

BROADSHEET

NEW ZEALAND'S FEMINIST MAGAZINE FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS

JULY 1991 \$4.50

Video Vagaries

Managing Women

Lauris Edmond

Virgin Birth

RY AUGER

22 FEB 1993

COURTESY OF EDUCATION

**Sometimes
it's hot
Short Story**



A black and white cartoon illustration of a woman with a crown, holding a lit candle, looking surprised or excited. She has long, wavy hair and is wearing a dark, textured garment. The drawing is done in a simple, expressive line style.

if you're a feminist LOTTO doesn't hold a candle to this won!

**Post to:
Womanfile
PO Box 56 147
Auckland**

BROADSHEET **HURAE**

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Herspective

There's an idea that's been making the rounds for a long time now. It goes something like this: "Women should stay away from counselling/ personal development/ psychodrama, etc. because they'll lose their anger/ energy/ integrity, etc. if they don't."

The latest version of this appeared on page 46 of the June issue of *Broadsheet* at the end of Jenny Rankine's review of Celia Kitzinger's book, *The Social Construction of Lesbianism*. Jenny writes "We're in a conservative social and economic time. . . and we're trying to survive. . . but I don't want to see us survive without our radical edge. I don't want our purple rage leached into mauve by therapy, 'feeling good' and other individual solutions."

This same article begins with a sentence about "the subtle ways psychologists shape our ideas of what lesbians should be." Actually, we all get shaped by what other people choose to notice or not notice and respond or not respond to, and what psychologists say is part of that. So is stating fears that "therapy. . . and other individual solutions" will dilute our anger. And implying that a further consequence will be that lesbians will stop challenging the system.

I'm responding to those fears which seem to me to be coming from people who see themselves as "okay". They are also quite clear for themselves that "I don't need any of that therapy stuff" while they assume that women who participate in therapy are selling out by doing something that's going to turn their focus inward forever. They also suggest that these women will be therapized for always and will never notice that an inordinate number of men are still assaulting women, that homophobia is still rife, that the Treaty is not honoured, that the Nats are outdoing Labour in selling Aotearoa to line the pockets, BMW interiors and yacht cabins of the few. Or that if they do notice they won't do anything about it.

I can only speak for one therapized woman - myself. I have looked and will go on looking both inwardly and outwardly. I've been assisted in my inward - looking sometimes by counsellors but most often through

psychodrama. Neither has given me any "individual solutions" to the frustration and pain I experience as a lesbian living at this time on this planet in Aotearoa. Counselling and psychodrama have not solved my frustration nor my pain, but they have lessened the immobilizing effects of both. I've marched against the Springbok tour, camped at Harewood base, raised funds for play centre, schools, human rights, etc.

And I'm still moving on.

Jenny writes that "social sciences say solutions to lesbians' problems come through individual change, rather than system change. 'Out of the closets and into therapy' is their rallying cry. . . " The implication here is that a lesbian can either participate in therapy or work to change the system - but not both. I disagree.

First, it's not just a matter of coming "out of the closets" to claim lesbian identity. There's coming out in careers where acknowledgment of one's sexuality will end promotion, if not employment. There's coming out in accommodation where your life partner is your flatmate to your landlady. There's coming out in an education system homophobic about itself, never mind the students - and good luck to them if they have one out lesbian or gay teacher in their entire schooling. Then there's something common to us all, every one of us has to decide when and/or whether to come out in our families.

I have found that when I just talk about any facet of these issues I rarely gain insights or new perspectives. However, when I address them psychodramatically I see and hear and feel and *know* what is going on and what changes I want to make. And what appears to be one small change around an everyday life question always frees up tremendous spontaneity and energy. Then I write to my MP or march down Queen Street or keep holding my lover's hand as we walk past a group of young men scuffling and teasing each other.

As I see it we lesbians can have therapy and still have our purple rage. And our cerise laughter. And our violet love.

Glenda Laurence Poet, group facilitator, educator.

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e t t e r s

OPPRESSION OF BIRTHMOTHERS

Re: In Search of Paul and Kate.
(*Broadsheet* June 1991)

Kathryn Voice writes of her experience of infertility, and has obviously made the connection between the patriarchal message that to be "real" women we must bear children, and the oppression this creates for women who are unable, for various reasons - social and medical, to do this.

In her article however Kathryn does not appear to acknowledge the oppression of birthmothers caused by infertile couples taking their children. We believe the pain caused by infertility, and the unfulfilled dream of motherhood cannot be compared with the pain of losing a real child, no matter what the circumstances of that loss. According to an overseas study the negative effects of losing a child by adoption last a lifetime, and we, as birthmothers can confirm this is true.

We find it difficult to understand how a woman can cause pain for another woman by taking her children to ease her own pain. This is a very real oppression.

Women who lose children by adoption are generally socialised into thinking that they are unable to parent their child as well as a two parent family could, and it is in the child's best interests for an adoption to be arranged. Another side of this that works very well, for the benefit of the adoptive parents anyway, is the verbal bashing of single mothers on the DPB, and keeping these mothers very poor. The more social stigma that a single woman having a baby can be surrounded with, the more likely there will be babies to "cure infertile couples' childless condition. Adoption, while it cures a childless state, rarely cures infertility.

If we are going to discuss the politics of infertility we must also be prepared to discuss the politics of adoption, the effects on the birthparents, adoptive parents, and the child and the child's siblings. We must break the conspiracy of lies that makes adoption socially acceptable, and acknowledge the disproportionate number of adoptees in jail for violent offences, in mental institutions, and who are junkies, self mutilators, victims of sexual abuse, and even the number in remedial reading programmes. Separation from its natural family is rarely in the child's best interests. With all the pressure being brought to bear from the anti-abortionists, we must also be prepared to fully discuss the effect on young women not deciding for a termination of pregnancy and tell these young women that a termination, while causing mental anguish, generally causes less permanent damage to their mental health than a lifetime of grieving for a lost baby.

So long as society condemns and punishes single women for having children, and condones the taking of these children by married couples; Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaids Tale* remains a possibility.

The Auckland Collective
Aotearoa Birthmothers Support Group

REPLY FROM JENNY SHIPLEY

In reply to the issues Margot Roth raises in her letter to the editor in relation to my interview published in the April issue of *Broadsheet*, may I suggest that she has misunderstood what is meant by "an efficient benefit".

The intent behind the provision for Domestic Purposes benefit is to financially assist caregivers when their primary source of income is lost.

In this respect the DPB is an efficient benefit as it meets the criteria of providing immediate assistance and it acts as a "safety net" for those in need. This is the primary function of state paid welfare.

There are no definitive figures on the average length of receipt of this benefit. The figures for the March 1991 quarter show that the average ongoing length of Domestic Purposes Benefit is 3 years 7 months. There has been a gradual increase in the current length of duration this benefit is being paid out for.

In the matter of benefits that have ceased in the same quarter, the length of receipt of benefit was 2 years 9 months. This also has gradually increased in the last four years.

But since the 19 December announcement of the alteration of benefit rates there has been a marked number of people choosing to cancel their Domestic Purposes Benefits.

Since January 1991 there has been a decline in the number of people in receipt of the DPB. 2145 benefits have been cancelled, reducing the overall number of people in receipt of this benefit to 97, 141 at the end of April.

The main reasons given for the cancellations have been reconciliation and employment.

This is the largest reduction since the inception of the benefit in 1973 and clearly demonstrated that the people have not only responded to the benefit changes but also that the benefit has assisted people while a temporary need existed.



In relation to the ratio of DPB to GRI recipients, it is more significant if viewed in dollar terms rather than numbers receiving these benefits. In the 1989-90 financial year, \$1,136,000,000 was paid out in DP Benefits while GRI payments totalled \$4,774,000,000. This places in perspective the ratio of dollars spent on DPB/GRI as approximately 1:4.

So it is not correct for Ms Roth to refer to DP Benefits being "a comparatively tiny number".

Matters relating to the allowable earned income, abatement rate and possible assistance with childcare costs are presently being considered. The purpose behind these discussions is to assist women back into the paid workforce and allow them to achieve independence which is surely a common goal shared by all women.

Jenny Shipley

Minister of Social Welfare

TO "PRODUCE" RATHER THAN "REPRODUCE": THAT IS THE QUESTION

A recent report in *The Herald* on genetic advancements in the United Kingdom, where the embryos of three mice were changed from female to male, again raises the issue of where such developments are leading us to.

It was nearly twenty years ago that Shulamith Firestone wrote that in order

for women to be freed from their sexual oppression, resulting from their role in reproduction, they needed to seize control of reproduction through the use of genetic engineering, so that child bearing and rearing would become society's rather than women's responsibility.

However, rather than being freed from oppression, the implications of current technology seem to be pointed towards further exploitation of women and their bodies. Are women merely being used as guinea pigs in artificial insemination programmes, under the guise that it is for "their own good"? It appears that women are losing what little control they had to doctors, researchers, and scientists who decide who they will "experiment" on, and once on such programmes, commit women into putting their bodies in their hands.

The very fact that geneticists can now change the sex of embryos should cause even the most short-sighted of us to be concerned, if not frightened. While the geneticists behind the United Kingdom advancement deny such technology will ever be permitted to be used on the human body, it is well-known that society generally favours male over female births.

We live in a society in which much importance is placed on women as mothers: for a woman to truly be fulfilled she is expected to be a mother. Such societal pressure leads to feelings of inadequacy for those who cannot "fulfil their role". This often explains why women are major proponents and supporters of genetic engineering even though it may be detrimental to them.

While women should not be denied the right to have children, they should also not be made to feel that they are only "real women" if they are mothers, nor should they be made to feel that this is the only contribution they can make to society. Perhaps we should invest funds into finding out why women are infertile in the first place. Better yet, why not channel our energies and concern into ways of coping with infertility rather than artificial reproduction?

Stephanie Cook
Auckland

BOOK FOR PARENTS OF GAYS/LESBIANS

My aim is to write a resource of information based on what New Zealand parents really need to know and what they are currently misinformed on; how

they do (or don't) cope; what are problems/positives of their situations. Part of this book will be based on questionnaires.

It is hoped the book will cover - experiences, cultural perspectives, facts, fallacies, positive coping, support information, and skills suggestions for handling initial problems, legalities and other issues.

Objectives overall are to provide a platform for dialogue towards acceptance. To assist in the prevention of suicide from low self esteem and feelings of rejection. To assist families in making informed choices. To challenge society and its homophobic pressures. To give New Zealand parents a culturally acceptable resource.

I absolutely assure complete confidentiality to anyone writing to me or filling in a questionnaire. Pen-names or householder addresses are fine, I just ask for honest responses. Closing date September 1991. If prepared to complete a questionnaire, please state whether a) parent/family or b) son/daughter.

TG Stewart (Mrs)

PO Box 402

Whangarei

WHERE'S WHAT'S NEW?

What has happened to the column called "what's new"???

I found it a really useful part of the the magazine and really miss it. It was a great way to be able to keep in touch with what was happening elsewhere in the feminist world. Can we have it back? Or has it gone for good?

Otherwise, *Broadsheet* is keeping up the good work - thank the Goddess!

Lesley

Dunedin

Ed note: "What's New" is now "Pin Ups" - our community noticeboard for feminist and nonprofit happenings.

WOMEN'S CENTRE OF EKET, NIGERIA

In past issues of *Win News* we have published articles from Ms Hannah Edemikpong, Women's Centre, Box 185, Eket, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, West Africa. *Win News* has received numerous letters from Ms Edemikpong describing her work at the Eket Women's Centre about their campaign against female Circumcision/Genital Mutilation (FC/GM), including requests for money. We sent the *Childbirth Picture Books* in support of the centre's educational

fronting up

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For September Issue 5 August

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booking 5 July

camera ready copy 12 July

For September Issue:

booking 9 August

camera ready copy 16 August

Office Hours

Normal business hours, although you are more likely to find someone here between 9.30am - 3.30pm. You can leave a message on our answerphone.

Volunteers

If you have some spare time during the day and would like to help Cathy or Lisa with tasks in the office, please call them on 360 1897.

activities she claimed to run, as well as sending her *Win News*.

As *Win News* exchanges publications with women's groups and journals all over the world, we saw that many other publications printed articles from Ms Edemikpong - including requests for money. For instance, in a recent issue of *Ms Magazine* (Volume 1, No 3, Nov/Dec 1990) under the heading of "Sisterhood is Global", *Ms* printed a letter of Hannah Edemikpong soliciting direct donations for "personal checks, bank drafts or international money orders in any currency," also "material gifts, used clothing and books ..." to be sent to Ms Hannah Edemikpong ... Eket.

As a responsible publication *Win News* never transmits requests for contributions or money without first hand information of the organisations /persons involved. Therefore, last summer we asked several of our contacts and friends in Nigeria to visit the Eket Women's Centre and see how their campaign against FC/GM and other activities were coming along as described in the many articles/requests for funds.

Ms Elizabeth Alabi, a professional midwife and member of the Nigeria Nurse/Midwives Association as well as being a representative of the Inter-Africa (IAC) of the "Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children" (PO Box 6051, Lagos, Nigeria) was kind enough to respond to my enquiry. She wrote on October 5, 1990, "Regarding your inquiries about Mrs Hannah Edemikpong of Eket Women's centre in Akwa Ibom State, I wish to say that the lady is known by name all over Europe and the Americas. IAC has been receiving copies of letters from these countries purportedly written by her. Our investigations however reveal that no such organisation as Eket Women's Centre exists and there are no programmes either by radio, news media, or television which can be credited to this organisation. It is significant that the organisation gives only a box number as its address in all its letters."

At the IAC conference in Addis Ababa in November 19-24 1990, I had the occasion to meet with Ms Alabi and discuss this problem. Ms Alabi whose

work organising health and training programmes takes her all over Nigeria was in Eket for such a programme at the local hospital and made enquiries regarding the Eket Women's Centre and MS Hannah Edemikpong. She told me that neither the hospital nor anyone in Eket know of a women's centre. according to MS Alabi and the professional nurses/midwives who were with her in Eket, the only person known as Hannah Edemikpong they met was a cleaning woman at the hospital with limited reading and writing skills.

Since *Win News* has also received numerous letters from Mrs Edemikpong requesting money etc, I wrote to her in early December regarding the information we received from Ms Alabi on the Eket Women's centre. we urged her to respond immediately as we would be informing our readers that according to our inquiries, no Eket Women's Centre exists. We regret we have had no reply from MS Edemikpong before going to press.

Fran P Hosken, Editor *Win News*

Ed note: We have also printed letters from Hannah Edemikpong.

pin ups

Wimmin's Music Network
PO Box 535 Eltham 3095
Victoria, Australia
Phone (03) 439 7942
Are keen to hear from
womyn/bands who have
made an album and are
interested in selling through
the Wimmin's Music Network
(Australia wide)

Women's Wellness Day
July 13
Starts 9am
Whangarei Girls High School
Contact: Whangarei Women's
Wellness Collective and Maori
Women's Wellness Collective
Box 862, Whangarei

Lesbian and Gay Tea Dance
Sunday 7 July
4 - 8pm
\$10 admission, entertainment, full bar
Pioneer Women's Memorial Hall, cnr
High and O'Connell Streets
Fundraising for lesbian and gay
services

NOW (National Organisation for Women, Inc)
Silver Anniversary Celebration
Global Feminist Conference
Washington DC
January 9 - 12, 1992
Contact: 1000 16th Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington DC 20036-5705, USA

Short Fiction By Women
Rachel Whalen, Editor
Box 1276, Stuyvesant Station
New York, USA 10009
Phone (212) 316 7601
Are calling for submissions for this
new magazine publishing the finest
literature by women writers. The
magazine needs short stories, novellas
and novel excerpts. All women writers
- published and unpublished - are
invited to submit their work.

broadcast

THE VIOLENCE NAMED

Pat Rosier talked with Bo Harnett about moves in Auckland to set up support for abused lesbians.

In the April *Broadsheet* we reprinted an article "With Our Own Hands" from *Trouble and Strife* in England that further stimulated discussion on this issue locally. Lesbian Workers in Refuge in New Zealand set up a working party in February to examine lesbian violence in New Zealand and investigate refuge's role in this area. (See Letters, *Broadsheet*, June 1991) Bo Harnett and her partner, Sue Neal, are involved with a project to see that lesbians in abusive relationships can find a safe place to go and/or support.

They don't have a lesbian refuge house, although that is part of the vision, but they do have a network of lesbians' homes where shelter can be offered. They have links with the refuge movement in Auckland for training for themselves and places for lesbians with children if they cannot be helped elsewhere. They also attended the Lesbian Workers in Refuge Network Hui in February. As Bo said, "We needed to have support, not be on our own."

Support for abused lesbians is one item on Bo and Sue's agenda. Another is to create an atmosphere in lesbian communities where any kind of violence is clearly seen as unacceptable behaviour. Bo says, "There's no excuse for any form of violence whatever. Abuse takes many shapes and forms and women can be good at it when they know they can do it and get away with it. If people would see that violence between women does exist, if they would acknowledge it and allow it to be brought out in the open instead of lifting

the carpet and sweeping it under there and not saying anything, I'm sure it would lessen."

There are many reasons why abused lesbians remain silent — shame, victim-blaming, lack of support, a sense that they won't be believed (The parallels with the silencing of women in any abusive situation, with any perpetrator, are obvious.) For Bo, who has previously been in two abusive relationships, all of these "silencers" were relevant.

"Well, look at the size of me. The women who have abused me have been smaller than I am. But I don't believe in violence, I don't believe in hitting back. I've had to defend myself, but I've never beaten a partner. If I'd let myself go in both those cases I could have done a lot of damage, but I maintained control and by doing that I also maintained my own dignity.

"If a woman can just get away from the abusive environment for two or three days and talk to people who have been in abusive relationships themselves, it gives them a perspective, it helps put it in order for them. Until you speak it to somebody else you don't acknowledge it fully to yourself, you don't validate what's happening.

"We have to educate ourselves and

the community to see it's all right to talk about it and validate it for the victim. The woman who is in an abusive relationship often finds that her friends are ones they have both made as a couple and they are supporting the abuser. She doesn't know where to go.

"We are not here for the abuser, we are here for the abused. We want to let people know we exist."

I asked Bo about indicators of abuse.

"Abuse can take many forms, but the bottom line is if you're frightened. It involves trying to control and/or manipulate someone else. If a person feels they're being manipulated that is a form of abuse. Another example is if you have an argument and it gets heated and you become subject to a tirade of verbal abuse that goes on for hours, depriving you of a basic human right — to sleep.

"And there are the threats, like 'I'll throw your bloody furniture on the lawn. It is control. It's a tricky area but if you are afraid of your partner you are in a really abusive relationship. The fights become more frequent, the abuse becomes stronger. Eventually something gets broken, either the person or a material thing. But what happens is the person who's being abused is getting broken all the time. It's about control, manipulation, domination. It's bloody



SUE NEAL AND BO HARNETT

awful. It really is. It's degrading.

"When I was with one of my abusive partners I used to be afraid to come home from work at night because I never knew what kind of a mood she was going to be in, and that's a fear that's very unhealthy. Another thing that really made me afraid was the fear that she'd hit the kids - rather me than the children. I was scared stiff of her. With my other abusive partner I never knew when her mood would change.

"When somebody's been in a violent relationship and it finishes the abusive person will sometimes keep coming back and coming back and coming back. The worst is when they keep coming back and they say I'd like to be friends, basically in the hope that because you're friends you won't be able to tell anyone about it. That's another form of abuse. And they keep hounding and hounding and hounding you. It's very hard to try and heal when that keeps happening.

"People who have been in an abusive relationship that finishes are vulnerable. So they can either closet themselves or go out looking for support and the next thing you know they're in another relationship. This then starts to form a pattern for them and they have to learn

how to break that pattern. It's a scary thing, seeing a woman go from one bad relationship to another. It takes a lot of strength not to let that happen again.

