would never say about her [Ada's] private life. Also because she represented so many women, not in her personality necessarily, but in all the chaos of her life.

“That family landed up within all the social strata of Christchurch. The classes sort of tumbled everywhere. Bankruptcy was quite common. For Ada, her mother was a lady, her father was in trade but successful until that got wiped out with tuberculosis and bankruptcy. Then her mother took in washing, so that’s almost rock bottom on the social scale, but still with these expectations and ideas about being ladies. My grandmother, Chris, ended up the genteel, intellectual poor and her sister Cos was very rich, she married the man who owned or managed Kaiapoi Woollen Mills, they had a massive house on the Cashmere Hills in Christchurch. Very rich and very mean. Then there was Bim who was a kitchen-hand among other things.”

Rachel is looking forward to the two biographies of Kate Sheppard that are in preparation now. “Patriarchal history writing did a very good job on the suffragettes. There’s a whole industry of writing about Katherine Mansfield yet this is the first book ever about Kate Sheppard.” There is no sign there will ever be a book about Ada Wells.
The gripes of
ROTH

The TV soap gets in our square eyes as we view some introductory flashbacks. An ambulance sirens through the streets while the same few metres of scenery are thriftily recycled past it at high speed, and the Southern Cross twinkles away in pursuit at low altitude. We hear the siren’s dying fall as the vehicle stops. Then occurs the standard hustle and bustle of any TV hospital drama as the patient is rushed on a trolley through the corridors to the operating theatre with various uniformed attendants, holding a drip over the anonymous body. One dr (Victor) marches briskly alongside the trolley working his calculator as he watches the dollar notes coming out of the drip into an attached container.

Victor (barks): This is an emergency. We’ve got a very famous and rich personage here. Our best medical team is going to pin and tuck and pleat and cut him into a new image.

The screen darkens and we see a group of witches at the end of their celebration of the autumn equinox. They are admiring a new baby with beautiful multi-coloured hair as her mother settles her into a baby seat on the back of her broomstick.

Witch Pandora: We have celebrated and given thanks for our harvest. We have expressed special appreciation to our fruitful sister who has given us a new daughter. Go well and safely sisters.

They all salute the baby in various ways, put on their crash helmets and sail off on their broomsticks – some of them riding pillion – and a couple making giant strides on pogo sticks. And at last we know today’s economy sized episode is near as we see the sand in an hour glass hurtling up and down like crazy while the muzak swells and the title appears on the screen: THE CRINGING DEFECTIVE.

The camera takes us to a hospital operating theatre. From a distance we see a large crowd dressed in TV operating gear: tunics, trousers, shower caps. The front row of the circle is bent over an invisible body while those further back try to peer at what’s going on. We are privileged with a quick peek at important machinery and can hear some rhythmic beeps while we glimpse the small screen showing the heart beats tying themselves into interesting swirls and knots. We are reminded of the identity problems of our test cricketers who have to have their names embroidered on their little ‘jamies – for, as the camera swoops closer we find the medical team has followed suit. We see titles like: Teenage Mutant; Michaelangelo; Leonardo; Goldie; Dr Who; Little Green man; Bonhamie; Lipo Sucks; Plastic Fantastic; Nippon Clipon; Broken Holmes; $Visa$$; Token Sheila/Ethnic/Lesbian Mother etc (this last character leans on a heavy stick, and her-large label covers a backpack holding a tiny baby with beautiful multicoloured hair.) Pandora and a couple of her crone cronies circle in the air above the patient and cackle.

Pandora (pointing derisively): Not much chance of fruitfulness there, sisters! We all knew it was padding pretending to do a put-up job.

A commercial break with bright music and colourful Easter Eggs and bunnies and an authoritative (i.e. male) voice urging kiddies and mothers to take one another to see the bunnies and buy the eggs. We swoop back to Pandora’s lot, going round at speed above the operating table.

Pandora: Hey! You fullas down there! You know what’s another name for a bunny rabbit? It’s a CONEY!

The heart machine beeps an SOS and makes agitated patterns. The health experts put their arms round one another and their heads down to form a protective scrum while Sheila’s magic stick unfolds ingeniously into a chair on which she sits to feed the baby. The witches swerve and dive, pointing their broomsticks at the medical team, singing in unison: Nar nar nanar nar.

Pandora: See, sisters? In medical circles they call it the Coney-Bunkle Denial Syndrome or Metro Gnome Megalomania. They all bunkle off to hide like scared little fluffy coneys and swear it never happened!

A commercial break for Magic Moments in Banks and we see All Blacks and big deals and wheels like the Roberts
Gripes

(Muldoon and Jones), the Rons (Brierly, Trotter and Don) and the Rogers (Douglas and the Lodger) etc. looting, pillaging etc. They fade into World War 1 Kiwi troops and a portentous (i.e. male) voice says: On Anzac Day we remember Gallipoli when New Zealand became a nation.

The screen darkens to show us the witches at the end of their winter solstice ritual, lovingly passing the baby round the circle.

Pandora: We celebrate the passing of the longest night and the rebirth of the sun so it shines brightly on the nation in 1991 to make up for the dark hypocrisy of 1990. Our daughter deserves to live in a different kind of nation, with peace, justice, equity.

The baby is now in a little hammock swinging from a tripod of broomsticks surrounded by banners saying The Treaty is a Fraud and other messages of peace and equity. A quick sequence of filmed activities illustrating these sentiments follows - the hikoi, anti-Gulf was rally, women beating protesting pots and pans at pay equity's repeal. There's another commercial break showing a lot of junk which we are urged to buy to remember Father on Father's Day. We move to the crones circling above the doctors and cackling cynically.

Pandora: Hey! You Fullas down there! We remember you fathers all right! That's why we need to keep up our feminist rituals. Let's go sisters – it's our spring solstice celebration.

