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Spirituality ◆

Schooling ◆

Scribes ◆

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WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION (NZ) (Inc.)

This Association is a feminist organisation formed to promote radical social change through the medium of women's studies. We believe that a feminist perspective necessarily acknowledges oppression on the grounds of race, sexuality and class as well as sex.
We acknowledge the Maori people as the tangata whenua of Aotearoa. This means we have a particular responsibility to address their oppression among our work and activities.

Full membership of the Association is open to all women. Other individuals may become associate members. Annual subscription: $16.50 or hardship: $5.50. (Both include GST.)

Enquiries to: PO Box 5067, Auckland, New Zealand.

Annual Conference: The Association holds an annual conference where members present the latest feminist research and discussion papers, and workshops explore issues important to women. The *Conference Papers* are published annually. Members receive a discount for the Conference and the *Conference Papers*.

Newsletter: A quarterly *Newsletter* containing local and overseas news, book reviews, conference reports etc. is sent to all members.

Editorial

This is the seventh issue of the *Women's Studies Journal*, and the first to be edited from Wellington, where it is being launched during the first New Zealand Women's Book Festival, timed to coincide with the 95th anniversary of women's suffrage. In Volume 1 Number 1, August 1984, Margot Roth described the *Journal* as 'an important, ongoing contribution to the celebration and documentation of New Zealand's own rowdy women'; and so, under her editorship, it has impressively proved to be.

The aims of the *Journal* bear restating here. Keeping an accurate, permanent, comprehensive record is a vital part of any sustained political philosophy and movement. In this respect the *Journal* is an essential complement to *Broadsheet*, the *Women's Studies Association Newsletter* and the annual *WSA Conference Papers*. It provides a unique interdisciplinary forum for feminist work within the broad framework of women's studies in New Zealand.

It has already had considerable impact. The subscription cards list individual addresses from all over New Zealand, and institutions from the Northland Polytechnic to the Invercargill Public LIbrary. But it can always do with becoming more widely known, so please draw it to potential subscribers' attention - or buy them a gift subscription!

The Auckland collective which has produced the *Journal* so capably to date is a very hard act to follow, but we are delighted to be given the chance to try. In alphabetical order, we are:

Joy Bickley, nurse, midwife, on the staff of the New Zealand Nurses' Association;

Ann Calhoun, art historian, who has worked at the QEII Arts Council, National Art Gallery, and Wellington City Art Gallery;

Ali Carew, freelance editor and writer with three young daughters who works at home;

Anne Else, freelance writer, editor, reviewer and lecturer, on the

national committee of WSA, currently holding a fellowship to work full-time on a book about adoption;
Beryl Hughes, now retired from the history department at Victoria University, where she taught some women's history and contributed to the women's studies course she helped to set up - currently working on women for the Dictionary of Biography;
Charlotte Macdonald, feminist historian, long-time member of WSA, on the national committee;
Jacquie Matthews, teaching women's studies at Victoria University, inspired toward feminism while reading Simone de Beauvoir in a French maternity hospital in the 1950s;
Viv Porzsolt, teaching sociology and trade union studies at Wellington Polytechnic, working both in theory and in practice on women's work in the home;
Elizabeth Rawlings, new to Wellington WSA, a publishing assistant pleased to apply her skills to a feminist project;
Felicity Rawlings, studying Maori and Philosophy at Victoria and working part-time at The Women's Place Bookshop, keen to see more feminist work published;
Gay Simpkin, union official working for the Post-Primary Teachers Association.

The move to Wellington will, we hope, tap into new sources of contributions and widen still further the range of topics covered. In the next issue we would like to include a 'Notes and Queries' section, where women can give information and make requests about work planned or in progress, or make brief comments expanding on what has appeared in previous issues.

We were assured by Margot that shortage of material was not a problem, and after a nervous few weeks we were relieved to find she was (as usual) right. The success of the *Journal* depends, of course, on its contributors. So now it is over to us - but also over to you.

Anne Else

The Construction of Inequality:

The Role of Education and Occupation in the Lives of Maori and Non-Maori Women[1]

Geraldine McDonald

The theories of the function of schooling presented to students of education in New Zealand are theories about the social circumstances of Pakeha men. With certain exceptions, most of what has been written about the functions of education for women in New Zealand has been written within male paradigms which view the school as an agency that reproduces the male social order, and/or as an instrument of oppression.