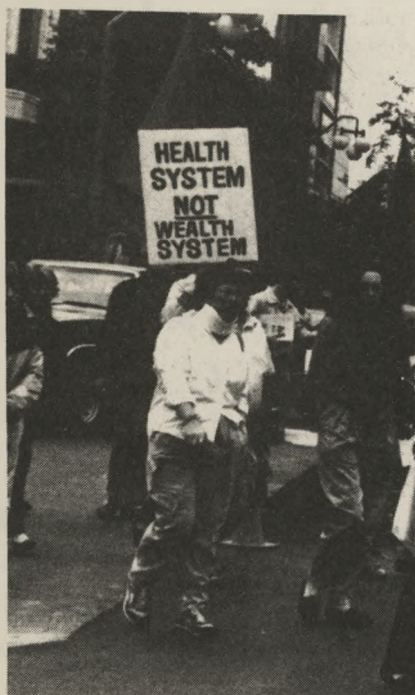
"We have to name the violence. And name the women to each other. If we don't name the violence we are condoning what the abuser is doing. What really upset the apple cart with a lot of people that I knew was that after one beating I went up to the club with a black eye, stitches on the side of my mouth, my eyes were swollen, my face puffy, I looked an absolute bloody mess. I was sore but I was determined I was going to let people see me. It went down like a lead balloon. It took a lot of guts to do it, believe me, but I wasn't going to sit back and let her get away with it."

When we know about violence and are silent we are colluding with the abuser. Some of our silence arises from a sense of helplessness and the very New Zealand "I musn't interfere". We are often reluctant to call the police, but the safety of the abused women must be our paramount concern. Bo sees the setting up of the network as giving us all something we can do — "we can talk about it, and we can pass on the information about the network. We need

more safe houses in all areas. Please call the number below if you are interested in finding out more about being part of the network.

"Even if a woman is not sure her situation is abusive, she can ring us up and talk about it. She doesn't have to give her name if she doesn't want to. We log the call - the time and the issue - but not names. If a woman just wants to ring up and have a natter that's fine. If she needs to get away we can work on that. There are places she can go to feel safe."

The number is 0-9-838 7982 - and has an answer phone. Or women can call the Auckland refuge number, which is 0-9-787 635 and ask for Margaret or Pippa, "because those are the two refuge workers we have been dealing with. They are lesbian-friendly and really nice women. If a lesbian needs an advocate or go-between that can be arranged too, and medical advice. It all has to be covered. When you're in a house in an abusive partnership you can feel there is no safe place. You think to yourself you can't go around to your friends they haven't been listening to what you've been saying. That's the time to call us." □



GIL HANLY

A HEALTH SYSTEM

Pat Rosier writes.

Under the dying "welfare state" (remember it?) we had in New Zealand what is known as a "public health system". This meant that hospital care, and pharmaceutical treatments were provided without being paid for at the point of use (it's always been paid for from taxes, of course). Visits to the doctor were heavily subsidised from tax monies.

How quickly it has changed. And is changing. As I am writing this, however, the government has announced a White Paper, for discussion, to be published after the July budget. Whoa there! It was all going too fast for the medical professionals. Consumers, particularly those who cannot afford medical insurance, were left well behind, even before last November's change of government.

I offer the following quote, from *The caring commodity; the provision of*

health care in New Zealand by Iain Hay, (published by OUP, Auckland 1989) as background information to the public vs private hospitals debate that is going on in television commercials and programmes, daily newspapers, unions, and living rooms. It is characterised by phrases like "waiting lists," "specialist of your choice," "efficiency," and "market led". This is what Iain Hay writes:

"The natures of the connections between public and private hospitals were largely created by staff who worked in both types of establishment. Private hospitals are simply places at which people sell their skills to the sick for a price. In an environment in which equally good, if not better, care is available elsewhere for no charge (at the point of use) in a socially acceptable establishment, there is virtually no scope for the private sale of these skills.

"However, should deficiencies arise in the free system, some people will be willing to pay to overcome them, and given that the nature of the public/private relationship provides a context in which

growing private business creates more public sector inadequacies (Fougere 1974) it is evident that public sector weaknesses will be exacerbated. The point which differentiates private surgical hospitals from other private medical facilities in their relations with public hospitals is that the surgical hospitals provide an outlet for the sale of a large number of specialist services of which there is only a very limited supply. The more surgeons and other specialist medical practitioners who engage in private hospital work, the fewer are available to the public sector."

Think about it. And about who is advising the government and what their vested interests are. And about how "health" provides a capitalist's dream market — there's a never-ending supply of consumers and an ever-expanding range of products to sell. □

VIRGIN BIRTH

Jacqueline O'Connor

For some time now single women in Britain have been availing themselves of new technology and becoming pregnant using AID (Artificial Insemination by Donor). These women do not know the donors, nor do they intend to marry. Some are heterosexual, some are lesbian, often with lesbian partners. Recently a

psychotherapist revealed in the British Medical Association publication, *Lancet*, that one of her clients had applied to use this service. The result would be a virgin birth. That is, the woman had no intention of starting a relationship with a man.

This revelation was greeted with universal disapprobation by the forces of reaction. Despite the fact that not one of them had ever met the woman concerned, politicians, clergy, psychologists and press, from the gutter to the *Guardian*, held forth on her likely psychological health, motives and fitness for maternity.

Amongst the guardians of public morality was a Dr Persaud of the British Institute for Psychiatry. Without the precaution of analysis, but on the basis of the woman's lack of a sexual relationship, she made her diagnosis. The woman, according to her, "may be suffering from psychological problems." It seems that a shafting a day keeps the shrink away.

The source of Anglican Archbishop Habgood's knowledge of the woman's motives must have been divine revelation. He, too, had never met her, but was nevertheless able to ascertain that her need for a child was based on her "selfish desire for someone to love" — in turn based, no doubt, on a selfish, unnatural and unfeminine desire for control over her own body and fertility.

Anti-abortion (LIFE) MP Anne Winterton's position was characterised by a perverse internal coherence. To her view that women who don't want

children should be prevented from not having them, she added a corollary — women who do want children should be prevented from having them. The Good Life apparently only comes in penis-shaped packages.

The availability of AID (Artificial Insemination by Donor) has also called the bluff of the Catholic Church. Sex to these anti-life bigots has always been viewed as sinful, but necessary for procreation purposes. Guess who's not thanking God, now it's not even needed for that? Unlike that ultimate rape victim, the Virgin Mary, this rather wiser virgin is to be vilified, not venerated.

What the contradictions contained within these reactionary views reveals is the function of sexist ideology in the maintenance of the bourgeois family. These responses are justifications of women's continued subordination as domestic and sexual slaves within that family, which exists to reproduce cheaply labour fodder for the capitalist profit system, and foster the ideological illusions necessary to maintain it. The moral panic caused by departures from the "norm" of a compulsory and dependent heterosexuality confirm that this is indeed its function. Despite the limited gains made by women over the postwar decades in terms of (albeit feminised, low paid) socialised work and minimal state benefits to single women with dependents, this is still the case.

It is predictable that a hue and cry like that over the use of AID by single women would occur at a time when families are being torn apart, not by

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WOMAN ON A BIRTH STOOL GERMAN MIDDLE AGES

women's "deviance", but by capitalistic economic crisis. In an attempt to impose order on the chaos created by an anarchic and disintegrating system, increasingly virulent ideological attacks go hand in hand with economic coercion. To restore profitability, the capitalist state has to cut back on social

spending on health, education and childcare. These cuts intensify women's domestic burden.

Shipley and Richardson have railed against the "promiscuity" and "easy lives" of DPB beneficiaries. They are gloating over the fact that cuts in the benefit have resulted in some women being driven back to a "normal" family situation. That is, to economic dependence on a male who they presumably left for a very good reason. It is these stressed-out, over-burdened women, living in situations which are often violent and abusive, who are far more likely to be emotionally "unfit" for motherhood than women who are free to choose it, here as in Britain.

A few single women choosing AID will, unfortunately, not threaten the stability of the bourgeois family and capitalist society. But the response to this situation in Britain has been to set up a Human Fertilisation and Embryo Authority by Act. It will soon publish guidelines for clinics offering AID. A clause in the Act names, among other considerations for the welfare of children born of AID, "the need of the child for a

father". Clinics risk losing their licences if they breach guidelines. The result will likely be that only single women who have sufficient income will get AID. Rich women have always been able to buy their way around the system. The rest will be forced to use do-it-yourself methods, and run the attendant risks.

Such a situation already exists de facto in New Zealand. Both public and private clinics already prioritise heterosexual couples in stable relationships. This supposedly arises naturally out of the fact that demand exceeds supply. Lesbian women who want children are the particular bane of the sexual reactionaries. In New Zealand most lesbian women in this situation already go for private "turkey basting" in the New Zealand tradition of do-it-yourself.

It is a basic right of women to choose whether or not to have children. We must fight to achieve that right and defend it from reactionary attempts to restrict it. All technology currently available which allows women to freely express that choice should be available free of cost through the public health system. □

NEW ZEALAND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENARY 1993

Reprinted from a newsletter by
Danna Glendining for the informal
1993 steering group.

September 1993 will be one of the most historic dates in our lifetimes - the 100th anniversary of New Zealand women winning the right to vote. This will not just be our anniversary. As New Zealand women were the first in the world to vote in their country's elections, 1993 will be the world centenary of women's suffrage.

On 15 June 1990 44 women, representing many women's groups and organisations, attended a meeting called by the National Council of Women to discuss 1993. Both National and Labour Party MPs were present. What emerged was tremendous energy and enthusiasm, and hundreds of valuable ideas. There was also a strong belief that 1993 should

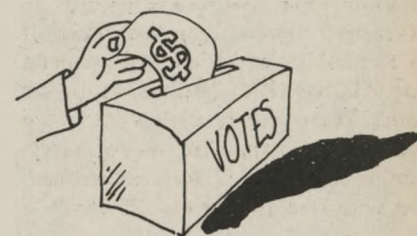
be a focus of activity, stocktaking and celebration for women in all parts of the country.

At that June meeting it was agreed to set up a steering group to get things going:

- lobbying the government and opposition to support the 1993 celebration and provide funding and resources
- contacting women's groups throughout the country
- compiling ideas and suggestions to be passed on to whatever structure is set up to coordinate the year and distribute funds and resources.

While members for a steering group were nominated at the 15 June meeting, in reality an open group of enthusiastic stalwarts/volunteers have met on an ongoing basis to try and keep things going. Former national Council of Women President, Jocelyn Fish, was elected convener.

Members of the group have met with the then Minister of Internal Affairs, Margaret Austin, the present Minister of Women's Affairs, Jenny Shipley and Katherine O'Regan, and with staff of the 1990 Commission. In October a seeding



grant of \$4,000 was received from the Ministry of Women's Affairs to assist with steering group costs.

The primary focus of the steering group has been to persuade the Government to fund the 1993 celebrations. This process has been protracted by the change of government in October. A budgeted proposal was drawn up and presented to Minister of Women's Affairs, Jenny Shipley on 18 December for consideration. A second meeting with the minister and Katherine O'Regan was held on 7 February. Since then we have been advised that the minister has met with the prime minister and that a proposal will go to cabinet shortly.

The group which has been meeting has an open mind on the form of organisation which might coordinate the

1993 celebrations. The funding proposal we have put to government is for \$17,834,000 which is about half the Government funding of the 1990 commemoration. We envisage regional staff in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and part-time district staff in fourteen districts.

Alongside the major effort of putting this proposal to government, the steering group has taken the following actions:

1. Incorporated the New Zealand Women's Suffrage Centenary Foundation as an incorporated society. While the principal aim of the foundation is to lobby government to establish a co-ordinating body for 1993, it was also felt and incorporated foundation would be independent of government and therefore in a position to receive monies (especially from overseas sources) which would not be forthcoming to a

government established body.

2. Invited Governor-General Dame Catherine Tizard to be a patron.

3. Held consultations with Maori women on an appropriate Maori name. It appears "Te Putanga Ki Te Ao Marama" (The achievement of women's rights into the world of enlightenment) is the most favoured option, but a final decision has not yet been made.

4. Gathered a large number of ideas and suggestions for activities and creative ways of celebrating 1993.

Action to coordinate planned 1993 activities, generate further 1993 activities, and to fund 1993 activities awaits the government's response to the funding proposal.

1993 NZ Women's Suffrage Centenary Foundation

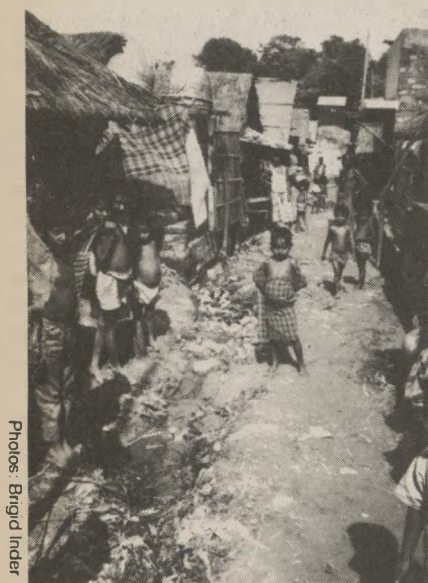
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Footnotes

Paul East, Leader of the House of Representatives, said on 1 May 1991, "The centennial will centre world attention on New Zealand. It is a most important event for the country and one in respect of which the government will be wishing to play a leading role."

In a bizarre move, a group calling itself Women Against Mismanagement has set itself up to monitor the spending of the \$17.8 million requested for the commemoration of the Centennial of Women's Suffrage, despite the fact that no one has yet received any funding, beyond \$4000 in 1989. In fact, 1993 is just 19 months away and there still has been no government recognition or funding for this event of world significance. □



Photos: Brigid Inder

BRIGID IN BANGLADESH

Brigid Inder a community and youth worker with the Dunedin YWCA has recently attended the World YWCA International Training Institute. As a part of the course Brigid visited Bangladesh. *Cindy Simpkins* writes:

Knowing the theories of the world's problems is one thing. But being there - unable to rid the smell of Bangladesh's open sewers from your throat; feeling humbled when a servant offers you her own precious food; entering the home of

a woman staked to her sickbed by a cycle of poverty; it slaps the theories hard into your face.

On February 20, Dunedin's 25 year old Brigid flew into Bangladesh, a country of about 20 million people where 70 percent live in starvation poverty, are landless and illiterate. Brigid spent two months in Bangladesh, leaving only two weeks before a cyclone swooped.

Depending on the culture the oppression of women manifests in different ways. Brigid says, "In Bangladesh they are second class citizens, have little freedom and few real choices. By and large marriages are still arranged and the dowry system operates to remind women of their lack of value. Home life is traditional, with the man as the head of the house. However, they are not necessarily the bread winners as most women work except the small percentage who are wealthy. It is not uncommon for a Muslim man to have two or three wives and four or five children all living in a one room thatched house."

When she first arrived in the capital, Dhaka, Brigid thought it looked like a major disaster had just hit (and this was before the cyclone). "It's hard to imagine what it looks like now. These recent disasters mean any sort of financial independence gained by individuals and communities will be wiped out. It will take a long time for the country to

recover. The ones that are wealthy will be fine, but it's the communities that were just beginning tentative development - they will have to start all over again. I don't know how they'll be coping. They definitely won't survive without major aid."

Brigid says recent world aid in the wake of cyclone devastation is all very well. However, the ruin wouldn't be as great if the world had given more development aid before the cyclones. "There is a certain amount of deprivation, poverty and starvation which the world is prepared to live with before provoking attention or any response. We are prepared to let countries like Bangladesh struggle, for the people to live and die in starvation poverty just as long as their deaths are quiet and they do not disturb us. If Bangladesh had been more developed, lives, communities, buildings and industries could have been saved. At the very least they would have had a better system for distributing emergency supplies."

While there, it struck Brigid that there can be no real development without justice. "It reinforced the idea that if any third world country is to pursue sustainable development, there needs to be a more just foreign borrowing system and world order. While some countries spend millions on

the military, their own people and those in third world countries die of starvation or live in sub-human conditions. Spending on the military kills, whether the weapons are used or not. You cannot feed, clothe, house or educate people with military hardware."

Although Bangladesh receives a large amount of aid money, it has also borrowed from the International Monetary Fund and is trying to pay off interest. Thus, it is never likely to get out of the borrowing cycle. Brigid says, "It is totally dependent on aid money. But those who 'donate' aid to third world countries often ask for favours in return. Bangladesh is in a strategic location and some donor countries may wish to take advantage of this."

For all its problems, Brigid says Bangladesh is not a hopeless case. "No the people have a real spirit of surviving. The recent disasters will have really hurt them, and there will be a lot of grief. But life there is not without some enjoyment. People can laugh even in the most appalling situations. The people have a real pride and affection for their country. They are very matter of fact about life and accept things as 'that's the way it is'. It seems only those in developed countries have the luxury of emotional trauma."

While poverty in Bangladesh is widespread and extreme, Brigid says New Zealand is not without poverty on a relative scale. "Relative poverty in developed countries is no less painful than starvation poverty. There are constant reminders through the media, and advertising of products which only seem like a stone's throw away, but in reality are well out of people's realm. People are taunted by what they can't afford. Being on a benefit or low wage in New Zealand means people are surviving without the quality of life most New Zealanders have come to expect. This is an unjust situation where those on low wages have slipped off into levels of poverty they have not known before, and the upper class continues to accumulate wealth."

Education and literacy are two key internal imperatives which contribute to development and Brigid realises how difficult it is trying to develop a country which has a 70 percent illiteracy rate. Most of the YWCA's workers in Bangladesh are drawn from the 15 percent who are educated and so, it is a predominantly middle class



organisation. "A lot of people think that being middleclass is a criticism, but it can also be positive. It's good that organisations like the Y are middle class and educated because it is from these people that an awareness and analysis exists of where change needs to take place. They know the process of change and how to lobby for it. To use your education for yourself is to mis-use it. Generally our education system has taught people to get ahead for themselves. Using your education as an opportunity to make a difference - to work for social justice, to favour the powerless, is an appropriate way to use it."

The types of projects undertaken by the YWCA are directed at the powerless - the women and children who are poor, illiterate, landless, and subsisting near the starvation poverty line. Primary health care, education, literacy, and job creation schemes aimed at the economic development of women and their families are examples of projects which are run in urban slums and villages. The YWCA has also established nursery schools all over the country. They are for children of the paying middle class which subsidise free schools for the children of the slums.

The urban slums of Cittagong had all of these projects underway when Brigid

visited. In the last two years this community had reached the stage of addressing its need for sanitation - most slums have no form of sanitation or clean running water. A YWCA project which serves thousandsof peoplesaw the creation of a shallow mud gutter for the deposit of human excrement and household waste. This was a real achievement.

From a community work perspective, it is easier to make contact with people because there are usually hundreds living in a small area. "In New Zealand the quarter acre section can keep people physically distant from each other and problems such as loneliness are kept behind closed doors."

Brigid believes the YWCA is having a positive impact in the communities it has targeted, "but not in the overall scene of Bangladesh. This is because the problems are so vast and complex." Although unsure about the total numbers of women and children involved in YWCA programmes, she estimates figures well into the thousands. "But, numbers aren't really important. What's important is working alongside the people there. Once the community is strong enough and can take charge of its own development, the Y moves on to another one." □

TIME USE SURVEY - CLEAR GENDER DIFFERENCES

Reprinted from *The Ministry of
Women's Affairs Newsletter*

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has for two years now been closely involved with other government agencies, including Manatu Maori, in preparatory work for a Time Use Survey. Last August, the Department of Statistics successfully carried out a pilot survey.

MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT

From its inception, the Ministry of Women's Affairs has consistently highlighted the importance and the extent of women's unpaid work in the household and the voluntary sector. Women's unpaid work is crucial to our

social and economic well-being and to the functioning of New Zealand society on a daily basis.

With that in mind, the Ministry of Women's Affairs was closely involved with the Department of Statistics in the ground work for a national time use survey. Preliminary work has included the Ministry's workshops on valuing women's unpaid work, held throughout the country in 1989, as well as a national seminar for policy makers.