They fly off in formation. The camera shifts back to the doctors, where there is a flurry of interest over the patient with the heartbeats jumping and a lot of beeping/

Victor (crisply): It's getting weaker. Quickly. Swab! Suture! Sponge! Nurse! Swab! Suture! Sheila, what are you DOING?

Sheila (who is rocking and singing the baby to sleep): What do you think I'm doing? I'm not a nurse. I'm just a token disabled kitchen-hand. Sometimes I'm an unpaid interpreter when you lot are stuck.

Pandora: Hey! You Fullas down there! You won't keep nurses with the pay and conditions you're giving them.

Victor (watching the heart beats flatten out and the beeps expire): It's too late. We did our best but his time has come. Another case of trying to extend himself beyond his credit limit.

The crones dive-bomb the patient, emerge with him to reveal - Da DAAA – the limp figure of Santa Claus.

Pandora: Pathetic! trying to rejuvenate that worn-out old sellabration. Hey! You fullas down there! We've got news for you. We're banning Xmas and we're off to a summer solstice party. And sisters, have I got gifts for you.

She makes some magic passes and there is a fleet of battery powered scooters in different bright colours. The crones help Sheila on to hers and lovingly put the baby into the shopping basket on a bed of summer flowers. Pandora stuffs Santa Claus face down into her shopping basket muttering a spell. They do a few wheelies round the doctors who are cringing as they try to ingratiate themselves into the crones' circle, then the scooters musak off into the wild blue yonder, the baby waving and laughing and throwing flowers.
The second annual Women’s Film Festival, produced by Chrissy Duggan (Black Rose Productions), was held at Outreach 4-8 December. Women film makers of Aotearoa were featured on the first night after an introduction from Athina Tsoulis. Most of the films shown here, especially in the first half, were the work of emerging film makers and were often experimental - consequently, the effects of low budgets and inexperience were visible, though counterbalanced by freshness and energy.

A Bitter Song (Athina Tsoulis) and Four Frames (Tara Pradhan and Anna Marbrook), strong films I would have considered programming to open the festival, were the highlights of the evening. These two were accompanied in the second half by Lisa Reihana’s Wog Features, an animated comment on cultural consumerism and the con-icons it produces.

A Bitter Song is a story built around an episode in the life of Thalia, a young Greek girl growing up in 1950s Auckland. Traditional family roles are evident: mother is devoted to her children; father, though affectionate at times and hardworking, is distanced from them and feels little compunction to take an active part in their lives. This man does not maltreat his family, but his very conception of them as unimportant contributes to their own low esteem and lack of confidence.

I look forward to Tsoulis’ planned sequel to Thalia’s story, and hope that she doesn’t encounter more of the problems that beset the printing of this film. The integrity that film makers of Tsoulis’ calibre put into their work should surely be matched by those responsible for its final production.

Four Frames (Pradhan and Marbrook) looks at four Aotearoa women film makers: Shereen Maloney, Nikola Caro, Bronwyn Sprague and Julie Benjamin. This documentary interspersed ‘talking-head’ interviews with footage of each woman at work on a film project.

Australian film makers:

Tracey Moffat’s Night Cries was visually stunning, which served to heighten the awareness of frustration and isolation felt by the daughter as she cared for her elderly, incapacitated mother.

Maria the Immaculate or Baby Duck by Doerthe Jansen, is particularly unsettling in its depiction of a woman who treats a roasting fowl as her infant. This is a perverse fantasy that fails to find its focus.

Point of Departure (Kathryn Millard) tells the fascinating story of Jean Devanny, a New Zealand writer who, despite personal tragedy, worked tirelessly for the Communist Party in Australia, an organisation dominated by men who finally could not accommodate her articulate insistence on women’s rights.

Landslides (Susan Lambert and Sarah Gibson) is an intriguing, challenging film that puts the audience to work. Dis-orientating to begin with, it slowly captivates the viewer with its mesmerising visual style. It is the juxtaposition of image and text that is so disconcerting at first and then so exhilarating and liberating.

Film makers from the USA were represented by Jane Wagner Hearts and Quarks, Linda Hassani Breakfast, The Follower, Arlene Bowman Navajo Talking Pictures and the volcanically explosive Lydia Lunch The Gun is Loaded.

A special tribute was paid to Sally Smith on the evening devoted to lesbian film makers. Sally’s contribution to the arts was immense considering her youth - she was a painter, a filmmaker, a photographer and a spokesperson for lesbian feminism. The video that has been made by her friends as a record of their friendships and working relationships is a unique memorial that will only become more precious as time passes. The impact that Sally had on many people, her warmth and her vision came through strongly. She likened the process of becoming and creating to making cakes - add an ingredient here, work on a skill there. Luckily, she finished several cakes along her journey - Life in the Kitchen is one. This is a fantasy that transports a woman from the drabness of domesticity to the vibrant celebration of lesbian love: painted bodies roll on the floor in a joyful embrace - rich images of a multi-faceted woman.
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How can I ignore the girl next door, or how to become a lesbian in 35 mins (UK/Hammersmith and Fulham Young Lesbian's Group), follows the developing relationships of a group of young women and a former friend who becomes attracted to their lifestyle.

Five short films by Barbara Hammer were scheduled - however the three that screened were sufficient to sample her style.

Lesbionage (US Lesbian Productions) is a send-up of the private detective agency genre, except the buddies who work together sleep together. Though this had some very funny moments and political points to make, it was marred by unrealistic plot-forwarding devices, even given the genre, and a narrative that just couldn't get the pace right.

Procuring product for the Third World film makers night unfortunately seemed beset with problems. Sally's Beauty Spot (Helen Lee) showed a young Asian woman's obsession with a black mole. She scrubs at it in a futile attempt to wash herself clean of the disfiguring spot (a symbol of black-white polarity and it's corresponding hierarchical values), but finally is able to accept it as part of herself, translating mole into beauty spot.