Feminist scholarship on education in New Zealand

Where women scholars in New Zealand have broken new ground they have, like Sue Middleton, taken imaginative leaps to explore issues such as how feminist women teachers came to know what they know (Middleton, 1988). Alison Jones, working within an anthropological framework, was able to demonstrate agency as well as oppression in her study of secondary school girls from the Pacific Islands (Jones, 1987).

Phyllis Levitt (1979) showed how the first kindergartens in Dunedin arose within a pattern of class interests supported by the voluntary work of largely anonymous women. Helen May (Cook, 1983) took women's powerlessness as central to her study of the politics of child care. In my study of women in playcentres (McDonald, 1969) I showed how women developed an ideology which allowed them to go out of the home to work for playcentres without incurring the criticism that they were neglecting family responsibilities. For the most part these studies began by using categories taken from male theorists, but they ended up looking very different because they sought authenticity in the study of female experience. In the work of Anne Smith (1982) childcare is a normal part of children's experience and not a costly social problem.

Despite these examples, feminist scholarship in education is not strong in New Zealand. Much of the work has been done by women outside the academic establishment. Much of it is one-off. Much of it is descriptive rather than explanatory. But the greatest obstacle has been the domination of education faculties by men, and their role as supervisors of research. This has not prevented women from gaining higher degrees, but has certainly stunted the development of feminist scholarship in the field of education.

I accept Charlotte Bunch's dictum that we should be 'describing what exists, analysing why that reality exists, determining what should exist, hypothesising how to change what is to what should be'. I cannot see that current theories of schooling do this for women.

Current theory, whether Old Left or New Right, gives priority to social class as the determinant of schooling and its effects. In the Left version, schooling presses particular population groups into the pattern they will continue to maintain when schooling is completed. In the New Right version, the middle classes 'capture' the advantages of schooling in a sort of entrepreneurial takeover. In both versions the social effects are measured by access to occupations. This fits the role of Pakeha men. In both versions men advance on the basis of individual training and ability. The Left and the New Right differ only in how difficult they believe this advancement to be. The Left concentrates on the structures which prevent it, the New Right on the market forces which encourage it. Both versions are based on one simple question: Does education give men access to power in the public sphere?

The feminist question is different. Following Gail Paradise Kelly (1985), the question is: Does education allow women to obtain greater power in both public and private spheres? Does education change the impact of marriage, reproduction, and child-rearing on women's roles in society?

Criticisms

I am not alone in expressing such criticisms. Madeleine MacDonald has complained about the 'neglect of race and sexual structures in schooling as integral and not subsidiary elements of capitalism' (MacDonald, 1981). Sue Middleton (1982), faced with the task of responding to a paper on racism *and* sexism in education, said 'We do not as yet have an adequate analysis of racism and sexism in capitalist societies, although there have been a number of speculative studies of their origins; and these suggest that they are two separate issues. The removal of racism from our national ideology may not entail the overthrow of patriarchy and vice versa' (Middleton, 1982:91).

My dissatisfaction with class interpretations encouraged a search for theory which explained more accurately the role of schooling for women's position in society. I felt that a comparison across both race and gender was necessary, and might prove more fruitful for explaining the situation of both Maori and non-Maori women than traditional contrasts on the basis of either gender (male compared with female) or of race (Maori compared with Pakeha).[2] In the light of current interpretations, women end up castigating the school. As practical action that is probably a waste of time.

Subordinate minorities, class and caste

Beginning with an ethnographic study of communities in Stockton, California, Ogbu (1974) has developed a theory to explain problems in the schooling of the children of minority groups (e.g. Ogbu 1987, 1983, 1978). He distinguishes three types of minority: *autonomous, castelike* and *immigrant.* Castelike or subordinate minorities have school problems which are different from those of the lower classes or of either autonomous or immigrant minorities. The following passages from Ogbu explain his classification:

> *Autonomous minorities,* which are represented in the United States by Jews and Mormons ...are primarily numerical minorities who may be victims of prejudice but are not subordinated in systems of stratification.
>
> *Castelike minorities* - those we have referred to as subordinate minorities - are either incorporated into a society more or less involuntarily and permanently or are forced to seek incorporation and then relegated to inferior status. Until recently it was (and in many cases still is) more difficult for castelike minority group members than for dominant-group members to advance on the basis of individual training and ability. The concept of a *job ceiling*... best

> describes the circumscribed occupational and economic...opportunities historically faced by castelike minorities. As we shall argue, the access of castelike minorities to schooling and their perceptions of and responses to schooling have historically been shaped by the job ceiling and related barriers.
>
> *Immigrant minorities* are those who have come more or less voluntarily (unless they are refugees) to their new society for economic, political, and social betterment. Immigrants may be subject to pillory and discrimination but have usually not internalised their effects. That is, at least in the first generation, they have not experienced such treatment as an ingrained part of their culture and thus have not been disillusioned to the same extent as castelike minorities. This is true even when the two minority types are faced with the same job ceiling and other barriers. Immigrants also tend to measure their success or failure against their peers in their homeland and not against the higher classes of their host society (Ogbu 1983:135-136).