Alongside this the Ministry has held regular discussions with the Department of Statistics on the extension of the National Accounts to include measurement of the production that occurs in the household through unpaid work. This includes work done at home, in the community and on the marae. In conjunction with these discussions, the Ministry worked with the Department of

Statistics and other government agencies involved on the design of the pilot time use survey.

WHY A TIME USE SURVEY?

Valmai Copeland, Department of Statistics, Manager Time Use Survey, explains the need for the survey:

"For some time now our department has been aware that our National Accounts don't give the whole picture about production in New Zealand as they do not reflect the production of households. The prime purpose of a time use survey is to gain information about people's lifestyles and their pattern of time use, and from the information collected we examine in detail three main categories: unpaid work in the household, unpaid work in the community, and leisure activities."

VALUING UNPAID WORK

The value of unpaid work may be measured in three different ways. Taking housekeeping as an example, it can be valued by:

A Generalist Approach - eg, how much it would cost to hire a housekeeper;

A Specialist Approach - breaking down each activity and giving it a specialist rate, say \$10 an hour for babysitting and \$30 an hour for gourmet meal production; or,

An Opportunity Cost Approach - If the "housekeeper" is also a doctor, then each hour of unpaid work is valued at the rate she could be earning in employment.

VARIETY OF USES

As well as measuring production within households and the voluntary sector, a time use survey provides other valuable information such as:

- * childcare arrangements, and arrangements for caring for other dependents, eg, the dependent elderly;

- * who does what work;

- * variables affecting labour force participation;

- * changing patterns of work hours;

- * how leisure time is spent;

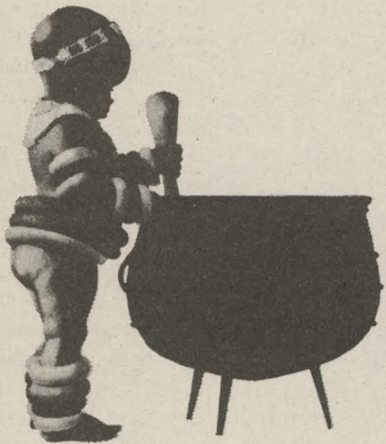
- * how other discretionary time is used;

- * how unemployed people use their time;

A BROADER AND TRUER PICTURE

Time use surveys give planners and policy makers information about the interplay of the formal and informal

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work sectors, and the relationships between households, the markets and government activity - or paid work versus unpaid work. They provide a picture of the total economic activity of the country.

As more women enter the workforce, that may impact on others in the household on the way in which they spend their time. It can also affect the place and the time that other activities occur. For instance, childcare patterns, eating patterns, and patterns of domestic work change. A time use survey gives an overview of the interaction - a broader and truer picture, and paid work is no longer seen as an independent activity, but as an activity that is dependent on the work of others in the home.

THE PILOT SURVEY

The pilot was chiefly concerned with the methodology of the survey. Those taking part in the survey, 600 in all were randomly chosen from households in all parts of the country. The sample was selected to ensure representation of the range of population in terms of age, race, gender, employment status, urban and rural dwellers etc. The team of interviewers included Maori and Pacific Island people.

TWO DAY DIARY

Those taking part were asked to fill in a detailed diary of their activities for two consecutive days. They had to record what they were doing at each time of the day and anything else they were doing at the same time as well as record who they were doing it for.

METHODOLOGY SUCCESSFUL

Overall the objectives of the pilot survey (testing the feasibility of conducting a time use survey, estimating the response rate and discovering the factors which affect these, testing the documents and developing the classification) have been met.

As well as analysis of methodology, information has been extracted which gives an indication of what people actually do with their time.

CLEAR GENDER SPLIT ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT

There is a clear gender split in domestic activity. Women take the major responsibility for child care and for

domestic work such as cooking and cleaning. Men take most responsibility for outdoor tasks such as lawn mowing, car maintenance and house painting.

Analysis of findings also reveals that:

- * Child care is the most frequently mentioned informal work activity for women.

- * Men in full-time paid work, work on average an hour longer each day than women in full-time paid work. Women are more likely to be in part-time work than men.

- * Total unpaid work in the community is very similar for men and women but the areas in which they do it are different. Women are more inclined to work for friends, neighbours and relatives. Men are more likely to work for organisations.

- * The most common activity done on behalf of organisations is fundraising. Women are most involved in fundraising occupations in terms of producing goods. Men are mostly involved on the administrative side.

- * The most common recipient of voluntary work outside the home is a

relative. A high proportion of socialising is with relatives. These facts apply to all ethnic groups.

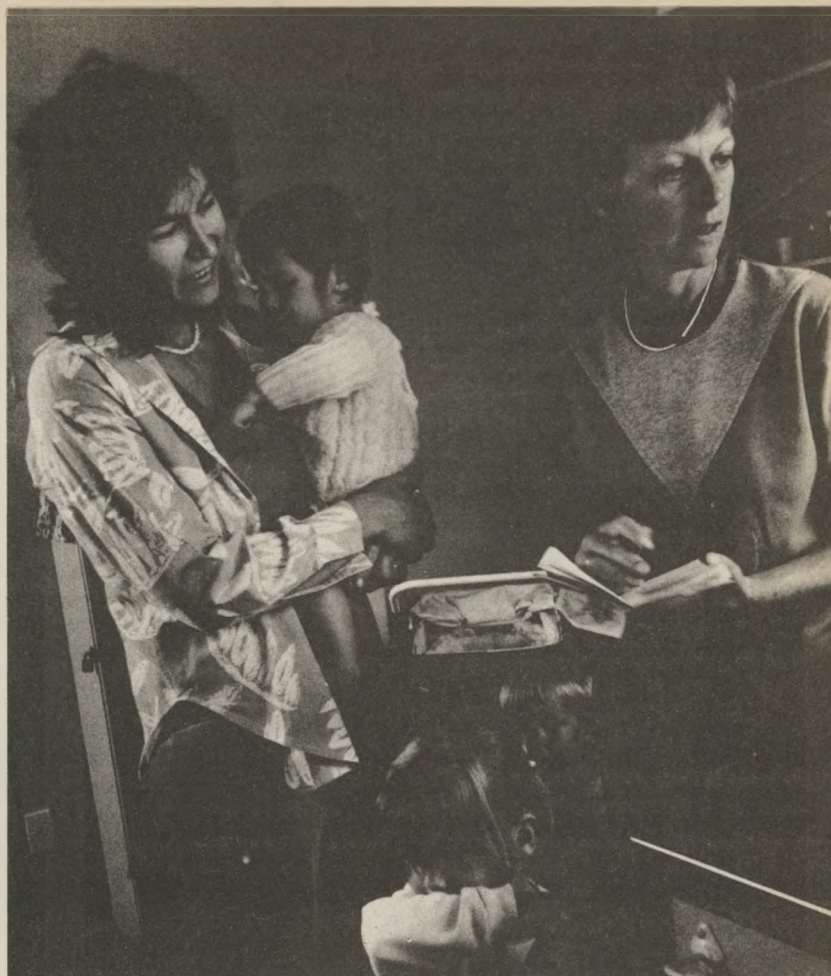
- * The average amount of time spent on sports and hobbies by everyone is one percent.

- * Men are more involved than women in sporting organisations. Men are more likely to go to hotels. Women do more hobby-type courses, spend more time visiting friends and relatives, and read books and magazines more frequently than men.

WHAT NEXT?

Work is now underway on developing the main survey. The size and the timing of this survey will be largely determined by the availability of funding. It is hoped that the survey will be carried out in 1992 and that 10,000 New Zealanders will take part.

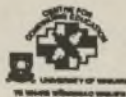
It is anticipated that from then on time use surveys will be held at five year intervals, and that valuations of unpaid work will be published regularly as supplements to the National Accounts. □



Gil Hanly

WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

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Saturday 10 August, 10.00am to 4.00pm
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October - November

To enrol and for further information, contact Gillian Marie, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton.



WHERE DO LESBIAN/FEMINIST BUSINESSES TURN FOR SUPPORT?

Written by Nett Hart and reprinted from *Feminist Bookstore News*, Vol 13 No 4, from San Francisco.

The intersection of our lesbian feminist communities with the economic community has created a hybrid: collectively or individually owned enterprises created for community service. These are not non-profit organisations to whom individuals and foundations make gifts; nor are they commercial ventures that believe following the law of supply and demand will ensure a profit and make the stock adjustments necessary to meet demand.

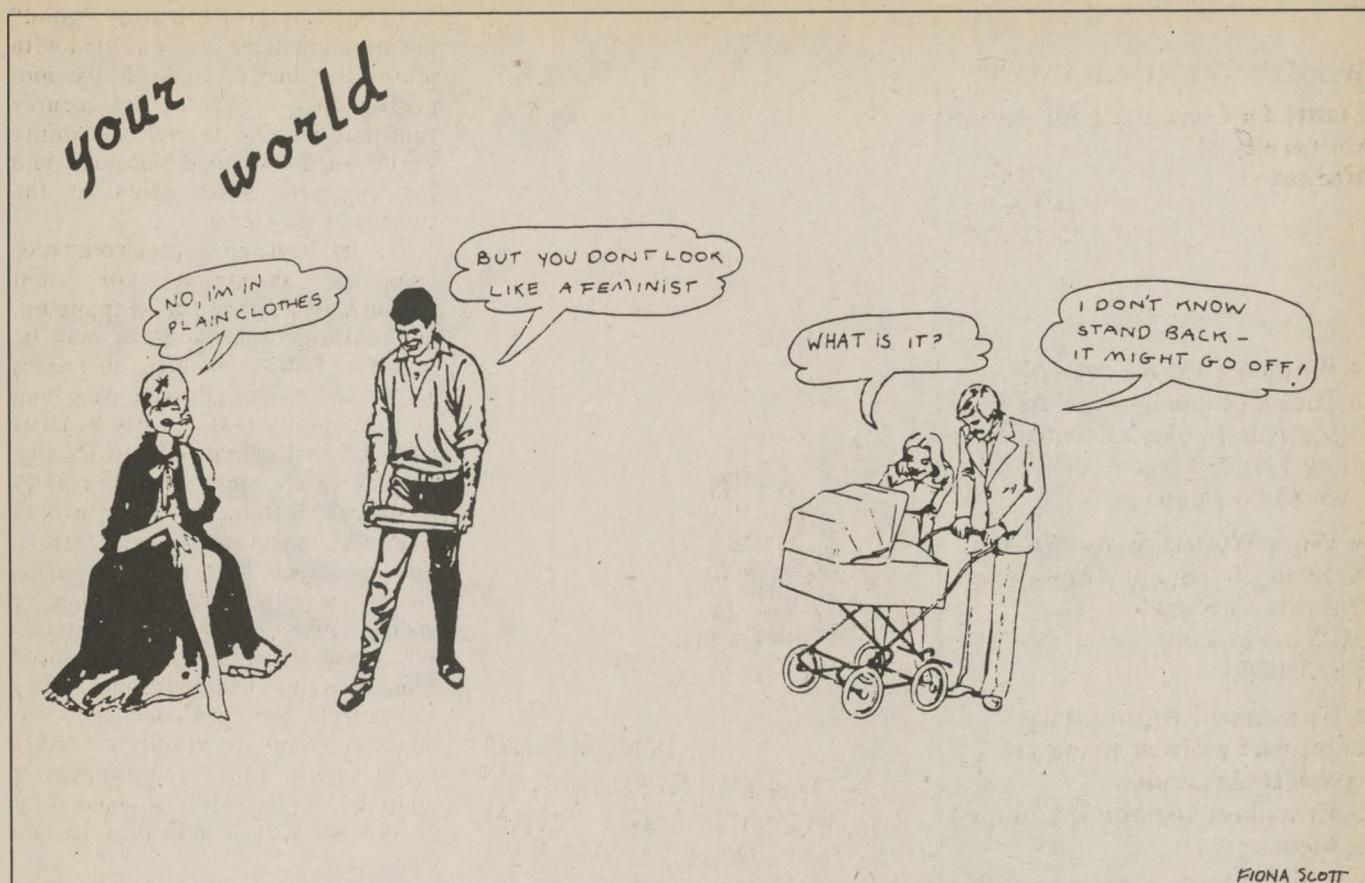
Instead these hybrid enterprises, not all small, have as their economic goal viability, so that they may sustain the community work they propose to do. To the best of my knowledge, all of our [in the US] women-owned bookstores and publishing houses (publishing garages?) fall into this category. Not all lesbian/feminist books are sold in these stores; nor do all the books in these stores come from such publishers. Thus both woman-owned publishers and bookstores exist in the world of for-profit publishers and bookstores whose purpose is not community service and viability but profit.

In the for-profit world, "good" business practices are rewarded with profits and lines of credit. In the non-profit world accountability secures contributions. But in the for-viability world, where do hybrid businesses turn for support? most often to the community they serve.

If a lesbian/feminist bookstore needs financial assistance for debt consolidation or for expansion, conventional loan sources may be available. But just as often, bookstores ask for and receive gifts and loans from the community that directly benefits from the bookstore's viability. Clearly, bookstores are viewed as community resources. Without a viable lesbian/feminist bookstore in town, lesbian/feminists would have to choose among the few currently successful feminist or lesbian titles carried by other stores. When lesbian/feminist publishers need help, again some traditional sources may be available. Here, the community that benefits from the viability of this business is more geographically scattered. Nevertheless, a community exists to which the publisher legitimately may appeal.

Individual or collective ownership does not presume the community does not have a responsibility to keep these businesses viable. The viability of the business benefits the community as directly — or more than — it benefits the owners. There is no danger, believe me, of any of our lesbian/feminist bookstores or publishers taking the money and running amok. The creation and maintenance of viable cultural resources in the lesbian/feminist community benefits us all. The stronger and more viable our cultural resources are, the less likely it is that the fate of our written culture will rest with publishing and bookselling conglomerates.

Community resources need economic support from the communities they serve. Most times this translates into "buy this book from me". Sometimes it includes an additional plea for loans or gifts. In the same way that the playing field is not level for women under heteropatriarchy, the playing field is not level for lesbian/feminist bookstores or publishers. Needing community support does not constitute whining. We can't level the field for one another, but we can be aware of each other's position and give the advantage when we can. □



● ■ ►

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Video

Vagaries



by Lisa Sabbage

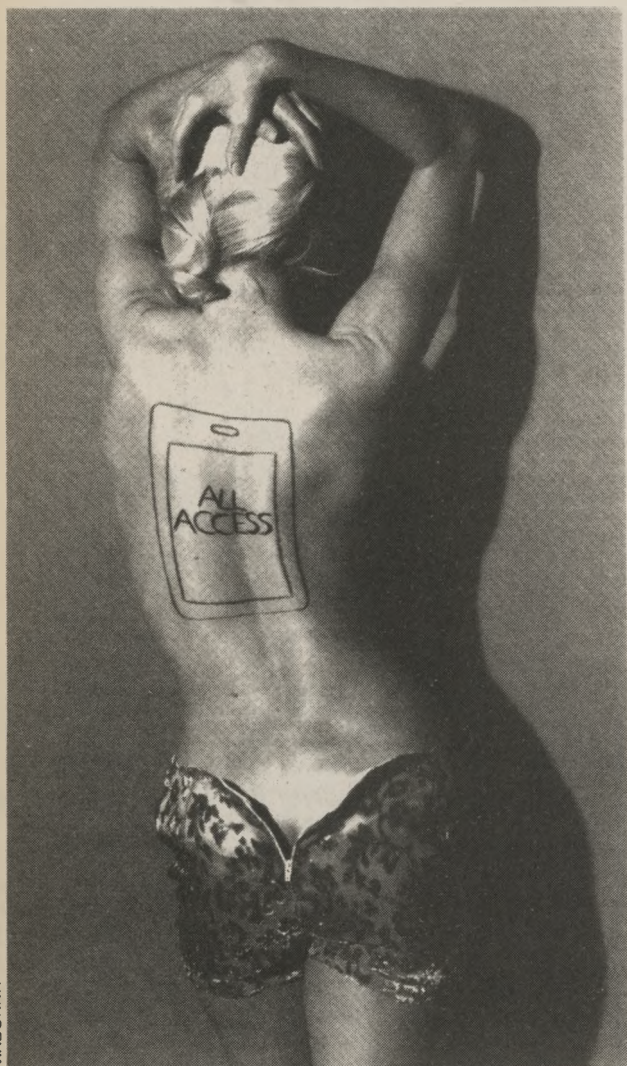
A young black woman, long and lean, wearing a tight mini-skirt, sheer bustier, fishnet stockings and stilettos, leans forward and pouts. She gyrates her hips and throws back her head, exposing her bare throat and cleavage. A young white man in jeans and T-shirt, stands singing and watching the woman. He reaches out to grab her, perhaps he chases her, but she slips from his grasp.

Sound familiar?

It could be the outline of any one of thousands of popular music videos that screen on TV each year. The scene is not unusual. Variations of it are common in many music videos, almost a prerequisite in fact.

TV is not the only source of music videos - they can be hired from most local stores and are sold at almost all record shops. Music videos are increasingly popular in pubs too, projected on to giant screens. Some cafes and restaurants now have video jukeboxes - select a song, pay your money and up comes your favourite tune with accompanying images.

The popular music video (PMV) is part of a thriving industry in which some videos can have million dollar budgets - a far cry from 10 to 15 years ago when a music video meant throwing a band into a dark studio, choking them with dry ice, blinding them with strobes and filming while they lip-synched badly to the song.



Exploring images of women and men in popular music videos (PMV's), that is, videos of commercial music as distinct from alternative music.



CARLY SIMON

A whole generation of (male) film directors has cut its teeth on music videos. Many techniques developed in the industry have influenced TV commercials, film and art. But behind the slick production values, narratives and special effects of the PMV, there often lies a very narrow vision of the roles of men and women.

Essentially, a music video is produced to promote a song and its performer(s). The aim is to sell the record and generate profits for the record company. The song-singer is the commodity, the music video the advertisement. The music video is therefore very much part of consumer culture. Its makers tap into the trends of the day, striving to stay ahead of fashion, setting standards for its audience to aspire to.

TVNZ publicity officer Roger Beaumont says Pepsi RTR Sounz, which screens Saturday at 10am on Channel 2, is targeted at the under-24 viewing audience. However, most of the commercials that appear during the one hour show - Pizza Hut, Sharkattack (boardgame), Cabbage Patch Kids, DTR, Jet Away Sindy Doll, Home Alone (film), Magnadoodle (toy), Sweet Valley High (boardgame), Coco Pops, Nintendo Video Games, Jenga (game), and music tapes - suggest a very young target audience of children and teenagers.

Record companies, like all good advertisers, recognise the importance of securing the custom of young people - the consumers of the future. Get little Bob to buy one MC Hammer

record and he'll buy them all, go to his concerts, buy Hammer T-shirts and maybe the MC Hammer doll from Mattel, too.

The comparison between PMVs and advertising is a useful one. Like ads, for the PMV to fulfil its function it must not offer satisfaction but the promise of fulfilment on purchase of the commodity. The sales pitch of both the ad and the PMV is the same: Buy this product and you too can be happy.

Put another way, for a PMV to sell the music it must also sell intangibles - the promise of peer acceptance, a sense of personal worth, and happiness. For kids to whom being accepted and part of the "in" crowd is everything, a PMV is a veritable mine of information about what's cool - the latest dance steps, hairstyles, clothes, poses, slang and accessories. The PMV provides a key to identity. Its images are important social indicators.

In this sense, the PMV provides kids with clues to behaviour. Unfortunately, many of the clues are red herrings based on sexist stereotypes.

"Gold Digger" by a band called EPMD, illustrates the song with a loose storyline. A group of men in therapy complain that women are after their money and possessions, leaving them to look after the kids. Between these scenes are shots of women wearing lurex hotpants, their bodies covered in gold paint, holding jackhammers in a "mine shaft". There are occasional close ups of the women from the neck down as their bodies

vibrate with the jackhammers. These shots simulate sex more than they suggest physically working with a jackhammer.