Deborah Howlett's A Little Life was the highlight. Ricci Vicenti was killed by the police in Australia in 1982 as he tried to escape from a remand centre. As we are told of Ricci's background and the events leading up to his death, we are also made aware of the horrific legacy of colonialism for the Aborigine.

The festival was somehow at odds with its promotion (though it did not appear to be promoted widely) and the aims of the programming rather ill-defined. Many people did not expect to see largely experimental student films on an occasion billed as “Women film makers of Aotearoa”. Some films seemed out of place in a women's festival (Moa Fashion Show), or in a category they were only vaguely associated with.

It's great to give film makers a forum, but audiences appreciate knowing what to expect.
FAME AND FORTUNE: FIVE WOMEN ARTISTS
Outreach Cultural Centre, Auckland
12 - 23 November 1990
Reviewed by Megan Fidler

"Fame and Fortune" is an exhibition by five women artists from the Christchurch Artists' Collective. Using a variety of media the exhibition includes 3 dimensional installations, etchings on porcelain, paintings, drawings and prints.

The exhibition is visually dominated by the strength and redness of "Soft SCELL - Women Within" and "Soft Sell/Cell", both by Robyn Kilty, and "Love For Sale" by Tiffany Thomley.

"Soft S/Cell" is a large acrylic on canvas, menstrual red in the centre radiating out to a more diluted pinky-white at the perimeter. Five women with distended stomachs, inside of each is a silver tearshaped drop in the place of the womb, are depicted. The vastness of the blood/womb reduces the women to becoming part of the larger picture, whilst at the same time, each woman has a womb within. The word scell fascinates me. The womb as a cell - a woman's internal prison; the womb as a place for the growth of a cell eventually forming an embryo; and, more obscure, the womb as a schelling - a 16th century silver coin. The tear shape of the silver womb symbolises the tears and pain from cramps, childbirth and children.

"Soft Sell/Cell" is installation piece made of a white grid suspended from the roof, with floor length strips of red and pink tissue paper and plastic, hanging from the grid. On the floor, lies pieces of wool. I was bemused by this piece. Its symmetry and lightness was aesthetically pleasing but I was at a loss as to its message. Later I discovered that originally each of the strips of paper and plastic had been rolled up and tied to the grid. On the opening night a woman untied each of the rolls, and they and the wool dropped to the floor. The tied up rolls resembled tampons. The darker red of the paper in the centre of the piece could be to signify the darkness of blood at the beginning of the menstrual flow, reducing in redness as the bleeding diminishes. The few strands of clear plastic are the end of the bleed.

The other piece notable for it's redness, "Love For Sale" by Tiffany Thomley is a collection of 99 pairs of second hand shoes. In her artist's statement, Tiffany says, "The woman artist is a modern dilemma, especially for the male artist who is used to the woman in the role of model, nurruter, or muse. "Love for Sale" says it all - red shoes, artists as housewives, mothers, hard work, tyranny of fashion, family ties, drudgery, incest, rape, sexuality, seduction, foot binding, witchcraft, sisters, voluntary work, the same but different, down trodden, down at heel, slovenly, slipshod, unpaid labour, backache, varicose veins, dressing to please, dressing to kill, commitment, revolution, freedom". By painting these women's shoes, many of them symbols of subjection and conformity, red, the colour of revolution, the message is subversive and dangerous to patriarchy and capitalism.

Robyn Kilty's piece "Seven Ages of Women" has been the subject of controversy. When it was exhibited in Timaru, residents were outraged and accused it of being pornographic. I suspect Auckland art patrons are not so squeamish. "The Seven Ages of Women" is derived from Shakespeare's lines in "As You Like It": "And one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages ... " Robyn has swapped genders. The seven ages she depicts are those of the female biological milestones. Robyn is saying that woman is framed by her biology. She depicts the internal woman, her reproduction age on the outside frame, and the external woman, her appearance, within the frame.

Margaret Riley's collection of Brides of the Year 1900 - 1950 begins with a handwritten epitaph, describing briefly the lives of the brides and their husbands. The brides were "well-known for the lightness of their pudding" or "crippled by arthritis", whereas the men had successful careers, gaining "fame and fortune". These etched and coloured porcelain pieces resemble formal wedding photographs. The "odd one out" both visually and symbolically is the teapot shaped piece onto which is an etching of a matronly looking woman in a tweed skirt and buttoned up shirt. There is a picture of a young man in military dress - the lost war beau. The inscription in the teapot says, "With grateful thanks from the combined football and cricket clubs 1955" - the plight of the maiden aunt? Margaret writes, "Three times a bridesmaid - never a bride" was the pervading message. Real women became "Bride of the Year" or at least "Bride", and their worth to the community was self evident. The unmarried woman was obliged to work much harder for an inevitably lower status.

Linda Jame's series of "Women Artists" is an acknowledgement and honouring of women artists who have gone before. Together with her finished works are her thoughts, sketches and working drawings. Seeing the work that has gone into the finished piece is both interesting and enlightening. Such an exposition shows strength and confidence. Linda tells the stories of these women, in their struggle with love and life, and proving themselves to be as good as male artists.

Helen Sutherland's large acrylic paintings have smacks of primitivism. They deal with human emotions and search for truth. She says "The work is about the human condition spirit. I have attempted to go beyond external appearances to express an inner reality". Helen's paintings are strong and bold, with an expert use of colour.

I don't know about fortune, but I'd be surprised if at least a couple of these women didn't gain some fame from this exhibition. Thank you Outreach for yet another high quality art show. □
"Art and Organised Labour" at the Wellington City Art Gallery, is a celebration of the visual record of work in Aotearoa. The curators have combined historical moments with images of labour to produce a strong and colourful picture of labour struggles in this country. It is a celebration which glowers in the shadows of a National party victory, in which working people and organisations face an uncertain future.