I will be concerned for the remainder of this paper with the concept of castelike minorities. The Pakeha working class in New Zealand, like the white working class in America, does not encounter the barriers experienced by Maori, Australian Aboriginal, blacks, Chicanos or native American Indians. And male working class problems are not those of women as a population group.

While both Ogbu's theory of minorities and his ethnographic study satisfactorily explain the main aspects of the Maori situation, he does not make a case for women. Therefore, I started with the proposition that both women and Maori could be of considered as castelike minorities rather than as members of a class system, and that there would be differences between Maori women and Maori men which would not necessarily be the same as the differences between Pakeha women and Pakeha men.

Assumptions

I shall extend the idea of job ceilings and 'other barriers' to ceilings which may appear at any stage in the life cycle of individuals from different population groups. A Left interpretation would probably accept that a ceiling existed if, for certain population groups, there was long-standing evidence of limited access to aspects of schooling or restricted access to positions in the public sphere including positions of power. A New

Right interpretation would probably accept that a ceiling existed if there was interference with the free flow of market forces from bureaucratic or other environmental sources, and if this affected only some population groups (Treasury, 1987). Both types of evidence will be presented.

Methods and results

The data are drawn from secondary analyses of statistics relating to (a) promotion out of the junior classes to the standards in 1985, (b) School Certificate passes in 1986, (c) destination and income of Massey University graduates in 1986, (d) statistics on Maori and Pakeha occupation and incomes, and (e) occupational segregation in the United States.

Promotion out of the junior classes

The proportion of children retained in the junior school beyond the expectation of the regulations on length of primary schooling and their age was calculated for eight-year-old children: Maori, non-Maori, boys and girls. The schools were split on two distinct principles: density of Maori enrolment (high density: 30% and over Maori enrolment; low density: under 30% Maori enrolment) and then in a separate division on the basis of size. Schools with rolls of 151 and over were classified as big schools, schools with rolls of 150 and under were classified as small schools. See Table 1 for characteristics of each sample.

Figure 1 shows the proportion retained in the junior classes in each population group in each school type. Note the variation in the non-Maori population as school type varies. The proportion of Maori retained is invariant across school types. This invariance constitutes a ceiling in the terms already defined. The non-Maori boys and girls reflect 'market' forces, the Maori do not. The non-Maori girls do better than all other groups in all conditions, and the Maori girls do better than the Maori boys.

This promotion pattern is the earliest manifestation of the sorting function of schooling, and the relative positions shown in the table are maintained to the end of compulsory schooling. Figure 2 shows the pattern for rates of attrition at secondary school for the 1984 Form 3 cohort.

School Certificate passes

Early leaving is associated with being Maori. By the time of the SC examination in 1986, nearly half of the third form cohort of Maori students had left school. Maori boys were more likely to have left than Maori girls. A majority of the non-Maori students had stayed on.