Less literal than the EPMD video is "If You Need Somebody" by Bad Company. This video is based on images of a man pursuing and finally winning back the woman who leaves him.

Robert Palmer's infamous "Simply Irresistible" shows the singer in front of a group of almost identical models in black mini dresses and red lipstick. Their function is only to be looked at, to be irresistible, a backdrop to Palmer.

In a video by London Beat a similar dynamic operates. While the men perform the song, women dance to their tune, as it were, with close ups of various parts of their bodies.

These four videos are fairly typical of those shown on TV each week and of the way women are portrayed. Kids and young adults watching these videos could be forgiven for thinking that women are essentially sexual creatures who do little else but seduce men and look good.

The major role of women in PMVs, whether or not they are the performers, is to be looked at, either by men in the video or by the viewer. Women are portrayed as passive objects to the active male singers or protagonists. The dancers and models in the Robert Palmer and London Beat videos, for example, are simply accessories to make the product - the song - more desirable to the viewer. Just as ads use women's bodies to sell products, so too do PMVs. A measure of this is that the Palmer video was actually co-opted by a successful soft-drink company to advertise its product.

Many video makers use techniques that reinforce the passivity assigned to women. Their bodies are literally cut up

by a series of closeups on their breasts, legs, lips, bottom and stomachs. This denies women a wholeness that is afforded to men. In doing so, it underlines the secondary role of women and their inability to act independently of men in the video.

George Michael's video "Faith" is a good example of how fragmentation works. George, dressed in jacket and jeans, plays his guitar and sings beside a jukebox. No woman appears in the video. However there is a pair of woman's legs - a sign of woman - shown leaning against the jukebox. the camera pans slowly up these legs from the stilettos to the top of the thighs. We never see more than that - the legs do not belong to anyone and are not given an identity. They exist only in relation to George Michael. Again, the legs represent female sexuality and are simply accessories to suggest George Michael is a worthwhile product.

Imagine a video in which the camera slowly panned up the legs of a man - it doesn't happen because the legs of men have not been separated from the rest of their bodies and eroticised as signs of sexuality.

Unlike women, the major role of men is not to be looked at.

So, PMVs teach the young viewer that sexuality is equated with a woman's identity and that passivity is at the heart of this sexuality. To be desired (not to desire) is the domain of the female gender. Increasingly women have become simply symbols of sexuality. In PMVs, an image of a woman often stands for sex - woman as a sign of sex. On the other hand, men are active and their sexuality is not deemed an integral part of their identity.

As in cinema and TV the male gaze is fundamental to the PMV. A common technique used in the PMV is to cut from a male face to a women's body, depicting the act of a man



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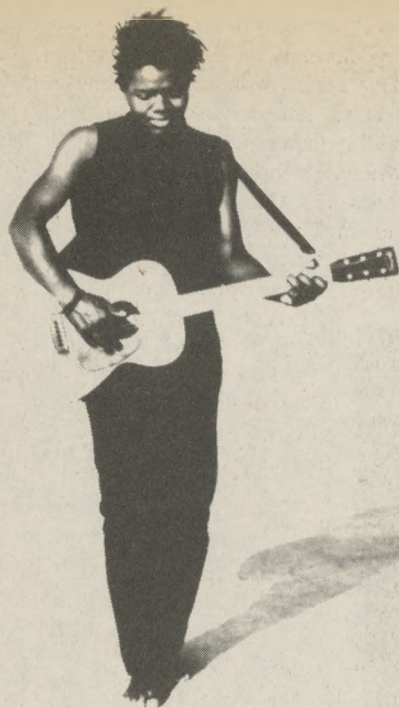
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looking at a woman. The woman is often unaware she is being looked at, or casts her eyes downwards, representing submission and an acknowledgement that her role is to be looked at and desired.

In this way the act of looking and the camera itself is constructed as male. Consequently, the audience is also constructed as male. "Gold Digger" shows this very clearly. The men in the video literally describe the women as we are shown them - it is their vision of women we see. For young women watching PMVs this means they learn to look at themselves and each other as men see them. Like the video-makers, they overvalue the sexual.

This poses a practical problem for the female viewer. She must conform to a very specific vision of what is sexually attractive. All the women in PMVs are slim, longlegged, portrayed as overtly heterosexual, and almost always dressed in miniskirts. Palmer's video is the extreme illustration of the ideal, clone-like model held up to the female and male viewer as the paragon of womanhood. From a young age, women learn to compare themselves to this ideal and to other women.

A video of a song by Wilson Phillips, a trio of women singers, hammers home just how narrow the vision of women is. The video is notable on two counts. First, one of the singers in the group does not conform to the size 10 ideal woman; and second, this caused an obvious dilemma for the video makers: How could they show a fat woman on screen? Their solution was to minimise her presence by focusing on the two slim women in the group, giving them more screen time, dressing them in short dresses and using close ups of their legs and bottoms. On the other hand, the big woman was dressed in dark, baggy clothes that hid her body and size, and she was seen in close up only from the neck up.

The solution found by the makers of the Wilson Phillips

video highlights the way "real" images of women are excluded from and by the PMV, and the way children and young adults - both male and female - are denied these images. What young viewers are presented with is a male fantasy of woman, more specifically a capitalist fantasy, not the vast range of women there is in reality.

Some people would argue that children can tell the difference between reality and what they see on TV. However, given that music videos employ very subtle and sophisticated techniques, teaching children not only how to view each other but the viewing process itself, I'm not so sure. The line is more

than a little blurry when it comes to PMVs because the musicians and the singers are real. Madonna is a real person, so is MC Hammer - why are their videos not real? More-over, for many kids the pop stars they adore are their role models. In the past, children up to the age of 12 learnt their attitudes about clothing, appearance and behaviour from their parents. But to some extent, the PMVs are part of a consumer culture that has taken over this socialisation process.

Jodie Marsh, an elementary school teacher in Los Angeles, sees girls of nine and ten coming to school dressed in the styles they see

in PMVs - high heels, tight miniskirts, low cut or see-through shirts, bare midriffs, painted fingernails and makeup.

In the United States, companies have recognised the commercial potential the PMVs hint at. Bloomers, a Texas-based company, recently launched a line of children's cosmetics. In case you think New Zealand is immune to this kind of marketing, we have at least three ranges of children's makeup available.

Pharmaceutical Sales and Marketing manufactures a range called Jellybean. Girls as young as five use the range which includes lipsticks, nailpolish, eyeshadows and perfumes.



ROXY MUSIC COVER

Totally Minnie, a Walt Disney range, is used by girls from four to thirteen, according to product manager Sally Giles. "It's for the little girl who aspires to be a teenager," says Sally.

Tinkerbelle, marketed by Cosmetic Sales Co Ltd, is also clear about its target market - eight to twelve year old girls, says sales and marketing director Ken Millar.

Young girls (not boys) are encouraged to wear makeup, to view themselves as a spectacle to be looked at, and they are also encouraged to be what they are not - either a teenager or a model they see in the PMV. If young children and young

adults copy the way their idols look, as Jodie Marsh observed, they also learn to copy the way their idols behave and interact. From this they extrapolate that women are passive, that men are active; that women are desired/pursued, that men desire/chase; that men look, and that women are looked at.

British writer John Berger underlined the implications of this lesson: "men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves. The surveyor of women in herself is male: the surveyed female. She

turns herself into an object and most particularly an object of vision: a sight."

From an early age, young women learn to place an inordinate value on their appearance - their size, their shapes, their faces. Happiness is equated with the narrow vision of female beauty they have grown up with and they learn to judge themselves against this - dieting to fit Her size, buying the cosmetics to look like Her, and feeling depressed because it is impossible to be Her.

Music videos are one small part of the socialisation process, but because of the growing role they play in popular culture and their relationship with consumerism and capitalism, I believe we need to be aware of their influence.

We should also be aware of their potential. While virgins, vixens and victims may be the most common images of women in PMVs at present, the music video can also be used to challenge sexist stereotypes and assumptions.

Performers like Laurie Anderson, Annie Lennox and Tracey Chapman refuse to pander to the video image of woman as powerless, sexual beings. Anderson foregrounds the process of construction itself, Lennox throws off stereotypes, and Chapman refuses to condone the use of images she considers oppressive in the videos made to promote her songs.

Ask yourself these questions when next you watch a PMV, and encourage those you know to ask them too:

How is the image produced?: whose fantasy is being recorded, what criteria are used to select the models (looks, strength, personality etc), and what is their relationship to the overall video?

Visual conventions: what techniques are used to make the video, how do we recognise gender of the subjects, does the video bear any relation to the song?

The audience: is the audience constructed as male or female, what kind of pleasures does the image offer the audience (sexual, emotional or intellectual), and does the image demand any kind of audience interaction to interpret the meaning of the image, does it challenge our assumptions?

Love them or hate them, music videos are here to stay. However, like ads, we may have to put up with them but we don't have to buy what they're selling. We can't teach our children not to be consumers, but we can teach them to be discriminating - in the best sense of the word. □

NEW ZEALAND

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a steady flame



PHOTO: KAREN ANGUS

Lauris Edmond has recently published the second volume of her autobiography *Bonfires in the Rain* (Bridget Williams Books). Pat Rosier talked to her recently. (*Bonfires* is one of the Top Twenty books for this year's Women's Book festival in September.)

The first volume, *Hot October* covered Lauris Edmond's early years, up to the time of her marriage. *Bonfires in the Rain* is the story of Lauris's years as a wife, mother and burgeoning writer. These are the years when she had and cared for six children while the family followed her husband around the North Island on his teaching career. She refers to this period as a time when she almost put herself aside (something familiar to many of us during our active mothering years), and also as a time that was full and rewarding.

"In lots of ways it was a really good life. That's one of the reasons I wanted to write about it. Since I now lead a very different sort of life, in some ways a much more public one, it would be quite easy for me to give the impression that I

had been just marking time, waiting for my real life to begin, and that's not true.

"I also thought that the life of bringing up children, being busy in that way, is often denigrated or ignored, as much as anything by writers who don't write about this part of their life. Autobiography is often seen to be about ideas and famous people and careers and so on. When I was just beginning *Bonfires* I talked to someone who had just published an autobiography and she'd said a lot about her mother and grandmother and I said, 'How much of yourself is in it?' and she said, 'Well, only until I got married and after that it's just mum and kids, so there's no story there.' I knew that was wrong and it stiffened my resolve to find the drama and the fascination and the sheer importance of it.

"Another major reason why I wanted to write this story was because we grew up very much with certain conventions and social laws and then they changed greatly. The second part of my life has been lived in a completely different social climate from the earlier part. When I was younger I had so few expectations for myself that there were some questions I simply didn't ask, questions I think young women do ask today. In some ways I don't envy them. Because their expectations are so much higher they have conflicts that didn't really touch me. You can't judge the way it is for another generation but in lots of ways I wanted to celebrate the life I had in those years. It was a lot of fun.

"There is at present in some parts of feminist thinking a tremendous amount of support and approval for career jobs

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just marking time, waiting
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and that's not true.**

that might be challenging, in management or something, and I have no quarrel with that at all. But in fact those jobs are in quite a crucial way not nearly as sophisticated as the age-old bringing up and shaping the destinies of young people. It's a job that I want to say, among other things in the book, is of the greatest possible importance. And besides, it's a pleasure in lots of ways. Very hard, too. And of course the book is partly of it coming to an end and the changes being made."

Bonfires in the Rain is a story of a life that also contains aspects of social history. Lauris Edmond deliberately puts her life in the context of its time and creates a picture of the impact of the changes of the sixties and seventies on an "ordinary" Pakeha New Zealand family. I was fascinated by this aspect of the book, with the linking of general trends and changes in attitudes to a particular life.

"Taking a sideways step into the social history of the time at various points was a very great help to me. In the end I think it's good for the book but I did it partly because it was a way of talking about troubling personal things without getting too deeply embedded in them and without running the risk of saying some version of 'poor me'. When I talk about my husband's troubled time and his being in a state of confusion it mattered a lot to be able to say — and I knew it was true — that a lot of other men had the same expectations of their wives as he did and in the same way found that their wives were for the first time not meeting them. At the very moment they were most needed they were turning away and doing other things for themselves."

Writing about your life in the intimately personal way Lauris Edmond does is, of course, very exposing of your own and others' lives. She talks of making "an arrangement with myself" long before beginning this book because she has written a lot of "quite personal poetry, about experiences and feelings of great intensity and very close to me". This arrangement means focussing on the experience and not on yourself having the experience. She says, "This is hard to explain, but there is a difference between thinking exactly how it was and being truthful and thinking 'Oh, I thought I was going to die because it was so dreadful.' She sees the

focus as a matter of the writer's judgement. "And I hope I haven't misjudged it, I hope it is the experience at all times and not myself sort of writhing around in the middle of it." For this reader at least, Lauris Edmond succeeded — I was gripped by the story, and not aware of any "writhing around". I also admire the way she describes her decreasing satisfaction with the marriage and beginning to grasp at "a life of her own" without self-pity or blaming. She writes,

I saw them as I never had before — they were my dearest people in all the world, almost everything I thought and did was directed towards their welfare, their happiness and fulfilment. And I saw with blinding clarity that not one of them thought there was a single thing to be done for me, in my turn. I didn't have a turn. I didn't exist, except as I helped them to exist. Without them I was nothing, and so they perceived me — theirs, useful, indeed necessary, loved, of course, depended upon; but as a person with possible separate requirements of my own, not there. And nobody, not even I, thought this unbalanced or wrong. (page 179)

Lauris Edmond considers herself, as a woman, in a particular context, and valuing the life she has at any particular time. She likes to make sense of it. "You look for the patterns of cause and effect and the trends and how one thing is connected to another and shaped by it. It really is quite inappropriate to put yourself in the middle of it and say 'poor me'. You don't think about this when you're writing, but if there's a result that I want now it's that other people look at their own lives, perhaps ask questions about them, perhaps know more about them.

"I've been talking to journalists these past few days and several of them have said to me what do I regret or what

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**I saw with blinding clarity
that not one of them thought
there was a single thing to
be done for me, in my turn.
I didn't have a turn.**

would I do differently if I could go back. I have said there really is no answer to that, because one of the things that working on this project does is give you a feeling of the inescapable existence of each event. You can't take out an event or an intention or a mood and say well now I'd do that differently, because you know that it's linked to choices you made or accidents of circumstance at that time. You might wish you'd been more mature, say, but you were not."

Another thread to *Bonfires in the Rain* that I found fascinating was Lauris Edmond's relationship with her mother and the changes that went through. It was, to me, an unusually close relationship during the writer's early adult years. She says, "I thought a tremendous amount about her life and it's been a big discovery to come to see her as a woman with a lot of unfulfilled possibilities and a part of the history of her time, — which was much more limiting than my time has been. The things about her that in the later stages really irritated me, I could see why they were so. I don't always spell it out in the book, but that was my attitude. After all if you're going to write a story the process is to set out to understand it. To say somebody's a victim and somebody else is wicked seems to me to be a lesser way to tell a story.

"A lot of the lives that people live are obscure to them — this was another thing that interested me a great deal — until quite a long time afterwards. So looking back and having embarked on the project of writing about my life it seemed very important to me to set it down as it really was — with hindsight. But, and this is a technical point, I also had a rule that I hope I never broke, which was to never say things like, 'If I had known what was to come,' or, 'Looking back I can see...' or, 'The future was to be ...' etc etc. If I caught myself doing that I quickly crossed it out."

There is to be a third volume, it's being written now. "It's very slow. I don't expect it to be as difficult as *Bonfires* — that's the most difficult one I will ever have to do probably. The next one is a good deal more about my working life. Some people have said to me why don't I stop there — at the beginning of *Bonfires* I am beginning to be a serious and industrious writer — and let the writing do it. My attitude is if I



Lauris Edmond Photo: Robert Cross

were to do that it would be like getting to the point where I say this person has in a rather muddle-headed way wanted to be independent and wanted to do what she wanted and it looks as though she's going to manage it. Hooray, she's sort of getting there. If I didn't say any more it would be like a kind of happy ever after. You get your freedom and ... but it's as complex and equivocal as anything else and I think I have to say so. Nothing's happy ever after, we just charge ahead.

"It matters to me just as much as the other books. But boy it's slow. That's because it's got a new crop of problems in that my life continued to be very populace so it has to be about lots of people. A number of friends have said that's fine I'm part of your story and say what you like but that actually doesn't solve it. I still have to find the right ways of talking about people that I've had to find all along, it's just a different set of people."

Some of Frances Edmond's children are "quite uncomfortable" about their lives being exposed through their mother's writing while others "are fine and in fact Frances is going to do some of the reading at the Women's Bookshop tonight with me and she's really pleased to. She doesn't have any problem and several of the others don't but a couple do. That's been really distressing and yet I can see of course how they feel. It does tell me that I have to be extremely

careful — which I sort of knew anyway — about their adult lives. They are adults now and I'm not going to attempt to tell their adult story at all. It was a bit different when they were children.

"This too is a constant problem. Finding a way of telling your own story without telling other peoples' is a technical challenge all the time. I don't think I understood all this fully. Perhaps I wouldn't have done it if I had. It will to some extent condition what I do in the third volume."

The life portrayed in *Bonfires* is not an "easy" one — there was not enough money to be relaxed about paying the bills or buying shoes, for instance. The emotional highs and lows, disappointments, joys and griefs of a family are all there. As Lauris Edmond said above, the story does not end with her achieving "independence". I am looking forward to the third volume. □

I wanted to write this story because we grew up very much with certain conventions and social laws and then they changed greatly.

the land is alive **Pitjantjatjara**

Chia Moan of
"Wildwise", an
Australian travel organisation,
which organises adventurous trips

and holidays for
women, writes about
her recent visit to the
bush college of the
Pitjantjatjara.



TJULKIWA AND NGANYINTJA,
TEACHERS OF THE BUSH COLLEGE OF
THE PITJANTJATJARA IN CENTRAL
AUSTRALIA. PHOTO: CHIA MOAN

It's so blue here by the sea that it's difficult to see properly after all that Central Desert red. Red, orange, sienna, burnt flesh tones, muscular shoulders of red sand rising out of powdery dirt and hard rock. Now I walk out of the house into the melting blue shadows of autumnal beach air and my vision slips over the surface of the blue road, diffuses into the blue air. No grip.

Finally my eyes find a huge hibiscus flower beaming out at me. Hello, Red. I can stop at this point. A point that connects here with there.

Black crows start squawking here, as there, their voices ricochet off the walls of a red canyon - so red that the wingshine is red too. (And I always thought wingshine was blue.) Red eats light and draws you into itself. It doesn't bounce back in the desert heat. Lusty

and deep for sinking tired dusty eyes into.

How profound is the affect of living your life in a red world? I realise that the issues of here and there are usually seen in terms of black and white. They are mainly black and white. They are mainly black, there in the aboriginal homelands of Central Australia and we are mainly white, here on the Europeanised coast. Their skin has a red shine to it. And the rocks are often black. How do I talk about the people from the red, as a person from the blue of a watery place and the grey of a city?

Is It Dirty?

Let's start with dirt. People say, are they dirty? (Liberal people only think it.) I say that are not afraid of the earth. Imagine sitting in the red dirt, sinking into it like a glorious feather duvet, embracing it, never mindful that it is dirt as in dirty, only feeling it is earth, as in earthy.

All good things come from the earth, except the good things that come from the sky. Sit in it, draw in it, steadily caress it as part of any story worth telling. It is part of life for the Pitjantjatjara. And when I am there it is part of me too.

It is thick in my red hair and livens up pallid fingernails. Things grow in dirt. Like germs, we think. Like bush tomatoes and grass seeds for grinding, they think. Well there is certainly no point in fighting it. Bleed into it. Sleep in it. What a relief.