Walking into the display, there is a patchwork of images from the past 150 years of the history of labour. The focus is the centre floor with banners draped as if in a march, and bold words painted on the floor heralding the right to work an eight hour day. Around the edges, different sections of identity in various mediums make up the different cloths of the patchwork, including moments in history (World War II, the depression, and the 1912/13 Waihi and Waterfront strikes), and visual identity, (banners, murals, working conditions, domestic and unpaid work, and the collective work of Maori).

The effect of this combination is a varied but strong visual tradition which has been forged out of the processes of solidarity and struggle. This exhibition shows a progression from the elite’s preoccupation with landscapes of the adoptive land, towards a recording of, and involvement in people’s lives. It acknowledges the value of art outside of the elite.

The images of labour go well beyond the safety of painting; posters, banners, cartoons, murals, video and photography, all reflect the images of labour. A wide view of labour is expressed, including unpaid work, unemployment, and the collective labour of Maori.

Maori labour is shown through a series of photos; Ngapine Tamihana Te Ao portrays food preparation on the marae. The exhibition does not though explore the links between poverty and unemployment and the restricted economic base of Maori.

The strongest images of women in "Art and Labour" are of recent times. There is some photographic record of women’s work in wartime. The contemporary issues including pay equity, parental leave, equal employment opportunity and unpaid labour, are explored through posters, paintings and cartoons.

The workplace smoko room with floor to ceiling pornography is also there; a sombre reminder of some women’s experience at work. Prostitution, a reality of labour for many women, remains invisible.

This exhibition is a bold attempt to take art out of the hands of the few, and recognise it in the richness of “ordinary” life. In that "Art and Labour" triumphs. The exhibition is full (too much for one viewing) and well worth a return visit. The active processes of the exhibition; audio tapes, video and film screenings, talks and tours, embody what this exhibition is about - accessibility.

"Art and Labour" closes in Wellington on January 21st 1991. The first stop on its national tour will be Auckland, opening at the City Art Gallery, on May Day - 1st May 1991.
FACING THE PAST: LOOKING AT REFUGEE CHILDHOOD IN NEW ZEALAND 1940S-1960S
Ann Beaglehole
Allen & Unwin $29.95
Review and Interview by Athina Tsoulis

As the title suggests, Ann Beaglehole's book looks at the experiences of immigrant refugee children in New Zealand. Beaglehole's earlier book, A Small Price to Pay, looked at the experiences of European refugees in the 30's. In Facing the Past she turns her attention to the second generation.

These children came from families fleeing Nazism and the effects of wartorn Europe. In many ways they were similar to most European immigrants during this period who were forced to leave their homelands through either political, religious or economic persecution. Where the families that Beaglehole is concerned with differed

was in their Jewishness and the personal effects of recent history. Even if a particular family had not faced first hand experience of the Holocaust, the effects of this nightmare were felt by every family.

Beaglehole's book is a comprehensive study of this refugee childhood and is based on many interviews and also on a wide reading of the literature that exists around the world on the subject. The information is carefully and skillfully interwoven so that by the end of the book one gets a real sense of the diversity and magnitude of the experience of these children.

I was delighted to have the opportunity to discuss aspects of her book with Ann Beaglehole when she was in Auckland.

Many people are unaware of the class differences between immigrants. They see people as being culturally homogenous. Yet many came from highly urbanised centres to small town New Zealand. In terms of your study, most of the Eastern Jewish refugees came from well-off backgrounds with a high level of education.

Although there is variety within that, most were from middle-class, professional and business backgrounds. For the first generation it was like coming from urban to rural. They came from large cities like Prague, Budapest and Vienna. When they came here, Wellington struck them as a small town. New Zealand at that time would not have been heavily into Culture.

No, definitely not! The immigrants were used to the many ensembles, symphony orchestras, theatres which were lacking in New Zealand.

Was there prejudice towards the Jewish immigrants from the local population? There was a great deal of ignorance in New Zealand about Jewishness, apart from the old stereotype of being dark and swarthy. The refugees all looked different. One of the people interviewed in the book who spoke at my launch said that for her that was a problem. If you look obviously different it forces other people to acknowledge that you are different. These people looked like everyone else so they were expected to behave like everyone else and yet they couldn't and wouldn't and they felt different inside.

You categorise second generation immigrants as those born in New Zealand and those who were children when they first arrived. Second generation immigrants seem to have different problems to the first generation.

The problems of the first generation immigrants were more immediate ones of learning a new language and earning a living and, in the beginning when they first arrived, they had to settle down and make a new life. They probably never expected to belong or become part of a new country - that's more a preoccupation of the second generation who know the language and so on. The question of identity and where they belong is more a second generation preoccupation though some people of the first generation I spoke to hoped to become part of the new country. Provided they were quite young then they had a good chance of doing that. It was never a real possibility for the older immigrant.

You make a big point about the many differences as well as the similarities amongst the experiences of the second generation.

Whether they came as young children or as teenagers, or were New Zealand born made a big difference. Some of the children themselves had suffered persecution in Europe before they came and this would have determined some of their experience in New Zealand - the kind of people they became.

The family backgrounds were very different in terms of the degree of persecution suffered. If the family had got away shortly after Hitler came to power, losing one's job may have been the worst that happened. Others who came after the war would have suffered the full effects. They may have been in ghettos or camps during the war which made a big difference to the children.

The families were different in their Jewishness too. One family was not Jewish at all, some had converted from Judaism so they had a Jewish background, some had not converted but
their children weren’t brought up in the Jewish religion at all and others were. So this made a difference.

Family dynamics was another factor. Some families, no matter how hard things were, remained positive. Other families seemed to be under stress and didn’t cope well and this made a difference to what happened to the children.

I suppose what the second generation had in common was that they were operating between two cultures, which led to some feeling caught between the two. Often people expect the first generation to have problems but ignore the problems of the second generation, who on the surface appear to fit in to the dominant culture. To some extent I shared that assumption when I began. I was aware that there would be big differences between first and second generation immigrants in terms of their experiences but I somehow assumed that the experiences of the second generation would have been easier because they spoke the language and so on. I was surprised by the extent of the difficulties that some people had.