On first arriving in the aboriginal homelands I saw dirt. (This is also what I first saw in New York City and London, grey dirt) Then I saw people. People who had this sort of character or that, some who made me laugh with delight and some who made me cross, just like people everywhere. Only these



"MINMAPULKA", WISE WOMEN OF THE PITJANTJATJARA LANDS WAVE GOODBYE TO THEIR "STUDENTS" AT THE BUSH COLLEGE. PHOTO: CHIA MOAN

are people whose ancestors have been on this land for 40,000 years.

The Land is Alive

They are part of the land, and for them the land is alive with ancestral beings, healers and spirits. The ancient magic of the red centre of Australia is nearly palpable. And to have the privilege of living with aboriginal people who are part of a long line of learning is an experience which profoundly altered my sense of reality, of time and of faith.

Nganyinyta is a woman of faith and a visionary. In her 60s, she is passionate about opening up channels of communication between blacks and whites. "Let your mind and spirit be as open as the land", she says. A storyteller extraordinaire, even through an interpreter, she has the ability to draw you in and wrap you up in fantastic stories of the Dreamtime. Many times, if we had had chairs, we would have been on the edge of them.

Fluent in the traditional ways of her people and also knowledgeable

about the ways of the white world, Nganyinytja was educated at the mission at Ernabella under the tutelage of a Presbyterian missionary who felt that the traditional ways and language of the Pitjantjatjara people were good and encouraged their continuation. This is an unusual heritage in a country where the indigenous people only received citizenship in 1963, where it was commonplace, until recently, for black mothers to have their babies taken away

*These
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on this land for
40,000 years.*

from them and handed over to white families in the "best interests" of the children, where their rights and lands have been historically violated at virtually every turn.

A Woman of Vision

Nganyinytja is a Christian, in the best sense of the word. In her desire for harmony and progress for her people, she has worked hard to set up the "bush college" of the Angatja people (her family). It is a vision which has become a reality.

One day, we were sitting high on a hillside, at the mouth of a cave, a sacred site, and Nganyinytja was telling us the dreamtime story of Wati Ngintaka, a giant lizard man whose travels through the country shaped its mountains and patterned its rocks, whose vomiting left generous deposits of the grass seeds most useful in making bread and other bush delights. After this story, which is long and intriguing, I ask her how it fits in with the Christian theories of creation. She looks at me slightly quizzically and

after awhile says, "Yes, that is another story. Our European obsession with duality is simply not an issue."

At various times over this period I have had to adjust my headset. One night the camp dogs were whining and barking, all night and keeping me awake and cranky. I thought, how do they stand it? Nobody is shouting at them. Then I recall that they see dogs as keeping the evil spirits away. My next thought is, well there are obviously evil spirits around and the dogs are doing their job. Thanks dogs, and off to sleep.

No Alcohol

The Angatja homeland is dry, in that it is a desert and also in that the people who live here do not permit alcohol onto their land. This is truly a wonderful thing. I am a keen traveller and have camped all over the world, and everywhere there are drunks and everywhere I have been afraid of them. But here there are no drunks. It is an issue which concerns adventurous women and which is so everpresent in daily life that it is not immediately apparent what the absence of it means. Safety in a riverbed. We live with the people, an open yet mutually respectful life - each group with its campsite and fire, sleeping out under the stars.

On approaching another camp one stops respectfully at an imaginary door and waits to be invited to speak. It is very pleasant. We are guided and somewhat cosseted in these matters of protocol by Diana James, our interpreter and guide, who has worked with the Angatja people since 1975 and been an integral part of establishing the bush college. White people can only enter these lands by special permit and as part of an organised learning group.

Women's Business

We spent seven days at the bush college on this trip, which was the first composed solely of women. It is an arrangement which proved particularly harmonious to the Angatja people as much of their work, knowledge and culture is defined as "women's business" or "men's business". I wanted to take a group of women up to the bush college in order to explore the opportunities which would be afforded us - as a women's group we were privy to special knowledge, dances, songs and ceremonies which would not be shared in a mixed-sex group.

There are at least seven different Pitjantjatjara words to indicate a wise, older woman - all terms of respect.

As the majority of anthropologists have been male and have brought to their work their own assumptions of male supremacy, "women's business" has often been dismissed as unimportant. In any case, information about these issues would not be shared with males and some of it would only be shared with particular women.

That women are the bearers of special powers, have a high degree of autonomy and hold a strong position in the traditional community has only recently begun to be acknowledged in white society. There are at least seven different Pitjantjatjara words to indicate a wise, older woman - all terms of respect. (How many are there in English?)

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We were instructed by several older women during our stay, including Tjulkiwa, a charming woman with a quick grin, a sharp eye for hunting and gathering and a vast knowledge of the song cycles. Song cycles are the way the history and stories of the Dreaming are passed on and certain people become guardians of a special knowledge, just as certain people become caretakers of a specified sacred site.

In the dry riverbed where our camp was we were joined by about forty members of the community. Although there are houses at Angatja it is common for everyone to move down to the riverbed for any sort of occasion. It is clear that this is where they are most comfortable.

Inma Happening

The songs and dance of the Dreaming happen because one or more of the people who know them decide to do it. You might be sitting around a campfire at night and some of the singers and dancers will start shouting that something is going to happen.

They disappear behind the bushes to get painted up. Everyone else assembles for the show. These ceremonies are called "inma" and while they are happening people sit with their backs to the fire to watch. Some of the stories are funny and irreverent, even bawdy, and will have the whole camp in fits of giggling while the musicians keep their rhythm sticks going.

Losing Whitefella Time

Our days are spent in gathering bush tucker, making artifacts, listening to stories and learning some dancing and Pitjantjatjara words. It is very full. One of the first things we learn is about time. It's not that anyone actually teaches us a different concept - it just happens. Things happen spontaneously, with only a few moments notice of what our next project will be. If you have to wait for something or someone, you wait. And if the bush tomatoes are ripe, then that is the time to go and pick them. If Tjulkiwa spots the tracks of a pirntic (a large, edible lizard), then that is the time to give chase. If there is a funeral everyone goes. Life just happens in response to life.

After awhile one gets a strong feeling of life going on and of being part of the story - everyone becomes a part of the ongoing story. The culture is alive and changing. □

Taken for a Ride

Women and Legal Drugs

by Megan Fidler



"That health is more than the normal functioning of the human body is a concept older than modern medicine. *Nga tupuna a Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa* (ancestors of the Pacific) may have said "*He hinengaro ora, he tinana ora*", while the ancient Romans of the Mediterranean might have quoted "*mens sana in corpore sano*". Both ancestral groups would have been saying "A healthy mind in a healthy body" indicating an awareness of the interaction between the physical and mental in determining total well-being."

From "Rapuora: Health and Maori Women"

Women's drug and alcohol use and abuse is a health issue, a social and political issue, and for many, a personal problem. Information and research into the use of drugs and alcohol specifically by women in New Zealand is stunning by its absence. Empirical investigation into illegal drugs is also virtually non-existent. In their 1988 publication, Arif and Westermeyer estimate rates for the number of people in New Zealand using opium, heroin and cocaine as less than 1:10,000. Rates for users of barbiturates, tranquillisers, other sedatives, and amphetamines, were also given as less than 1:10,000 of the population. Marijuana/cannabis use was given as between 1:1,000 and 1:10,000 of the population. Research into both legal and illegal drugs is presently in progress at Auckland Medical School.

In this article I will look at "legal" drugs - alcohol, cigarette smoking and tranquillisers and the effects of these drugs on New Zealand women.

Alcohol

Alcohol was unknown to the pre-European Maori. The tangata whenua distrusted the waipiro, or rotten water. Some Bay of Islands chiefs tried to prevent alcohol being landed at their ports. A proposal was put to Governor Grey, to give Maori communities separate control over alcohol laws with respect to their own people. He rejected it and instead in 1847 brought in a social



Women receive twice as many prescriptions for tranquillisers than men ... doctors are more ready to prescribe tranquillisers to a woman than a man.

prohibition on the sale of liquor to Maori people. Prohibition gave rise to "sly grogging", and many Pakeha, including Government agents, used alcohol to manipulate land sales.

In the early years of New Zealand colonial settlement, whalers, traders, escaped convicts and the like were hard-drinking, hard-living men. A reputation as a tough, male-dominated society was gained in these years, and, reinforced during the gold rushes of the South, the reputation stuck. Public drunkenness was a visible and major problem.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) formed in 1885, supported prohibition. The WCTU was the only national organisation for women and there were few women in public life then who did not belong to it. WCTU women were drawn from the urban middle class and responded

eagerly to the message brought to them by Mrs Leavitt from the world WCTU that alcohol was the natural enemy of the home, the domain of women (Bunkle, 1980). According to Jock Phillips, in his book, *A Man's Country?*, "for 50 years from the first establishment of temperance societies in the 1870's, the campaign against alcoholic drink represented the most powerful and sustained public movement that has ever occurred in New Zealand. The drink question came to dominate politics from the 1890's" (p55)

Historically men have drunk more than women. They have begun drinking sooner and drinking has played an important part in their social bonding. In the past, women often faced difficulties obtaining drink. Drunkenness amongst women was regarded with disgust, undermining their special place in society as upholders of social and moral standards.

These restraints against women drinking and the negative social values still operate today. As a consequence of these attitudes, women have been discouraged from seeking help when they have a problem with alcohol. According to Lindsay Barron, in her paper, *Women and Alcoholism: Its Etiology and Treatment* women have also tended to be shielded longer than men by their families, police, employers and so on. An alcoholic woman may not be able to talk about her alcohol problem with her doctor and may be prescribed tranquillisers for depression or other difficulties. As a result, polyaddiction is a common problem for women alcoholics. Women have also tended to be "protected" by the law, a problem which is likely to be further compounded by her social status. She is "less likely to be picked up, jailed, charged or convicted if she has bargaining power in the form of class, money and reputation - the greater the socioeconomic class, the greater society's will to protect itself from her." (Fraser, 1978,p3)

Women are now drinking more than in the past. Research in North America and the United Kingdom suggests that higher socio-economic status women are becoming more likely to drink and to drink more, and that within this broad category employed mothers intensify the trend. Johnson (1977) found that married women who are employed have significantly higher rates of both problem and heavier drinking than either



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single working women or women working solely in the home.

A succinct summary of at least some of the reasons women are drinking, is offered by Helen Warren, Chris Griffiths and Ingrid Hugyens, in their book *Our Shout: Women and Alcohol*. They say "In the 1980s and 1990s economic and social forces encourage us to drink. Alcohol is easily available. None of us would drink if alcohol were not produced by our society and made available to us. We are taught to use it by our families, or at least permitted to do so by the laws of the land, even if our own family or culture has discouraged or forbidden its use. Advertising in newspapers, magazines, billboards and in the cinema reaches all of us, promoting the latest model of alcohol use - that alcohol is for everyone and every occasion, and that it is somehow responsible for fun, success, sex, power and status. We see happy, fulfilled women drinking alcohol to celebrate their life-styles. They never look drunk or abused. Finally, television and films show us women using alcohol to ease the kind of tension and stress we can easily see in our own lives. Like most social animals we copy the people we identify with." (p66)

Environmental and social factors and their impact on alcoholism must be recognised. The traditional roles of women (or some women anyway - predominantly white, educated, middle class women in western societies) have undergone tremendous change in the past thirty years. Although positive changes in and control over their lives has been initiated by many women, these changes have also caused much confusion and stress. Many women have taken on more, whereas men, especially in terms of homemaking, have not increased their responsibilities proportionately. Consider for example the stress a woman faces when she holds down a career while maintaining a home and family. In New Zealand one third of women heavy drinkers have (or have had) jobs as teachers, nurses, scientists, lawyers, journalists. (Casswell, 1980)

Practically all women at alcohol treatment centres present with depressive symptoms. Underlying that is often with alcohol abuse, and almost always with drug abuse, a history of sexual abuse. New Zealand statistics show that 90% of drug abusers and 50% of women with alcohol problems have been



JOH THOMAS AND VERITY THOM OF ADDS PHOTO: GIL HANLY

sexually abused. Since a large percentage of women have a polyabuse problem, it is reasonable to assume that a very high proportion of substance abusers have been sexually abused. (Submission by Women's Working Party on Drug Use to Standing Committee of Women's health, 1985).

Although alcohol and drug abuse affects both men and women, workers in the field believe there are issues particular to women. Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service (ADDs), of Presbyterian Support, runs a Women's Residential Programme. According to Joh Thomas, co-ordinator of the programme, "the underlying principle of the women's programme is that there are some particular issues for women in recovery. They are learning how to live as women and learning what it means to be a woman ... self esteem issues are really apparent."

Lesbian women have specific needs. ADDs usually runs a lesbian programme which is being reviewed presently but

In advertising ... we see happy, fulfilled women using alcohol to celebrate their lifestyles. They never look drunk or abused.



will definitely continue, although it may take a different form. In the past, Edna ADDs had been involved in running groups for lesbian women, and has trained group leaders. They helped set up and fund LADA (Lesbian Alcohol and Drug Action). Although there are severe cuts being made to health services, Verity Thom, senior counsellor, says "Despite all the cuts the lesbian programme is going to have more money." Of the lesbian programme she says, "We think it's time to stop and look at what we're doing. When we first started there was a huge need and nothing was happening. Now we think it's time to review it."

Maori women in our society also have particular needs around substance abuse. Joh Thomas believes, "the traditional way which the mental health field works is in terms of deinstitutionalisation, but for Maori women this is effectively reinstitutionalisation." She believes "the best thing for Maori is the Taha Maori programme at Queen Mary hospital. It's kaupapa Maori. Addiction keeps you away from yourself, alienates you from yourself, Maori are alienated and so the programme is one way of breaking through that alienation."

Monica Stockdale began the Taha Maori programme, Te Aroha hau angī angī, at Hamner Springs three years ago. About 50% of the people who use the Taha Maori programme are women, and the average age of the women is 25 - 30 years. Monica believes there are issues specific to Maori women around abuse. "The same things happen for Pakeha

women as for Maori, but with Maori, violence and sexual abuse is more prevalent, more women who come into the Maori programme have been in prison, and fewer have jobs."

Cigarette Smoking

Lung cancer bought on by smoking kills Maori women at a higher rate than any other ethnic group in the world. Statistics show that Maori women are dying of heart disease, much of it related to smoking, at four times the rate of non-Maori, and of respiratory diseases, up to five times the rate of non-Maori women. Fifty young New Zealanders start smoking every day and smoking causes 4,000 deaths per year. According to Dr Paparaingi Reid, Maori Health researcher, "smoking has become almost a cultural norm among Maori women."

Although awareness of the damage of cigarette smoking is becoming widespread amongst New Zealand society generally, up to 75% of Maori women between 15 and 25 years still smoke cigarettes. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, from the Australia Anti-Smoking Campaign, explains, "when a new trend like quitting (smoking) and having a

If you think you may have an abuse problem, and want help, contact one of these groups:

- **Alcohol and Drug Dependency Service, 408 Mt Eden Road, Mt Eden, Auckland, Phone (09) 686 111**
- **Queen Mary Hospital, Private Bag, Hamner Springs, North Canterbury, Phone (03) 315 7016**
- **TRANX, PO Box 44051, Pt Chevalier, Auckland, Phone (09) 874 336**

new lifestyle starts, people who have power in a community, which is basically the white males in New Zealand, take up that trend and then it moves on down through the men and then through the women, and finally to the poorer women."

In its submission to the select committee on the Smoke Free Environments Act (passed under the previous government and at present being reviewed by the National government), the Maori Heartbeat group said, "Tobacco is the number one health problem in Maoridom today and will continue to be in the foreseeable future unless steps are taken."

Lung cancer rates tripled among New Zealand women between 1980 and 1984 and according to Deidre Kent from ASH (Action on Smoking and Health), will become the leading cause of cancer deaths in new Zealand women by early next century. 36% of young women of all ethnic groups, aged between 15 and 24 years, smoke.

As with alcohol, women have been targeted by the tobacco companies. Candace Bagnall from WAT (Women Against Tobacco) writes in *Broadsheet* (Oct 1990 no 182) "smoking advertisements seem to epitomise the very worst aspects of sexist advertising, with their emphasis on being slim, glamorous, "getting your man", and being one of the beautiful (heterosexual) people. Adolescent females are vulnerable to the promises made by these advertisements which are commonly placed in magazines popular with young women." Last year a company report on how to target blue-collar women said, "develop advertisements showing a woman who is independent, her own person, someone with a fun-loving, rebellious nature. A

female version of the Marlborough cowboy." The "insidious nature of tobacco advertising and sports sponsorship", as Helen Clark, former Labour Minister of Health, describes it, is clearly displayed by a secret marketing plan for another tobacco company wanting to keep people hooked, which suggested, "provide people with a rationale for their behaviour and a means of repressing their health concerns. Lead them to believe that cigarette smoking provides the smoker with a means of social acceptance."

As well as causing cancer and heart disease, smoking exposes women to a whole range of health risks which aren't problems for men. Smoking is a risk factor for cervical cancer. Women who smoke and take the contraceptive pill are more likely to have heart disease and strokes. Smokers are more likely to have complications during pregnancy and childbirth, and smoking mothers are twice as likely as non-smoking mothers to have a baby die of cot death. Women who smoke have earlier menopause than non-smoking women.

Tranquillisers

Tranquillisers, sedatives and barbituates are other "legal drugs". Some people take minor tranquillisers at some time during their lives to relieve insomnia or anxiety, muscle pain, stress or nerves. These pills can be useful when used for short periods, but when used for 6 - 8 weeks or longer, there is a danger of becoming dependent on the pills. Although there are no statistics available in New Zealand, showing a gender breakdown on "trank" use, workers in the field claim most people addicted to tranquillisers are women. According to Hazel McIsaac, senior consultant for TRANX, a group set up in 1986 to work

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with people in recovery from tranquilliser addiction, 95% of the people who contact them are women, ranging in age from 10 to 84 years. Although some addicts do fit the stereotype of the woman addict who was prescribed tranquillisers to deal with "suburban neuroses" of the 1950's, more do not. Hazel says, "I'm getting women in their twenties and thirties. Some have been teenagers and younger when they have been put on these things."

Women receive twice as many prescriptions for tranquillisers as men. Men are brought up not to admit to feeling weak and vulnerable and in need of help. This makes them less likely to admit that there is anything wrong, or to go to a doctor - or to anyone else - for help. Women are more likely to go to the doctor and Hazel believes that doctors are more ready to prescribe a tranquilliser to a woman than a man. She says, "a man is more likely to be sent for an x-ray or a blood test."

No one knows how many people are dependent on minor tranquillisers. It seems likely that only a proportion of the people who use these drugs for more than a few months become addicted. But

research to show what proportion has never been done. Research in progress in England has made a conservative estimate that there may be a 100,000 tranquilliser addicts in England. Translating proportionally to the New Zealand population, that would suggest 10,000 people in this country are addicted to tranquillisers. The Macky Report (December 1990) commissioned by The Auckland Drug and Alcohol Team (ADAPT) showed that there has been a decline in the number of barbiturates prescribed between 1978 and 1987, and a decline in the number of major tranquillisers prescribed from 1981. Non-barbiturate hypnotic prescriptions have increased.

Apart from their own drug use, women are often personally affected by the drug ab/use of someone close to them. The ab/use by their partners, friends and children may mean that the life of a woman is severely disrupted. This is not always recognised, and economic support is often not forthcoming. Verity Thom says, "because of the financial situation, because of the cuts, the focus has come more and more onto the abuser ... there is less and less

funding, concern and focus going on partners, children and adult children. I feel very concerned because those two groups have a huge amount of women in them. What's happening is that the funding is drying up so we've just got to keep the bottom of the cliff services. That concerns a lot of women. It's difficult when funds are being cut back and we're being told we have to provide a core service, which is work with the abuser and some of the preventative work with the children."

Some drugs are legal, some drugs are condoned and encouraged in our society, some drugs have their place and can be useful and pleasurable for people at certain times and in particular situations. Drug ab/use is inextricably connected to the position and status of women in our society and their access to their emotional, psychological, physical safety and independence. Women of different ethnic, class and social backgrounds will be positioned differently in relation to a variety of drugs. It is crucial that researchers and workers in the field of drug recovery, acknowledge and incorporate this into their work. □

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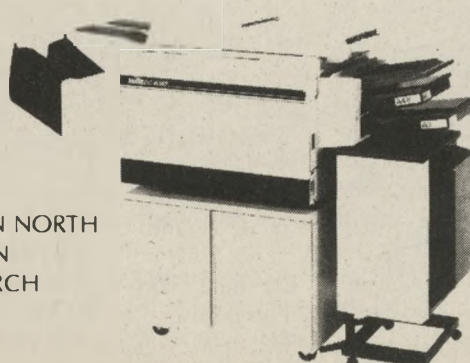
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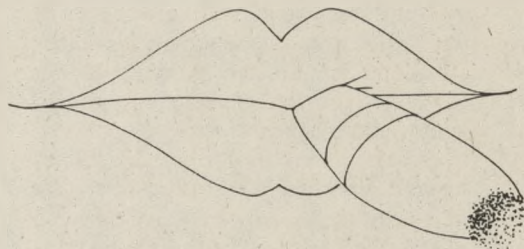
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Managing Women



Bev Gatenby and Maria Humphries of the Department of Management at Waikato University took the opportunity, while researching managerial learning in New Zealand, to ask some questions about the role of women in management. They report on their findings.

We sought written responses and interviewed 96 managers from a broad range of both public and private sector organisations. Of those 96, 87 were men and nine were women. Their ages ranged from 24 to 59, with a mean age of 42 and they had been in managerial positions for an average of 2.7 years.

Five questions about women in management were asked. Each is stated below, followed by a summary of the responses. Some of these responses explain the comparative lack of progress of women in attempting to reach managerial levels. Others show a willingness to recognise the value, and indeed the necessity, given the changing nature of the population, of recognising and developing the managerial skills of women. Whatever the case, the responses are important because they are from managers who will be making decisions about whether or not to hire, train, promote or fire women.

Are there many female managers in your organisation? If not, why do you think this is so?

Forty-nine managers said that there were either none or not many women managers in their organisation. Some gave actual numbers. Fifteen said there were many and then gave actual figures, such as 7:23, 4:114, 2:10 at executive level and 9:31 at branch level. Of course the answers depended on the respondent's definition of "many". If respondents do not believe women should be managers any women in management would seem a lot. Where figures were given it was clear that women managers are very much a minority and

tend to be at middle-management rather than executive level.

Various explanations were given for the low numbers. A major theme in these explanations is the suitability of women for the type of industry of the company. Some managers spoke of engineering as an area in which there are few women, and hence not many managers. Certainly in 1989 only 48 of the 563 graduates in engineering throughout New Zealand were women. As long as the career path to management in some companies is via technical expertise then the numbers of women may remain low for some years, perhaps until more girls are encouraged to take engineering-related subjects at school and tertiary level. However, a career path to general management positions may not always be via engineering so other factors may be operating to hinder women.

Several managers from organisations in the dairy industry said that the industry had few women involved generally. Some blamed this on farmers, whether they be customers or shareholders. Farmers apparently would not want women running the company. This is an interesting approach given the number and strength of women who consider themselves farmers, and that the managers are unlikely to have asked for the views of farmers. Perhaps it is a case of "passing the buck" on an issue some managers find uncomfortable and threatening.

Not all respondents in this industry blamed the farmers for the low representation of women in the management of the industry. One, in a dairy-related organisation, perceived it to be "all men [who are] chauvinist ... conservative, traditional, male, older managers". Others spoke of "institutionalised sexism" and the "stereotyping of an industry", particularly

where trades or technical people are involved. The belief that women (or "ladies" or "girls" as some put it) aren't interested in these industries has been challenged many times, yet the managers surveyed did not seem to be aware of this challenge.

Four said that women aren't qualified to be managers, although they didn't elaborate on the qualifications they think are needed. Yet the larger survey had found generally that managers learn to manage "on the job", so denying women access to learn on the job may mean that it will be difficult to ever view them as qualified. In terms of university qualification there are many women graduates in commerce. The response led us to think that no matter what kinds of qualifications women have, they will never be the right ones because the ground keeps shifting.

Other explanations for the low numbers of women in management were linked to characteristics attributed to women in general. One manager said that women get married and so don't become managers. Getting married has never seemed to prevent men from becoming managers. Indeed, a survey in the USA revealed that executive level men were far more likely to be married than executive level women. What this suggests is that the roles of "wife and mother" and "manager" are mutually exclusive, while the roles of "husband and father" and "manager" go together rather well. We suspect that few managers would be prepared to come out and say that wives and mothers can't be managers nowadays, although at least one manager in the survey was happy to: "My bias is going to show but I think women should be mothers". Others also said that women get pregnant, implying they can't therefore be managers. Others said that women didn't get to be managers because they are less mobile than men, due to their husband's careers. There is obviously still some belief that a woman's occupation, paid or unpaid, is subordinate to her (male) partner's career.

For some women an unpaid role in the home may be a positive choice, for others it may not be appropriate at all. For managers to assume that women in general should have only one option is extremely limiting to women, just as assuming men must climb "the ladder of success" is limiting to men. One manager said that women don't want promotion. Some women may not, but we are sure that some women do want promotion. Perhaps a more in-depth analysis of the situation was given by the manager who said that for women, the "lack of opportunity to progress leads to lack of motivation".

Will there be more female managers in this organisation in the future?

Forty managers said there would be more women managers in the future, seven thought there would not be and the rest were unsure. Many of the themes which arose were similar to the response to the first question.

Several respondents wrote, again, of the unlikelihood of women becoming managers in some industries because of the scarcity of women entering science-related fields and the "macho image" of those industries. Some extended such comments to note that more women are entering areas such as

accounting, sales and personnel, and that women are likely to succeed in what are viewed as "support roles" rather than "practical roles", even though women have "the same technical and mental skills (as men)".

There does appear to be an increase in numbers of women entering personnel. Personnel management is perhaps a more comfortable area for women to enter and for men to relate to women in, because it fits more closely the stereotype of women as nurturers, carers and interested in other people generally. It will be interesting to see whether personnel management experience provides a route to general or executive-level management as it had in the past, or whether women entering personnel will go no higher than middle-management.

British research illustrates an unfortunate trend in personnel careers. In 1913 the British Institute of Personnel management consisted of 29 women and five men. In 1927 there were 400 women and 20 men belonging to the Institute. By 1972, women were just 19% of the workforce and all in junior positions. The same researcher found that in a sample of 90 personnel directors, there were no women.

Accounting, as a career, is a more recent area of entry for women, at least when it is called accounting rather than book-keeping. More women are also entering sales. Again, it will be interesting to see the career paths which

accounting and sales may provide for women.

One respondent wrote that he couldn't answer the question as he believed it was entirely up to women themselves whether or not there will be more women in management in the future. This response fails to recognise the role that organisations and their current managers play in deciding who are selected as managers. Other respondents saw existing managers as providing a barrier to women because "men won't allow" or "tradition won't allow" women to become managers. One wrote that it was unlikely there would ever be a woman in his position because even though 85% of female cadets did "exceedingly well" many of them didn't like the 12 hour shift work required. We wonder about the ability of the organisation to adapt to its staff, and the apparent need for the experience of 12 hour shifts to become a manager.

Undoubtedly, for many organisations, flexible work conditions would benefit both men and women, particularly those with family responsibilities. Some managers mentioned the issue of combining work and family commitments, which affects women's opportunities in management: "A lot are quite keen to have a family and seem to realise they have enough on their plate at home"; "Children can cause problems with time off etc"; "Pressures of family".

The above comments assume that women take primary responsibility for family care and will continue to do so. In June 1990, 94.8% of people at home caring for children were women. Whether or not women wish it to be this way may be a different matter. The comments did not recognise that work in the home and community may provide valuable management skills.

The percentage of women in full-time paid work has increased from 35.9% in 1966 to 62.7% in 1986, and these

*There is still
some belief that a
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paid or unpaid, is
subordinate to her
(male) partner's
career.*





figures do not include part-time workers or those seeking employment. One of the largest increases has been in the number of married women in paid work. It may be that until fathers take an equal role in day-to-day family care, or communities provide more child care facilities, women who wish to remain in paid work and have children will continue to feel the "pressures of family". Organisations will thus be drawing from a reduced pool of talented people.

Despite these opinions, other respondents noted that the trend of women leaving paid employment to be mothers may be changing. In their experience, women are "less likely to leave for family reasons" and the "modern generation of women will be applying for jobs" and "planning careers". There is a "trend", an "acceptance" of women as managers, although the "change will be gradual". It is a real concern though that women end up being expected to be "superwomen", who take on the major responsibilities of both family and management. The relative lack of provision of alternative childcare and the role fathers play in families at present continue to affect the opportunities women have and the quality of women's paid work and home lives.

Some respondents said that they very much hoped there would be more women managers in the future. They believe that the "younger, male managers (are) more open" and that current women managers provide good role models for others. Some spoke positively of the valuable skills with people, and as decision-makers, that women bring to an organisation. As one respondent wrote, "women [have] already proven they can do the jobs". Others noted that equal employment opportunity programmes would lead to more women reaching management.

What obstacles do you think female managers would have to confront in this organisation?

Twenty-eight managers thought that female managers faced

no obstacles in their organisation. Common themes which recurred again in the responses of those who thought that there are obstacles included family commitments, lack of mobility, child-rearing leave and lack of acceptance in some industries.

Some respondents elaborated further on what they saw as male chauvinism, bias or stereotyped views of men's and women's roles. They cited evidence of senior managers who believed that "wives should be at home" and so were reluctant to promote women. Several respondents suggested that male managers are scared of women managers or feel threatened by them, or are afraid that they will do just as good a job as the men.

Two comments related to the status symbol and employment perk — the company car — came up. One respondent noted that a service bay was provided for cars but there was no creche. Another noted that female managers in equivalent positions to male managers didn't receive a company car because their children might dirty it. One manager said outright that if two people applying for a job were equal he would appoint a man every time. Another suggested that women would not be able to handle some work: "Area managers resolve big problems, eg plant overhaul — big, hard, dirty work." Other respondents cited lack of encouragement, few role models and sexual harassment of women to be major hurdles.

If the attitudes described above are widespread then many women aren't being encouraged to see themselves as managers, and those who do aspire to management will face all kinds of hurdles embedded in company policies as well as the attitudes of individuals who believe that women should be at home and are unlikely to be good managers. These attitudes explain why several respondents thought that women are "judged more harshly", have to keep "proving themselves" and "have to be 120% of male counterparts."

Female managers in equivalent positions to male managers didn't receive a company car because their children might dirty it.

Have you ever worked with a female manager? What were your experiences in this respect?

Forty-three of the managers had never worked with a female manager, while thirty-three had done so. Of those who had, many commented that they had never been subordinate to a female manager. Of those who had never worked with a female manager, many said that they would like to do so.

Of the 33 who had worked with a female manager, 20 made very positive comments about their experiences: adjectives such as professional, capable, hard-working, strong, disciplined, open, technically competent and excellent were used. Comments reflecting the stereotypical perception of women as caring and nurturing were also common, and several managers reported that they found women managers to be more supportive of other people.

Further evidence of our stereotypes of what women and men are like was shown in some of the less positive comments. One respondent wrote of a female colleague: "Don't remember resenting her. She was pretty stern. Like

Maggie Thatcher. Perhaps it was an accident of nature she was born a woman, may have been meant to be a man." Another respondent described a colleague as a "spinster type", while another described his "relationship like a school teacher" with a female manager. Our stereotypes of women influence the way we perceive and communicate with individual women. Although many respondents commented that women they have worked with were individuals and of course treated as such, it may be important that managers also acknowledge their stereotypes of the appropriate roles for women.

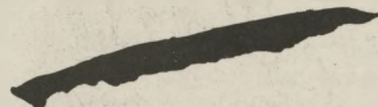
Do you feel that male and female managers differ in any way?

Of the managers who answered this question, 41 believed that male and female managers differ, 20 believed that they do not differ and 12 weren't sure. Thirty-one of the respondents who commented on differences they perceived had never actually worked with a female manager.

The managers who believed that there were no significant differences almost all commented that each manager is an individual and that there are no intrinsic differences between men and women. Other managers, however, commented in ways which suggest that they believe biological differences mean that men and women will manage differently. One person wrote: "A woman by nature of being a woman is more understanding and more receptive to listening to problems — private/personal problems which women can do better than a man — the maternal instinct." Another combined perceived biological and emotional differences: "Physicality — emotional makeup — approaches — are different". Yet another commented that he perceived that hormonal changes in women through their lives could affect their ways of managing.

There is a great deal of controversy surrounding the notion that biological differences between men and women mean that they will inevitably work differently. Despite the stringent

Until fathers take an equal role in day to day family care, or communities provide more child care facilities, women who wish to remain in paid work will feel the "pressure of family".



critique of these theories, some consultants employ them to explain or "train" people into gender consciousness.

Some managers commented that women learn many skills as mothers which are useful in the workplace. An extension of this comment came from a respondent who perceived that: "Both men and women are more considerate and more likely to carry out personnel functions with understanding and support. Parenthood increases interpersonal skills."

Many of the respondents who commented positively on the managerial skills of women wrote particularly about interpersonal skills. As in question 4, they suggested that women were caring, better communicators, good with people, good with customers, good with staff, more approachable, and more co-operative. There were just as many comments, however, which suggested that women managers are professional, rational, capable, decisive, good at taking a broad perspective, lateral thinkers, intuitive, good at detailed

DALE SPENDER

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work, dynamic, efficient, precise, well-prepared for meetings and technically competent. If women are more co-operative and less dictatorial than men, while being professional, capable and competent, then women managers should be prepared for promotion to the most senior management ranks, particularly since co-operative models of management are today considered more effective than the older, paramilitary models.

Two particular characteristics of female managers which received varied comments were the attributes of assertiveness and aggressiveness. One respondent described assertiveness as being used for "systematic discrimination": "assertive men, okay; assertive women not okay".

One manager perceived women managers as lacking because they are not aggressive enough, avoid confrontation and are less competitive. For another respondent, who perceived women as being less aggressive, this was a valuable attribute. However, yet another respondent perceived women to be more aggressive. When respondents were describing relative aggressiveness, they almost always stated it as "more aggressive" or "less aggressive". Than whom? We presume the standard of comparison is male managers, though we might question why they should be the standard. Often there was an underlying assumption that aggressiveness and masculinity were inseparable. One respondent made this explicit when he wrote: "men can give women a hard time and women managers can become very masculine as a result."

Although there were some respondents who were very positive about their experience of women managers, a number made comments which were of concern to us, such as the ones which suggested that women needed to learn how to be "tough" because men in the workplace give women "a hard time". Women were also described as needing to "lighten up a little bit" and "defensive" because they have to work extra hard to prove themselves.

Even more disturbing are comments such as: "If I can choose from equivalent males and females, I choose the male every time — even though the female is worth 120% equivalent of the male." For this manager a woman who has better skills, experience and qualifications will not get a job with him, let alone promotion or career opportunities. This manager is consciously limiting the effectiveness of his workforce by recruiting from a small pool of applicants and discriminating against women.

Some concluding remarks

While we are hesitant to make generalisations from this small sample of managers, we believe that because they had already spent up to an hour discussing their careers with the interviewer their responses were candid. The questions regarding women in management were included in this project as an exploratory opportunity. We were very surprised by the outcome. It appears that many attitudes have not changed as much as we would like to think they have. □

AVAILABLE JULY

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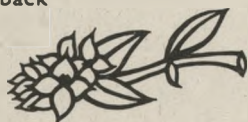
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"Ladies a Plate" - Change & Continuity. This study of the lives of NZ women, newly published by Auckland University Press, is based on detailed research with 2,000 women between 1985-1988. Co-author **Julie Park** will look at: socialisation, identity, relationships, women & food, women & alcohol, and gender boundaries.

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Sometimes *It's* *Hot*

Sometimes it's hot. The sun bites into the skin. But around the back of the neck and ankles the cool wind can be felt. Or heard. Dry leaves skid and scratch across the wooden deck, driven by this April breeze. Not the mass of autumn leaves that lie in dead piles, heavy with moisture, solid. Just the few that have dropped, earlier than the rest, responding to dry weather and colder mornings. Mostly though, the trees still look well covered, almost in their prime, but we all know it's just a matter of time and they become ragged, tattered, bare. Like bones.

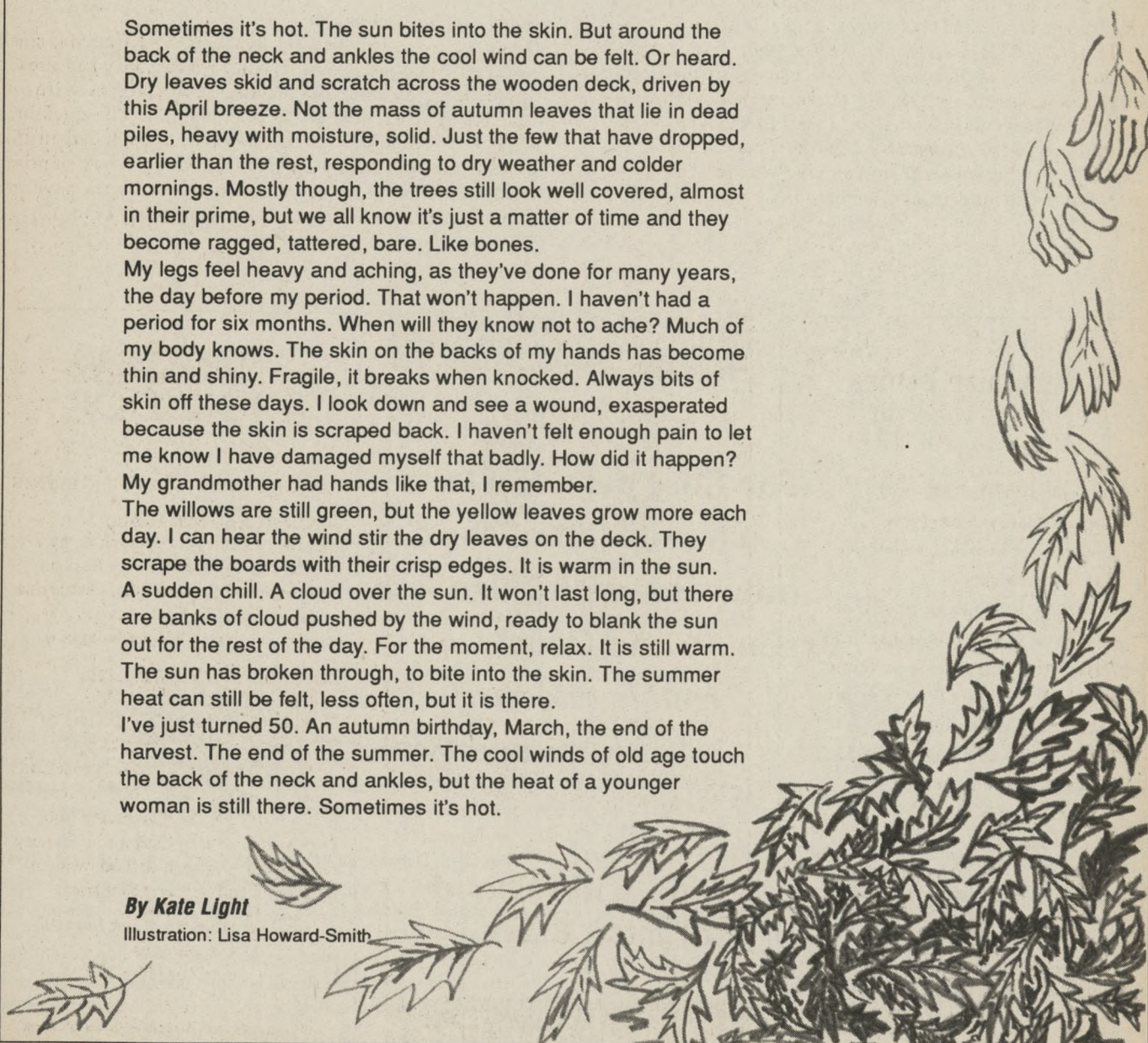
My legs feel heavy and aching, as they've done for many years, the day before my period. That won't happen. I haven't had a period for six months. When will they know not to ache? Much of my body knows. The skin on the backs of my hands has become thin and shiny. Fragile, it breaks when knocked. Always bits of skin off these days. I look down and see a wound, exasperated because the skin is scraped back. I haven't felt enough pain to let me know I have damaged myself that badly. How did it happen? My grandmother had hands like that, I remember.