For these refugees the Holocaust devastated the families in terms of numbers. The more family members here the happier the childhood and vice versa. New Zealand friends all had cousins and uncles and the refugee children didn’t. That was quite important. And if you weren’t getting on with your parents or there was a lot of pressure or tension then to be able to go and talk to another family member helped. But often the families were small and intense. All the problems of the nuclear family were accentuated.

And the nuclear family situation would have been quite alien to these people. Back in Europe the immigrants would have had large families. But having lost so many family members made the families very close, too close for some people. The parents’ expectations were also ambivalent and contradictory. They wanted the children to fit in and assimilate, yet they wanted their children to not lose their culture or to forget the past.

What is important is the choice that the second generation faced on a daily level. What effect do you think this had?

To some extent it had a good effect, making you a more flexible, more thinking person who knew there was more than one way of doing things. Some spoke of this more positive aspect. Others spoke of being confused by this. They would have liked to have had one right way and they still feel ill at ease as adults as to what is the correct way.

What was the particular effect of migration for the women who lost their support networks and yet had to go and work in a climate where women were not expected to work outside the home?

To make a living the women often went out and did all sorts of things like cleaning homes. Those women who were professionals themselves stayed home whilst the husband requalified. None of the women doctors went to Otago to requalify. His career came first. The other thing which I looked at in my earlier book on first generation Jewish refugees, A Small Price to Pay, is that when the women did stay at home they had big adjustments to make due to their sheltered middle class upbringing. They had to learn to cook and clean which is something their maids would have done. This wasn’t true for all of them.

What did they do for childcare?

I have a terrible story of a couple who arrived with an eighteen month old child. They both needed to get paid work and they didn’t know what to do so they boarded the child out with a New Zealand family. It was very traumatic for everyone and it didn’t work out. I didn’t follow this up to find out what they eventually did for childcare.

Childcare was a problem for immigrant women in Australia during the same period. However, due to a large immigrant community the women could make their own informal arrangements like working different shifts and taking turns to look after each other’s children. The smaller number of immigrants in New Zealand would have precluded this.

Some women worked until they had children and then they stopped. One of the families managed to bring their
German nanny with them and that was a wonderful continuity for the children. It was very much dependent on how much money they had as to whether the woman had to work. So there were all sorts from the extreme of having to board your child out to having your nanny with you. It is the diversity which is very much evident.

You are also looking at people who came from different countries who would have seen themselves as being different to one another which must have made it hard to establish a sense of community.

Yes, you had Czechs, Hungarians, Polish and so forth. Some would have identified with the Jewish community but those who weren’t religious didn’t. The Jewish community was not interested in those who were not observant and didn’t want to go along to a synagogue. Even those who went to the synagogue tended to be more liberal Jews rather than orthodox. There was support from the Jewish community but there were also difficulties.

In small numbers it’s always a problem because even if you have 20 Hungarians there is no guarantee they will get on together.

That’s right. Its the whole society that lumps them together as foreigners - they should at least like each other! It threw people together who wouldn’t have had anything to do with each other back home. Sometimes it worked out but sometimes it didn’t. Class and educational differences meant that people did not necessarily want to know each other.

You make a point of not talking about the psychological trauma of these refugees. Was this reticence on your part?

I don’t know if its my squeamishness or my being oversensitive to other people in thinking that they may not want to talk about it. Also, it’s a question of how much to identify the person. It’s a small community and everybody will know whom I’m talking about if I’m very specific.

It also struck me as a separate subject. It just seemed easier for one reason or another. I knew of particular instances and people would ask to have the tape recorder turned off. Often it was someone talking about someone else and how could I verify this apart from going up to the person concerned? It was too difficult.

**OUR OWN IMAGE**

Barry Barclay
Longman Paul, $12.95
Reviewed by Athina Tsoulis

It is rare for *Broadsheet* to review books by men. *Our Own Image* by Barry Barclay, however, fills a gap - or rather a chasm - in the area of filmmaking from an indigenous perspective. Barclay is writing as a Maori filmmaker in a Pakeha society.

Barclay is well qualified to write on this topic, being an indigenous filmmaker of long standing with the *Tangata Whenua* documentary series (1972-4) and the film, *Ngati*, to his credit. Over the course of his filmmaking career Barclay has obviously reflected upon the implications of indigenous film-making and how his bicultural identity alters his approach to the film-making process.

Although bicultural has come to mean Maori and Pakeha, what Barclay talks about is relevant to all bicultural filmmakers and their audiences.

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Barclay reflects upon the dilemmas of documentary scriptwriting where Pakeha values dictate "precision and answers" rather than the desire to reflect the "age-old process of discussion and decision-making" present in Maori society, which means giving people the opportunity to say what they think. Barclay talks about the importance of all-Maori crews as well as the problems of current practices in archiving film.

He gives heavy emphasis to the importance of communicating to your people first - what he calls 'talking in' - and says that in the process you will be representing a more authentic and moving image of your people to the rest of society. The latter however is always secondary - keeping control of the image for your community is paramount.

A minor quibble is his statement that the concept of individualism came out of Ancient Greece. This may be true. As Greece has one of the oldest written cultures, I’m sure that you can find most concepts in some form or another,
somewhere. However in modern day Greece where most of the population live or have just emerged from a traditional peasant society, the concept of individualism is just as alien as it is to Maori society.

Barclay's book is quite appealing due to its conversational tone: unlike many conversations which we are subjected to, this gives us much to dwell upon. This may be due to the fact that he discusses ideas that he has been grappling with on the practical level, which makes them refreshing.

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**WILL THE REAL MR NEW ZEALAND PLEASE STAND UP?**

Gwendoline Smith
Penguin $19.95
Reviewed by Athina Tsoulis

Gwendoline Smith uses a feminist analysis to profile the thoughts and feelings of 16 NZ men. Therefore you will be forgiven if much of what Smith says sounds all too familiar. The men interviewed come from a wide range of backgrounds - from Joe who has learnt to deal with his anger and can claim “My missus hasn’t had a hiding for nearly two years” to Bob the businessman who does not have a close male friend and in a crisis claims that “there is no way I would want to share it with anyone.”