The willows are still green, but the yellow leaves grow more each day. I can hear the wind stir the dry leaves on the deck. They scrape the boards with their crisp edges. It is warm in the sun. A sudden chill. A cloud over the sun. It won't last long, but there are banks of cloud pushed by the wind, ready to blank the sun out for the rest of the day. For the moment, relax. It is still warm. The sun has broken through, to bite into the skin. The summer heat can still be felt, less often, but it is there.

I've just turned 50. An autumn birthday, March, the end of the harvest. The end of the summer. The cool winds of old age touch the back of the neck and ankles, but the heat of a younger woman is still there. Sometimes it's hot.

By Kate Light

Illustration: Lisa Howard-Smith



DWORKIN ON DWORKIN

The final part of a three-part reprint of the full interview with Elizabeth Braeman and Carol Cox in *Trouble and Strife 19,*

Summer 1990.

Carol Cox: You consistently deal with issues of race and class in your work on violence against women. How does this affect the strategies that could be put forth to combat violence against women which we might adopt as a movement?

Andrea Dworkin: It's a really big question. The first thing is that simply acting on pornography and prostitution as urgent political issues includes women in the women's movement who have been excluded until now. All of the pejorative characterisations of the movement as a middle-class movement were in many ways not true, the women's movement always called on and involved women from all sectors of society. But, I would say that a lot of the women

who have been involved in the women's movement are on a quest for respectability. They want to be acknowledged as decent whole human beings. This is right and fair but there are enormous numbers of women who are living in what amounts to, slavery is not the right word, it's not slavery, it's a barely acknowledged kind of marginality. They too are human beings and they are being used, day in and day out, by men in ways that other women have some kind of protection from. The women's movement has never had anything to do with those women until we began to address pornography, which led to addressing prostitution in a real way, not in the liberal way of "let's everybody have a good time and some of us want to be prostitutes."

In that sense, just dealing with the issue has changed the politics of the women's movement and I think a lot of what people call the split in the women's movement is basically a class split. I have seen it that way for years that the women who have used the women's movement to achieve some kind of respectability (which is not to say that they were necessarily born middle class but they became middle class because feminism conferred on them certain professional options that weren't there for them before) want to maintain that respectability above all else. You can not maintain respectability and deal with the status of women in pornography and prostitution at the same time. It's as if women are saying, we don't want the stink on us, we just don't, we don't want to smell that way.

In addition, the reason that the Minneapolis civil rights law got passed and the reason that it was the kind of political event that it was, which nobody has ever written about correctly, is because it dealt with the reality of the impact of pornography on poor people and people of colour in cities, which is to say the zoning laws. The fact that politicians put the pornography where people of colour live. That is true in every city across the country. The ethnic or racial group may change, city to city. Minneapolis is extraordinary, it is 96% white and virtually all the pornography is dumped on four percent of the people, who are primarily American Indian, which is their term of preference they don't like to be called native Americans and Black people. In Boston it's Asians and in Washington it's Blacks. You go across the country and that is the pattern you see. We built, for the first time, a real coalition among all those people, people who were poor, people who had this happening to them and the very real violence around them increasing because of it and the economic deprivation becoming worse because of it. They all came to deal with pornography and to deal with every issue of power around pornography, from real estate to corrupt local government to the woman-hating to the sexualised racism in pornography itself.

A lot of the battle around pornography has to do with the soul of the women's movement. Is it going to be a movement for women who just want better career chances or is it really going to deal with the way that poor women and women of colour are truly exploited? Again, in Minneapolis, the live sex shows in that town, virtually all the women in them are women of colour. I have never understood how people who claim to be

leftist can ignore these facts around pornography, nevertheless they manage it brilliantly. What has happened is that we have broadened the base of the women's movement enormously but we've broadened it to people who don't count. The horrible thing is that they don't count to these white women academics who have their list of "isms" that they're against. They're just full of correct left wing politics, they deplore racism they just won't do anything about it. They hate poverty. Mostly they don't want to ever experience it. The fact that essentially the base of the women's movement has broadened because of this work on pornography is utterly meaningless to them because the women are meaningless to them. They don't care about them.

If you see an example of race hate that brings men to orgasm and is being sold for money you do something about it. Are you going to live in the world of theory or are you going to live in the world? What has always been strongest about feminist theory is that supposedly it has something to do with the world. What we're seeing now is a kind of fracturing of the women's movement into people who live in the world and people who live in the academy. The academy has become the safe space for feminists to be. It's certainly safer than the streets.

In "Nervous Interview" (1978) the fictional interviewer says, "If the personal is political ... why aren't you more willing to talk about your personal life?" You give a paragraph answer basically saying that you need privacy to have a personal life and that the press "far exceeds its authentic right to know in pursuing the private lives of individuals..." Do you still feel this way and if so could you further explain?

AD: Since I wrote that what has really had a tremendous impact on me personally has been the stuff that pornographers have done to me. I sued *Hustler* for some cartoons of me that essentially turned me into a piece of pornography and the courts said to me, you provoked it, if you want to open your big mouth what the hell do you expect? I went to court and I said I've been raped, these people raped me. They took me, they took my sexuality, they took my body and they made pornography out of it. The court said, well if you hadn't opened your big mouth it wouldn't have happened so it's your fault. I don't understand how anybody is supposed to live with that unless the accommodation that they come to is one of female silence. That you never open your big mouth again.

My understanding of the personal is political also is that what you have experienced in your personal life has a political dimension to it and you can use what you know in a way that has social value. It wasn't just a personal experience. It was something that has to do with women everywhere in one way or another. In a sense that is where my commitment is now. My commitment is to using what I know in a way that is political.

I have always felt that the way in which I was accountable to the women's movement was through my work.

The issue of fame in this country is a very big one and is a very political one and it's one that I think feminists have been exceptionally mean and miserable about. A lot of women have been destroyed because they become famous in some way or another, usually for a very short period of time, and the burden that other

feminists expect them to carry is one that nobody can carry. You can't carry a burden of purity, you can't carry a burden of being a symbol for other people. You have to continue to operate with respect to your own conscience. You

can't be accountable to millions of people. You can't be. You can only be accountable to people that you really know. That is in a sense part of what the difference is. I have to draw a line of accountability and at the same time, increasingly, my behaviour does have an impact on other women that I don't know. Then there is some kind of accountability that I owe them, but what is it?

There are a lot of things I would like to talk about, and I do not want to read about them in *Hustler*. I don't want my life used against me, I want to use my life for women. That's the part I really do not know how to deal with. Where I think that there are personal experiences that it's appropriate for me to talk about now, I will not talk about them. I can't. When people talk about freedom of speech, and all of these civil liberties assholes go into court about what is going to chill speech somewhere for someone. I mean [want to tell you that my speech is fucking freezing to death and I am a writer and it does matter what has happened to me and it does matter how I learned what it is that I know and women do have a right to have some idea of what those things are and the pornographers in collusion with the courts have been successful in creating a social environment where I cannot survive having that discussion. My speech is as chilled as it can be.

Elizabeth Braeman: *The question I wanted to ask you has to do with you living with John Stoltenberg. Why have you chosen to do that?*

AD: We've been living together now over 15 years and we live together because we deeply love each other and this is the answer to the question. I have always felt that the way in which I was accountable to the women's movement was through my work, that if my work continued to be what it should be then there was no question about it that I had to answer. In the early days when we lived together it was very rough. I couldn't walk into a room without being called names because John and I lived together. Now people seem to have taken an attitude of benign indifference. I think that his work has been very important too. He has done a lot of organising against pornography and his book *Refusing to be a Man* is a brilliant and unique book. But that's not why we live together. He is a very kind person and we love each other.

CC: One of the powerful statements in "Letters..." addresses the issue of censorship. You note in "Voyage in the Dark: Hers and Ours" (1987) that

the work of Jean Rhys was obliterated. You go on to say, "I don't know why we now, we women writers, think our books are going to live." What do you suggest that women do so that the writings of women of this generation are not also obliterated?

AD: That is a really important and hard question. *Sexual Politics* is out of print. *Dialectic of Sex* is out of print. What women have to do is to come to terms with the fact that we live in a society that simply censors better than state censorship. People have got to come to terms with the power of the publishing industry and the media in controlling thought and expression. They have to understand that it is an issue of power and money and people have to be less passive in relation to books. People have to take their money which they don't have much of and they have to buy books by feminist writers. They have to develop a much more sophisticated understanding of how the book industry works. A hard cover book like *Letters From A War Zone* was virtually published dead. If it's still in bookstores in two months it will be a miracle. They have to understand that everything that they hear all the time about how everything can be published in this country is a lie and that part of the social function of the publishing industry is to buy up the right to and then obliterate certain books so that nobody can get them. They have to stop thinking that they live in the liberal dream world of equality where fairness has already been achieved. It hasn't been achieved. You can be equal in your heart but it doesn't make you equal in the world. I think that the refusal to understand what happens to books by women goes along with this liberal refusal to acknowledge that power is a reality and we're not the ones who have it. What I'm saying is that women have got to start facing reality. You cannot build any kind of movement for change on wishful thinking. The wishful thinking is that we already have what it is we want and what it is we need. We don't have it. Women who want to write and communicate, which in a big country is hard to do, it's getting harder for them, not getting easier. There isn't more access, there is less access. People have got to take the economics of the publishing industry seriously and understand that very few writers will survive who do not write according to the demands of the marketplace, by which I mean essentially the demands of turning out books you can consume as passively as a television show. That's sort of the standard.

EB: *Is there anything else you want to say?*

AD: I want to say more than anything that the women's movement has a chance to do something miraculous which is to really tear down these hierarchies of sex and race and class. We can do it but the way that you do it is not through rhetorical denunciations of injustice. You do it through attacking institutions of injustice through political action. That hasn't changed. That's what we have to do. The other thing I would like to say is, do something. You don't have to do everything. You don't have to be perfect, you don't have to be pure, do what you can do. Do it. Life is short and you don't know when it is going to end for you so do it, do it now. □

STROKES AND ART ATTACKS

A MONUMENTAL DISPLAY OF SCULPTURE

Recent Works by Chiara Corbelletto and Charlotte Fisher
Reviewed by *Ros Spratt*

The exhibition of work by Auckland sculptors Charlotte Fisher and Chiara Corbelletto held recently at the Gow Langsford Gallery was undoubtedly one of the most exciting that I've seen this year.

The Gow Langsford Gallery has done admirably in securing both of these artists to its growing stable of prominent New Zealand artists.

The work of the artists complement each other well. When looking at the exhibition the viewer can not help but acknowledge the skills that these artists have in working in wood and stone, in successfully creating objects that are both monumental in size and sensitive in form.

Corbelletto carves most of her pieces, of which there are twelve from Oamaru stone, incorporating materials such as slate, onyx and cork to contrast the whiteness of the South Island stone.

The sculptures show the simplicity of form and the cleanness of line that has become a characteristic feature of Corbelletto's work. All the works seem to explore areas of worship, each can be interpreted as a shrine or altarpiece. In several of the works

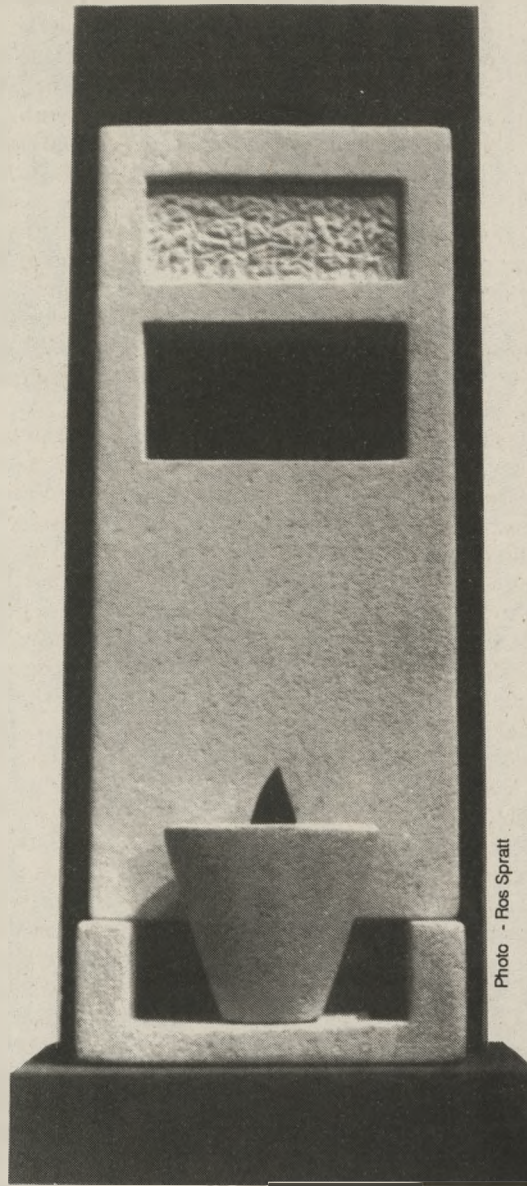


Photo - Ros Spratt

CHIARA
CORBELLETTO
"LA CASA DEL
ROSSO - HOUSE
OF RED"

the image of a house is repeated, within each house a precious object has been placed, which further suggests the interpretation of these being shrines. In "La Casa Del Rosso - House of Red" a carved pot has been filled with sand and placed within the house construction, as if entombing or enshrining that object. The feeling of these sculptures being objects of worship is still further suggested by the placement of several of them within a theatrically lit semi-circle.

Charlotte Fisher also explores the ideas of shrines, however her free

standing constructions seem to be more in the style of totems, reminiscent of the artwork of the indigenous people of North America and Polynesia.

The seven works carved from Australian hardwoods and native New Zealand timbers stand larger than life. Works such as "She Serves" with its copper covered arch rising from a hardwood pedestal evokes a feeling of the sublime when viewed.

In some of the works Fisher has chosen to paint the carved timbers; despite this application of paint, Fisher's work remains essentially organic in nature reminding the viewer of the intrinsic properties of the materials.

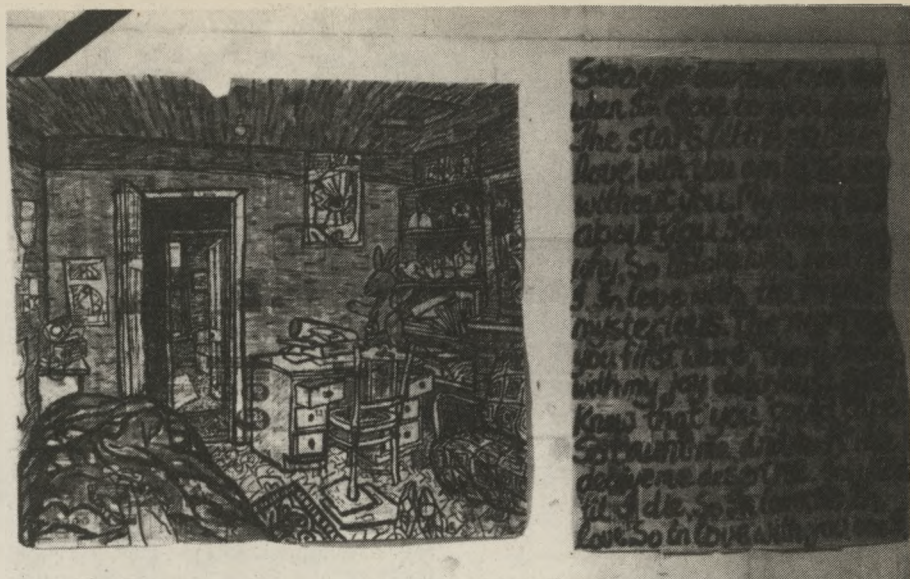
Fisher also included several drawings in the exhibition which explore the carved forms in a two dimensional state. □

ROOMS AND SONGS

Linda James
Old Mill, Christchurch
4-23 May 1991
Reviewed by *Mary-Jane Duffy*

"Home is where the heart is" certainly characterises Linda James' "Rooms and Songs" at the Old Mill in Christchurch. Huge paintings on squares of layered newsprint fill the newly renovated old Addington Flour Mill with a humming - of Cole Porter love songs. And the viewer can hum along too because alternatively hung with mostly black and white images of domestic interiors are huge song sheets containing Cole Porters' words ... "I give to you and you give to me, truuue love, truuue ..."

KITCHEN I



BEDROOM I

The building resounds and echoes with gentle song and a feeling of domestic bliss emanates from the rooms depicted in the images. James tells us on a blurb that these are "drawings of my home enlarged by grid onto layered newspaper in black acrylic." It's all here, the bathrooms, bedrooms, hallway, kitchen - full of domestic clutter and traces of interwoven lives. All these rooms feel comfortable - a cup of tea on the kitchen table, an unmade bed, a cast off pair of shoes. The recycled

newspapers as medium and background confirm the domestic setting but also the outside world.

However the one thing absent from the images of this home are the whanau. This house is empty of anyone else except the viewer who roams its rooms catching the songs. We, the viewers, become the painter walking her house in the way one does in the absence of a loved one, picking up things to look at, feeling

their presence in the setting and humming ... "I've got you under my skin, I've got you deep in my heart." It was with some reluctance I must admit, that I left this happy setting.

James' work as ever pushes the boundaries, acting as a point of resistance to the hegemony of the art world. It's medium of recycled newspaper, warts-and-all approach and setting in post-industrial, economically desolate and working class Addington challenges the preciousness of the gallery context. "A conservators nightmare". I hear the whispers. But these days conservators can preserve anything if they really want to.

Yet the subject matter of the works is not an angry challenge. If anything, it contradicts its surroundings. "The Art World meets Addington" and the contradictions become all too apparent. Domestic bliss in ravaged Addington? One wonders at the actual occurrence of such overt contentment in this working class neighbourhood.

For all that "Rooms and Songs" is an assured show revealing James literally at home in her environment of the Mill, where she once had a studio. She is comfortable with the setting, in harmony with the surroundings and joining in the spirit of new life being breathed (though somewhat haphazardly) into the Old Mill. And we know this because the place hums ... "You'd be so nice to come home to tonight." □

FORESKIN'S LAMENT

By Greg McGee

At Wellington's Downstage in May

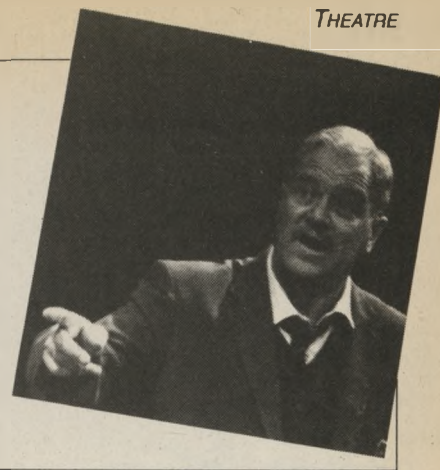
Reviewed by Jane Blaikie

Downstage's third production of *Foreskin's Lament* since 1980 is said to establish it as a modern theatrical classic. It is studied at schools and universities, and dramaturg and lecturer David Carnegie is typical in his literary assessment... "Its vigorous comic entertainment value, and its passionate anguish, marked it as a major play," he says in the programme. Our national sport is used as a metaphor for society and the questions raised still apply, perhaps now more than ever.

For those who've missed this little treasure, it's about a rugby team whose captain dies after being stomped on the head by a team mate during a game. The first half is set in the changing rooms, revealing that the game is not only grubby on the field but is mean, oppressive, crude, ugly and brutal when stripped to its essentials. The second half is set in a backyard, with the noises of a full-scale post-game party coming from offstage. Here Foreskin, who could well mature into a liberal bore, makes his lament, concluding with the telling line "Waddarya?"

Here, too, in the backyard, actor Michael Haigh does a brilliantly gross rendition of the pissed, glaze-eyed,

KATHERINE
MCCRAE
(MOIRA) AND
MICHAEL
HAIGH
(TUPPER)



shaking old coach Tupper, scoffing cheerios, pavlova, beer, etc, in no particular order. He looked genuinely ill for the rest of the show.

This is a play about New Zealand male culture. Personally, I think it's a mistake to elevate it to a metaphor for all society. Though indisputably valuable and classic of its type, it should be kept in its place and not given delusions of national grandeur.

Also, it's dated. According to one man in the audience, male culture is much more diverse nowadays (the play is set in 1976) — we now have rugby league (as well as rugby) which is a completely different game!

Foreskin's Lament is great material for a men's consciousness raising group — which raises the question of the validity of feminist comment on such a

play. Women would be scornful of unsympathetic male comment on women's literature. Is it therefore hypocritical to criticise the male counterpart? Or are we reaching the maturity to handle full and frank discussion? I wish men would discuss the issues raised — particularly in the changing room — with honesty and with a view to managing violence and anger rather than taking it out on those who are weaker or different.

Director Colin McColl, is to be expected, turned in a professional production with some particularly astute casting. Of the two mono-dimensional female characters, Sima Urale was totally convincing as the sweetly self-effacing Pat and Katherine McCrae wrestled bravely to make something of the improbable lawyer, Moira. □



Candace Bagnall, artist, health promotion worker and occasional Broadsheet contributor, held a sell-out show of her pastel drawings at an Auckland gallery in May.

Now the drawing shown here is available, beautifully printed in full colour on high quality paper, as an art-poster.

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House of Fish Candace Bagnall, 1990
gouache and pastel
printed size 594mm x 420mm

DANCES WITH WOLVES

Dir. Kevin Costner
Reviewed by *K Kennedy*

Dances With Wolves is one of the more thought-provoking movies to emerge from the Hollywood stables in recent times. Kevin Costner (producer, director and all-round star of the show) has been showered with accolades as white America rises to the call for a re-evaluation of its colonial history, albeit belatedly. Visually the film contained some of the most exciting and breath taking cinematography to be witnessed; politically, the messages left me feeling ambivalent towards Costner's carefully cultivated baby.

While this film attempted to be, in part, a celebration of change in white values towards indigenous people (in this case the Sioux Indian on the American prairies, but a universal experience nonetheless), it was also hard to ignore how little has changed for most

indigenous cultures worldwide. It is now not always acceptable for racism to come out of the barrel of a gun. However, cultural genocide continues to decimate indigenous populations throughout the world through means such as poverty, starvation, atrocious health standards, and all-round "seemingly self-inflicted" symbols of powerlessness; all tools of contemporary white brutality and power. While liberal America extravagantly lavishes wealth and status on Costner for his "heroic" efforts, the American Indians, like indigenous cultures elsewhere, will continue to be ravaged by AIDS, alcoholism and poor health to the point where their population can barely sustain itself.

But in the long-run, perhaps films such as these play an important part in raising the consciousness of a population, bringing the issues to those who could otherwise ignore them. I predict that this film will date rapidly, that Costner has managed to capture a particular moment in the consciousness of white liberal America, in much the same way as "To Sir With Love" did in the 1960s. This too will seem heavy on paternalism with the benefit of hindsight. A little less of Costner and a lot more of the Sioux would have done a lot to improve the film's intentions.

There was much to suggest that issues such as feminism have been abandoned in the race to be recognised as "ethnically aware". I wondered throughout the film where on earth the women were hiding in this story. The name of the token (white) love-interest, "Stands With A Fist", showed promise, but she remained damp-eyed and pouting for much of the film. Very little of the culture of the Sioux women was projected; we learned more of the men. Sexist stereotypes such as those presented in this movie would mercifully still have been a white man's poison on the American frontier of 1863.

But the ambivalence comes because, despite a desire to criticise this seldom-criticised movie, I also found it thoroughly engrossing, and I was glad to have seen this film. The story was involving, despite its failure to ever really depart from the action-love-tears formula of Hollywood blockbusters. The visuals were awesome, and the tiny peep that (I think) we received of Sioux culture was enlightening. It gives a glimmer of hope that in the future, films in the genre of New Zealand's *Ngati* or *Mauri* may receive the respect that they deserve, as white America wakes up to itself and realises it can no longer tell the story. □

PRIVILEGE

Dir: Yvonne Rainer
To be screened at The International Film Festival
Reviewed by *Alison McCulloch*

I worried that this film might be too much of a lecture for my liking. To come clean: I've been into entertainment lately and I want to be entertained. To come clean again: I haven't seen any of US filmmaker Yvonne Rainer's other films (including *About A Woman Who ...* (1974), *Journeys From Berlin* (1971) (1980), and *The Man Who Envied Women* (1985). Actually I'd never heard of her.

Privilege is something of a cross between a documentary and not-a-documentary. It is ostensibly an



YVONNE RAINER

interview format film about menopause. But as the film's main character, Jenny (Alice Spivak) answers questions about her menopause she cannot avoid scrutinising questions like rape, racism, ageism, classism - mainly in the context of her own background.

Jenny is being interviewed by radical black filmmaker Yvonne Washington (Novella Nelson). As she talks she has a flashback, re-enacted in the film, to her life in a segregated New York apartment building in the 1960s when she was a "luscious" young dancer.

"Don't think I'm proud of having been a woman that men look at, it's a chronic disease that you never get over."

Jenny remembers getting involved after the near rape of neighbour, Brenda, a white lesbian. And she squirms when recalling her subsequent affair with the lawyer who prosecuted Brenda's case.

Rainer, 57, says of *Privilege*, "like my other films, there's no plot to speak of." Aside from Jenny and the ostensibly central topic of menopause, other characters are threaded in and out of the film bringing with them the related issues.

It was a little too complex for me to believe I'd unravelled and made sense of all that was going on, but this didn't leave a bad taste in my mouth as "avante garde" films sometimes do.

Rainer makes great use of sound and silence and different filmmaking styles, switching from tinny sounding doco interviews to professionally acted scenes, from spoken language to sign language and from silence to sound.

The script was the highlight for me. Well-written, it contained some real gems, some spoken, some appearing on a computer screen: "After all these years I finally get my head together and my ass falls apart."

"There is a popular saying among gynecologists that there is no ovary so healthy that it is not better removed and no testes so diseased that they should not be left intact."

"White women always manage to use their own victim status as a way of pleading innocent to the charge of racism."

"When I was younger, my sex life had been the object of all kinds of questioning, from prurient curiosity to

solicitous concern. Now that I do not appear to be looking for a man, the state of my desires seems of no interest to anyone."

"Roy Wilkins said somewhere that the most he could ever hope to be was a permanent recovering sexist. Is "permanent recovering racists" the most WE can ever be?"

And what does the filmmaker think? The film's distributor quotes Rainer as saying: "The film came out of the difficulties and challenges of telling the story. Subjecting Jenny's life to that kind of scrutiny clarified things in my life. There were a lot of things I had to examine about the 60s, the factors that were attendant on my own success at the time - the white-dominated art world

which supported my work, the kind of single-minded ambition that excluded realities of social inequity. The film provides a kind of clearinghouse for thinking about those privileges.

"People have asked me how I can put menopause and racism in the same film. Well, as an ageing woman I live in a racist society, and I experience that every day, especially in New York where I live."

Rainer was born in San Francisco. She trained as a modern dancer in New York from 1957 and was one of the founders of the Judson Dance theatre in 1962. Between 1962 and 1975 she began to integrate slides and short films into her live performance.

She began filmmaking in 1972. □

Ron S Diamond

THE COMPANY OF STRANGERS

Dir: Cynthia Scott

To be screened at the International Film Festival

Reviewed by Megan Fidler

Special the sign on the bus in an opening shots claims, and special this film certainly is. Seven elderly women find themselves stranded in the country when their tour bus breaks down. They spend two nights and days passing the time talking and looking for food, whilst one of their number attempts to fix the bus, fails and then sets off on foot to find help. The setting is magic - a dilapidated old house with one of those wonderful, droopy porches, set beside a beautiful, placid lake.

The *Company of Strangers* emanates unselfconscious calmness, with frequent pockets of humour and poignant moments of sadness and regret. Composed of vignette-like scenes of conversations and shared experiences usually between no more than two or



CISSY MEDDINGS & WINIFRED HOLDEN

three of the women at a time, the film is subtly structured to allow the women to express themselves intimately and honestly. A favourite scene is of three of the women, sitting in a broken-down vintage car, discussing if the "right man" came along, whether or not they would fall in love. "I'm eighty you know, but I still might surprise you." And I bet they might too.

"Scott held onto her goal of making a film "not about old people, but people who were old", and that determination plays off in the performances she has elicited." (Toronto Film Festival) The

actors are not experienced and work from a minimal script, which allows the personalities of the women to emerge - uncontained and graceful.

A film with women as the main protagonists is rare enough, but to experience a film which portrays older women as feeling, laughing, crying, passionate, scared, creative, repressed, unfulfilled, happy, sensitive and funny people, is a wonder. This film does not stereotype or offer answers or conclusions, but successfully shows older women in their multiplicity. This is a mustsee. □



MARIANNE FAITHFUL

In concert in Auckland
Reviewed by Sarah Anstead

There wasn't any waiting around for the star: Marianne Faithfull walked on straight after the intermission to sing "Guilty". The audience was rapt to see her and before the third number, "Blue Millionaire" she had taken off her blue satiny coat and moved to get a glass of water and the essential cigarette. ("I just

can't stop smoking.") There was something hypnotic and story-like about "Blue Mill". Marianne Faithfull has a lot of power to draw you in and hold you. I couldn't help thinking of Nico.

Well, naturally she's moved on. Always true to herself, her music has grown with her into something calmer; there is a more ballady and folksy quality to her, rather than the raunchiness that we associate with "Broken English".

"Why Do Ya Do What Ya Did" was enthusiastically received. But though the sentiment here is unchanged it doesn't sound as essential to her as it obviously was when she first wrote it. What did sound more relevant to her life now were a couple of beautiful numbers, "When I Find My Life" and "Let Me Keep it with Mine". Also off *Broken English* was "The Witches Song", retaining its power in her performance, rhythmically and lyrically ritualistic, celebrating the power of women united. This will always be a great song.

There were people who wanted to dance and this was vocalised after "Blue Millionaire". Marianne said, "I can't do anything about that." This was not a

showy performance; it's not the sort of sound that makes you want to "get down in the aisles" but it hasn't lost any of its power and richness.

Still affirming her womanhood as much as she ever did, Marianne created a warm relationship between herself and the audience, who were very encouraging throughout.

She introduced her musicians half-way through — Chris Cunningham on bass, accordion and keyboards and Barry Reynolds (who also worked with her on *Blazing Away*) on rhythm and lead. Chris is from New York city, Barry also from New York, but originally Manchester. She'd been remiss with introductions in Wellington and they hadn't let her forget it.

There was a good mix of the old and the new. Of the two Jagger/Richards numbers she sang, "Sister Morphine" and "Wild Horses", the latter was the strongest. She did a beautiful job on this song, giving it a strong personal quality.

She came back for two encores to sing "As Years Go By" and "Times Square Song". I liked Marianne, she was great and well worth the effort. I just wish she'd played for longer. □

EMBRACING THE DARK

Mike Minehan
Hazard Poet Series
Hazard Press- \$19.95
Reviewed by Lisa Howard-Smith

The intention of Hazard Press is to "make individual volumes of high quality work by Australasian poets more available". Both new and established poets in New Zealand and Australia will be included in the series. There will eventually be ten volumes. Of the four books already received by *Broadsheet* for review only *Embracing the Dark*, by Mike Minehan, is the work of a woman poet. I understand there are a further two volumes in preparation by women and I look forward to reading them.

Mike Minehan has previously been published in *Broadsheet* and this is where I first encountered, and enjoyed, the clever truth of her work. In reading *Embracing The Dark* I have ingested a

succession of Mike Minehan's poems in a short space of time and feel gorged. My poetic palate prefers to savour a selected individual piece rather than consume a whole volume en masse in one sitting. However, this does not detract from the pleasure of this volume, which I shall dip into on occasions to treat myself.

The book is divided into 3 sections; family songs, embracing the dark and between friends - an entree, main and dessert perhaps! Certainly family songs is the lighter section, with the astute, succinct style that I readily associate with Mike Minehan.

'family songs':-
little girls love their grandfathers
but
grandfathers chase the butterfly skirts
of little girls
offering plums
instead of rings...

in my mother's house
in the shadow of my father
i studied the way of despair
my mother's tears



stretching the long night
was the only lullaby
i ever heard.

embracing the dark makes up the larger portion of the book. These poems border on prose and are more intense. They require careful mastication; mind the bones, they can easily catch in one's throat. The selection in *between friends* does not come from the dessert trolley, more like coffee from the espresso machine, strong and biting.

Reading this book I have found myself wondering: if writers draw on the well of experience, then how

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autobiographical are these poems?
Many are strongly women identified - in
the case of 'the blue lady', overtly so. I
found a deep bitterness inherent in a
number of pieces, the frustration of
women frequently pitted against men
and the patriarchy, betrayed and
wrathful. Feelings that many of us will
identify with. There is an observance of
the maniacal magic of women on the
brink of insanity reclaiming their power
with glee. I like that, it's wonderfully
affirming. Mike Minchan herself writes
that in this book she has explored
mythology and salvation, "secrets and
truths that are never uttered and banished
to the darkness ...". *Embracing The
Dark* is a book of powerful poetry, read
and be sated.

'divorce':-

one morning i woke &
told god to buggar off
i packed his bags &
gave him a one way ticket
& a cut lunch
i swept the cave &
lit a fire
invited some women to share a meal

we sang & told tales till dawn. □

LIVING WITH CHRONIC PAIN

by Mary Schmidt

Collins \$11.95

Reviewed by *Gloria Weaver*

Mary Schmidt has written a wonderful
book about chronic pain and how to live
with it. She describes in clear language
the different levels and types of pain
and the often negative responses the
sufferer, family, care-givers, doctors and
society have towards it. She explains
how the physical and intellectual effects
of pain are connected, and how we
allow them to control us emotionally.

The very important chapter on
drugs/medication for pain relief is a
real challenge and one I personally
found refreshing. The writer, as a
chronic pain sufferer herself and
medical professional knows exactly
what she is writing about; her direct,
honest approach instantly pulled me in
with total empathy.

As I read *Living With Chronic Pain* a
sense of hope grew, as did my
understanding of my own acute over
chronic pain. The only issue I see
missing in this holistic approach is the
one around diet. As a chronic pain
sufferer I have found that I can take
a lot of responsibility and control -
and get relief, through monitoring what
I eat.

Mary Schmidt has written a clear and
uncluttered book based on her personal
experience. Any person with pain, or
connected with a person in physical
pain, would gain a lot from reading it. □



sabbage blows

A new craze is sweeping the nation hot on the heels of bungy jumping, skateboarding, fluorescent sunblock and Twin Peaks. In every city, suburb and rural town, good solid New Zealand citizens are lining up for a dose of Escapism.

During the last great depression New Zealanders flocked to theatres and cinemas desperate for slapstick antics and vaudeville humour to take their minds off reality. Today, Escapism is once again doing a roaring trade.

This phenomenon takes many forms.

Large numbers of people are taking Escapism literally and fleeing the country. Some are following the Yellow Brick Road in search of the Wizard of Oz and a job, others are off to jolly olde England looking for Greener Pastures and a job.

Unfortunately Oz seems to have lost the magic and the jobs once attributed to it. And England has very few pastures left, green or otherwise. Those that remain are covered not with clover but by nuclear power plants or American airforce bases. There aren't many jobs in England either unless you want to work at a nuclear power plant or an American airforce base.

Because that particular escape route does not lead very far, many Kiwis remain here at home and try to escape through other channels - usually television channels.

TV does its best to promote its own brand of Escapism. For a while the Gulf war did a good job taking everyone's mind off the recession, but it didn't last so the TV programmers were forced to settle for second best - comedy. All three channels have scheduled comedies galore - English, America, Australia, even (shock, horror) local comedy. It doesn't matter what sort of comedy it is, or even whether it's particularly funny as long as the intention

to make people laugh is there. The programmers operate on the principle that sufficiently high doses of canned laughter must eventually trigger some kind of reaction, if only hysteria.

Basically, it's the old Disney philosophy - a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down - and it's a philosophy our government has also embraced.

The Minister in charge of TVNZ and Radio New Zealand, Warren Cooper, is of the not-so-firm opinion that all this country needs is a smile and a tune to whistle to set itself on the mythical "road to economic recovery". He is so certain of this he felt able to criticise RNZ's in depth news programme Morning Report for being depressing and negative.

An exasperated Geoff Robinson pointed out that the programme only reported and analysed the news, it didn't make the news. But that paltry excuse held no water with Agent Cooper who maintains that New Zealanders deserve a little John Rowles and Suzanne Prentice to cheer them up first thing in the morning, not serious and disturbing news of the world. I suspect Warren may be a distant cousin of a cheery German chap named Goebbels who was Minister of Propaganda around the time of World War II. Perhaps not, but when Ministers publicly suggest news programmes should shift their axis, the implications are fairly frightening.

Coop must have been heartened by the news (albeit a tad depressing for the rest of us) that 50 people at RNZ have lost their jobs and up to 170 more might also be asked to hang up their headphones.

Never mind. Perhaps the jobless journalists can find work with a fabulous humour magazine to be launched in October. *The New Zealand Jester* is the

brainchild of two true Kiwi jokers, Michael Tull and Stephen Hall-Jones, who say the magazine will be "a mainstream humour publication and tackle a wide range of topics". For the record, Mr Tull is a former editor of Otago University's erudite capping magazine, and Mr Hall-Jones is the student association's social activities manager.

The *New Zealand Jester's* timing is perfect. All sorts of people are willing to pay for a laugh these days. Take the Ministry of Commerce for instance. They've awarded the venture \$17,394. The Otago Business Development Board has also voted funds for the magazine. And I hear Warren Cooper can't wait to read the first issue. Perhaps *Morning Report* could interview Mike and Steve - I'm sure Warren would enjoy that.

Warren Cooper may not be particularly worried about the tide of redundancies at the *Auckland Star*, the *Evening Post*, and the *Dominion*, but others are. Jim Tully, head of Canterbury University's school of journalism, says: "It does have an effect on the quality of reporting and the quality and range of information put before the reader."

You may already detect signs of a narrowing range of information in newspapers and TV news. Witness the conviction of peace activist Moana Cole for conspiracy and damaging United States government property. On TV One's 6pm news this received minimum coverage - the news lead was the story of Prince William's fracas with a golf club.

Some one once said the public gets the government it deserves. Does it follow that the public gets the media it deserves?

Ask Warren.

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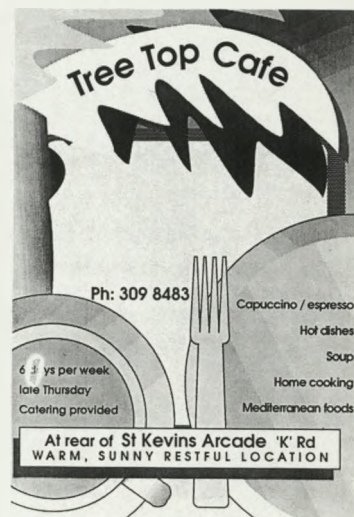
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