Smith uses the argument from the early days of the women’s movement that men just as much as women are socialised into their roles, much to each other’s detriment. The fact that men have to succeed in a competitive world means they are taught early to repress their feelings - emotions are for girls - to always maintain control and hide any weakness. This makes friendships between men problematic as competition prevents men from relating to other men as true friends, and relationships with women as equals, impossible.

The feminist observation restated by Smith that “talking about feelings can be the hardest thing you can ever ask a man to do” is a theme most women will relate to. Men may be willing to take turns at washing the dishes or cooking but “To share and feel vulnerable, to expose themselves emotionally, especially in a room full of other men, can be devastating” is quite a sad realisation. It gives others power over you and most men are not prepared to allow this situation to arise - not even many of our ‘New Men’. It is not surprising then that what emerges from the interviews is male friendships with each other based on a shared activity rather than sitting around talking about your feelings.

There are not many books around by contemporary feminists examining men and these are long overdue. Far from being in a Post-Feminist era, feminism needs to keep a continual eye on men. Smith has written a book that popularises feminist thinking in this area and it will, no doubt, find a wide audience. Certainly a good gift for any male that you would like to give a not so subtle hint to!

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**PERMANENT PARTNERS: BUILDING GAY AND LESBIAN RELATIONSHIPS THAT LAST**

Betty Berzon and E P Dutton
A LESBIAN LOVE ADVISOR
Celeste West
Cleis Press
Reviewed by Pat Rosier

No, it’s not all woman to woman romances and staunch women private investigators who just might fall in love with the women they are working for - lesbian writing, that is. Writing by lesbians. Writing from the position of being a lesbian. Writing by for and about lesbians. Speaking about what, for many, is unspeakable. Exploring what we are, what we do, how we think, thinking creatively and spontaneously about our concerns. Naming our concerns. Whoooeee!! It’s exciting.

Relationships are a major concern for lesbians. We have no models for the sorts of relationships we want except our own and we put a lot of work into them. Lover relationships, certainly, but also friendships, including those with past lovers. There are lots of lesbian jokes about ex-lovers, because we try harder than any other group to keep connections going, in whatever changed form can be achieved.

And so, lesbians talk to each other, think, do research and write about their relationships. And we are learning, and adapting and changing our beliefs and ideas and, increasingly I think, seeking new ways to behave with each other.

Betty Berzon, author of Permanent Partners is, among other things, a psychotherapist who has worked with many lesbians and gays on relationship issues. She has been partners with the same woman for over 15 years. She writes, “We have to get down to the work of constructing a new gay and lesbian partnership style,” and states the general goals of the book as “... to enable you to gain perspective on a relationship you may have grown too close to, to identify the particular relationship stressors that may be
inhibiting your growth in your partnership, and to develop new options for dealing with those stressors.”

It’s a worthwhile, useful book. I particularly welcome the way the author uses examples from her own life, both with her partner and her family of origin (foo), as well as from clients. She is one of us, not the expert passing on wisdom she no longer needs herself.

I also applaud her consistent locating of the “problems” in society at large. The “tradition of failure” of homosexual relationships, she says, arises not from any lack in the people concerned, but from the settings in which they have had to try to exist. The two-paragraph description of the history of lesbian relationships is inadequate as history but makes the point. “Beset by conflict from within, surrounded by a conspiracy of silence as to their very existence in the society, gay and lesbian partnerships most often did not endure for long.” We do not have legal and social supports and our elders are invisible, so we “just break up” when the going gets rough. Betty Burzon suggests that breaking up has been our chief way of dealing with conflict. We have special issues, beginning with language and two main categories of label: those meant to conceal (“friend”, “roommate”) and those meant to reveal (“lover”). None of those available in English, she suggests, serve us well.

The body of the book consists of chapters on issues and concerns, with suggestions and case stories. Living with differences, myths and fantasies about what relationships are, sexual identity conflict, learning to identify underlying problems, improving communication, power and control, jealousy, dealing constructively with conflict, differences of level of desire, resolving the monogamy issue, money, contracts, foos, children, vows, change ... it’s a pretty comprehensive coverage.

The basic ideal of a long-term, live-in couple relationship – which, as the writer correctly points out is what most of us say we want – is not questioned. In fact, there is a strong underlying assumption throughout the book that this is the “best” option if we can learn to do it without diminishing or limiting ourselves or our partners. I’m not about to argue with that, but I can think of a friend or two who might.

The great strength of Permanent Partners is its constant affirmation of the absolute right of lesbians and gays to get respect from society at large - including families. A Lesbian Love Advisor is a different sort of thing altogether. This statement on the title page gives a fair indication of what to expect: “A Lesbian Love Advisor on the sweet & savoury arts of Lesbian Courtship, sensualizing them with impeccable Bedside Manners, with sage advice in enjoying the Divine Lesbian Relationship in graceful gusto. How to manage Faux Pas with finesse, Jealousy with Mercy and the Apples of Discord without war. Lesbian Rituals, Meta*Physicals, Sorcery & Ceremonies of Life elucidated.”

Most of the advice is splendid. The packaging, in a cutesy sort of style “with the commentaries of Lady Clitoressa & Her Circle”, drove one friend to distraction (“Cloying,” she said) and another into fits of giggles. I got used to it but could have done without it.

This book ranges over a wider territory than Permanent Partners – one section is called “The Lesbian Relationship Spectrum” – and claims no professional expertise, just a lesbian voice. The advice favours treating each other with respect, and assumes it’s okay to be a lesbian. My favourite cartoon – they are scattered throughout the book - is in the chapter “Fair Fighting” and has one lesbian saying to another, “Honey, when are you going to learn: take out the garbage when it’s full! Use the yellow sponge for the floor and the pink one for the dishes! Dry yourself in the tub, not in the bathroom! Don’t answer the phone when my mother calls!!!”

In very different ways, each of these books contributes to the growing range of lesbian writing about relationships. It is not only lesbians who are richer for it.

FAREWELL SPEECH
Rachel McAlpine
Penguin $24.95
Pat Rosier and Megan Fidler

In the school history that most of us experienced, women getting the vote in New Zealand in 1893 was squeezed somewhere between refrigerated shipping and the Boer War. And what little there was was phrased in terms of the nation giving women the vote. Patriarchy and patriotism giving each other a pat on the back. The frozen sheep carcasses on their way to England and the young men to South Africa to to fight a colonial war were given far more importance than women fighting for and gaining the right to take part in the parliamentary process.

It took this novel, Farewell Speech to give me a picture of what the fight was really like. (Women’s Suffrage in New Zealand by Patricia Grimshaw was published but I read it.)

Rachel McAlpine succeeds in her aim to create a picture of each of the women. The differences in their personalities and style are clearly drawn. It is Ada we come to know best, which seems as it should be – we know little of the lives of poor, fighting women from our past.

Farewell Speech works as a novel. I was caught up in the developments, changes, passions and failings of the characters. I liked some, disliked others. It’s a tantalising glimpse of Kate Sheppard in many ways, but there are two biographies of her being worked on at present, so there will be more.

This is really Ada’s book. She was Rachel McAlpine’s great-grandmother and the writer has used her family knowledge to flesh out the information she researched from historical sources. We see Ada as admirable, staunch, difficult, passionate about her beliefs, right to her chosen death. Clearly the author came to love and respect Ada, but she gives her to us whole, strengths and failings all acknowledged. We are invited to admire, but not to idealise, and I appreciate this – I have an aversion to “history” that “protects” its subjects and readers from the reality of the women involved.

Bim, one of Ada’s daughters, is the other character whose voice is heard in the novel. I found her harder to see than the other two, although I recognised the particular sort of pride that did not allow her to need anything from anyone and remembered women of that generation from my family.

I am left with a sense of wanting more – more histories, novels, stories that show us the women from our New Zealand past. Not the ideals or stereotypes but the actual women who are our foremothers in spirit and belief.
The Exploding Frangipani

Lesbian Writing from Australia and New Zealand
Eds Cathie Dunsford and Susan Hawthorne
New Women's Press $19.95
Reviewed by Pat Rosier

Cathie is the New Zealander, Susan the Australian. Together they have assembled a collection of writings by lesbians in their respective countries. There has been very little overtly lesbian (written by lesbians and with the word “lesbian” on the cover) work published in book form in New Zealand. Miriam Saphira (Papers Inc), Spiral, Circle, various lesbian newsletters and journals over the years – until now these have been the vehicles for publishing lesbian writing.

However, The Exploding Frangipani is not quite a first for New Women’s Press. There have already been Frances Cherry’s Dancing With Strings and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku’s Tahuri, both from NWP, Renee’s Willy Nilly (Penguin) and a few stories in various collections of women’s writing. Any other content in New Zealand novels has been pretty much about lesbians, rather than lesbian writing. The Exploding Frangipani is clearly identified on the cover as “lesbian writing” and that is a cause for celebration.

The bulk of the content is short stories – or short fiction – well, short pieces, anyway. My indecision over language reflects the range of modes and styles. Some have a more or less classical short story form, others are more reflections, stream of consciousness, autobiographical .... Then there are the poems. And Thalia’s drawings? hieroglyphics? Attractive but meaningless to me until a friend pointed out they were based on shorthand symbols. Then I liked them.

The editors say in their introduction that a vital part of our “journeying and crossing new boundaries” is “exploring language and inventing new language.” A number of the pieces are certainly exploratory/experimental. Thalia’s for example, Linda Weste’s “Don’t let them teach you” straddles poetry/prose form and restates boldly truths that need stating often, like, “who will represent us except us”. Cathie Dunsford’s poem “Survivors” speaks of paintings created from the stockings sent by women from East Berlin (before the wall fell), of a woman who lives in a wine barrel ... fascinating glimpses, but I wanted more from the poem. Its language somehow does not carry the imagery as powerfully as I want it to.

Of course I have my favourites among the stories. Like Nancy Stone’s “Moments”. She writes about sex, and intimacy and fears, and it’s funny/sad and funny/familiar and wonderful. As is Louise Simone’s “The Exploding Frangipani.” This one has humour, too – oh, blessed be! and lovely, spare writing. Susan Hawthorne’s “The Colour of Shadows” is a many-layered evocation of the fragile hold we all have on what we might call “reality”, and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku’s “He Tika” is an affirmation and a delight.

Read The Exploding Frangipani and discover your own favourites. □

By Pat Rosier

Cottage Gardening in New Zealand

by Christine Dann, with photographs by Tony Wyber, must be one of the last New Zealand titles to be published by Allen & Unwin (Bridget Williams Books has bought the New Zealand list from Allen & Unwin and will be continuing to publish new titles).

The text is very much based in New Zealand and includes chapters on designing and making a cottage garden of your own. The historical photos are fascinating but it is disappointing that there are so few of contemporary New Zealand cottage gardens and so many from England. Sissinghurst is a beautiful garden but this book needed local photos of today’s gardens.

The New Improved Dykes to Watch Out For (Firebrand Press) is Alison Bechdel’s third collection of cartoon strips featuring Mo and friends. She doesn’t so much shoot at our lesbian sacred cows as nudge and reflect them with a warmth and humour that produce an occasional belly-laugh and stimulate many a grin and giggle. The regular characters have become familiar enough for me to feel a fondness for some – the indecisive, anguish Mo is a special favourite – and irritation at a couple. There are Dykes to Watch Out For cards, calendars and posters, and the strips appear in many feminist publications. Certainly worth watching out for.

In Susie Sexpert’s Lesbian Sex World by Susie Bright (Cleis) lesbian feminism is equated, right from the introduction, with sexual repression. The book is a collection of essays, originally published in the American lesbian erotica magazine On Our Backs, that are explicit, detailed and pro-pleasure. Some bits I found entertaining, others distasteful. Naiad Press sure do keep putting out those lesbian novels. I’m not sure why A Room Full of Women by Elisabeth Nonas irritated me as much as it did. One lesbian is a designer, another a film editor. Natalie has a turing-forty crisis. Blair fears intimacy. Ted-next-door is dying of AIDS. (A friend dying of AIDS is becoming de rigueur in lesbian novels.) Blair’s mother rejects her because of her lesbianism. Somehow I never got to care about any of it. Something to do with the the luppy (as in “yuppy”) air of the whole thing, maybe.
Murder is Relative by Karen Saum is based on interminable family wars of the sort beloved of whodunnit writers – everyone has a motive for the killing. Lesbian private investigator Brigid Donovan is in recovery from alcohol abuse and seeks AA meetings wherever she goes. Some of the themes got a little laboured in this one.

Naiad publishes more than novels. The Lesbian Survival Manual is a collection of cartoons by Rhonda Dickson. Presented as hints for survival, they poke fun at lesbian pretensions and the world in general. They didn’t do a lot for me in either style or content, but we can’t have too much that’s even trying to be funny. One friend laughed out loud several times.

Women of Power is edited by Gael Knepler and published by Hutchinson Australia. I thoroughly disliked this book, from the less than adequate consideration of “The Notion of Power” in the editor’s introduction of that title, to the over-inclusive interview write-ups. It’s sheer self indulgence to publish statements like, “With plenty of tapes and an open mind, I spent my time on the plane thinking of what I might ask….” Any collection of interviews with high-achieving women (in this case all Australians) is of some interest for what the women do and don’t say about themselves. But this one doesn’t do the subjects justice.

Reviewed by Margot Roth

May Davis is a multi-talented, indomitable character who provides a fascinating account of her life in May. Musician/potter/pacifist/writer/paper-maker, this distinguished 76-year-old widow has her kitset coffin stored in the garage of her Nelson home ready for “...the last and greatest adventure yet.” She adventured with her dearly loved, talented, difficult, idealistic husband of 50 years to establish potteries in Africa, Patagonia, Paraguay, Cornwall, Nelson (luckily for us) and Peru (when they were both in their sixties). She has been the supreme juggler of professional and domestic lives – potter, peace-maker for her four children and their father, adapting uncomplainingly to often inadequate conditions, trying to maintain her own interests which her husband opposed. Read this moving auto-biography: it is a rewarding record of creative, gallant living and loving.

Did you know why, in the 1950s and 60s, the top nurse opposed the introduction of bidets in maternity wards to enable mobile mothers to attend to their own hygiene requirements? She said bidets were used in France by prostitutes. This gem is from Mary Dobbie’s meticulous history of Parents’ Centre New Zealand of which both she and publisher Christine Cole Catley are honoured founding members. The title, The trouble With Women is culled from one of the many irritating and contemptuous comments made by both doctors and nurses about women eagerly seizing on Parents’ Centre ideas of exercising control over birthing and breast-feeding. Although the organisation’s beginnings largely sprang from Grantly Dick Read’s theories of natural childbirth and John Bowlby’s findings on the dangers of separating mothers from babies (“Maternal deprivation”) its educational activities aimed at both parents and health professionals continue to diversify. This is an important contribution to our understanding of the health industry’s resistance over the years to changing their rules and of some of the admirable women who have collectively battled to enlighten them. A reservation here is that there is no mention at all of the criticisms of Bowlby’s research which have shown its guilt-inducing application to mothers to be an expression of immediate post-war ideology rather than scientifically valid.

Reviewed by Megan Fidler

The NZ Green Guide, written by Peter Davis & Judith Hodge is an informative and comprehensive look at what individuals can do to ensure healthy living for themselves and the planet. It covers a vast range of subjects, from sanitary protection to coppicing (that’s cycle cropping - don’t worry, I had no idea what it was either), alternative travelling to alternative schools. There are loads of self help suggestions that encourage greater self sufficiency and less reliance on “experts” and “professionals”. This is a great reference book, not a good “read”.

Whilst on the subject of green, Penguin have reprinted Go Easy on the Earth, first published last year by The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. This book is printed on recycled paper and is visually exciting, with lots of quirky, funny-but-serious cartoons. I liked this book, I think it’s accessible to a much wider range of people than The Green Guide - it is informative and empowering.

I really enjoyed Double Lives by Heather Murray. It is about the women in the stories of Katherine Mansfield and manages to straddle easily the personal and the academic, both in Mansfield’s work and the analysis of it. I recommend this book for people who are interested in Mansfield’s work as scholars and for those who read her “just for fun”.

Women in New Zealand published jointly by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and The Department of Statistics is primarily a statistical analysis of the situation of women in New Zealand society. An effort has been made to offer a bicultural analysis of women which I imagine is difficult, when dealing with collection and collating of statistics - a very Pakeha thing to do. A substantial amount of the information is presented visually through the use of photographs and diagrams which I find is a easier way to absorb statistical information. Apart from the usual topics of health, work, education, housing etc, there are chapters on women in public affairs, women’s income and wealth, and empowerment perspectives. I like this book because it offers a wholistic look at women’s place in our society - another excellent reference book.

The Illustrated History of The Treaty of Waitangi by Claudia Orange, doesn’t require the same academic prowess as her earlier book on the same subject. There is a certain amount of cumbersome but necessary history, which is written as lightly as facts can be. The last two chapters - “Since 1975” and “New Developments” I found particularly interesting. It is clear there is no panacea to the difficulties New Zealand will have in fully honouring the treaty and tino rangatiratanga. □
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