Figure 3 aggregates B2 or higher passes (equivalent to the former

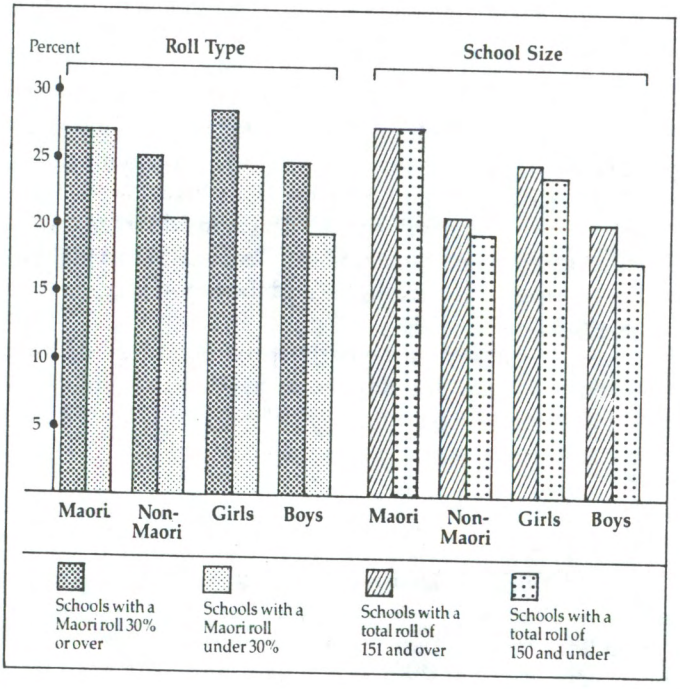
TABLE 1

Characteristics of Schools in the Four Samples

Variable	High Density	Low Density	Big	Small	All
8-yr-olds	10930	41856	42681	10105	52786
Average Number 8-yr-olds	21	22	43	7	22
Average Children in S.2	22	22	44	7	22
% Maori	47	10	18	17	18

Note : All figures rounded.

figure 1
Retention in relation to roll type and school size.



pass mark) in all School Certificate subjects, and shows the percentage success rate for the four population groups. Pakeha females head the list. Maori males are slightly ahead of Maori females. The gap between Maori and Pakeha is now substantially wider than the retention differences at the junior school level.

Occupations

After schooling, the picture we have presented changes abruptly. The superiority of women is lost upon entry to the work force - a fact which is difficult to explain by any theory of schooling (folk or otherwise) which views schooling as a determinant of access to employment, income and prestige. The position of women is complicated by part-time work, time out for child-bearing and rearing, and family responsibilities. The first comparision will be between Maori and non-Maori, using work by Peter Brosnan (1987). Brosnan examined census data over time to determine the cause of lower incomes in the Maori group. Where both groups performed the same jobs, he found no income differential. He concluded that incomes were depressed because the Maori (women and men) entered a narrower range of occupations than the non-Maori, and that this segregation was accompanied by lower median incomes in the occupations in which Maori clustered. Where Maori were found in occupations outside this range, they tended to be in the lower ranks of these occupation categories.

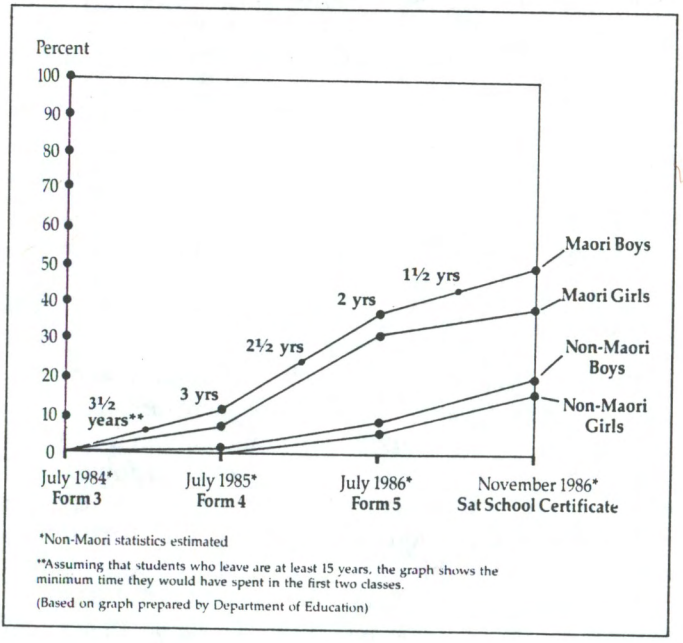
Brosnan concluded that, 'Maoris are concentrated in occupations which have lower pay, prestige and power', that segregation had increased, and that occupational segregation was greater between the races than between the sexes. The principal determinant of difference was difference in the occupational distributions. This is a feature of a caste in Ogbu's sense.

Although the segregation on grounds of race is greater, women are also subject to occupational segregation relative to men, and have lower median incomes in the occupations in which they are segregated. In 1981 the median income of Pakeha men in full-time jobs was $12,104, that of Maori men $9936, that of Pakeha women $7779, and that of Maori women $6838 (Brosnan, personal communication). In both the Maori and Pakeha populations, men reverse the subordinate position relative to women of their own race that they occupied in school, and have higher median incomes than women.

Graduate incomes

Census data do not allow ready comparisons of occupation and income between groups of the same age with the same educational qualifica-

figure 2
Attrition rates of 1984 Form 3 Cohort.

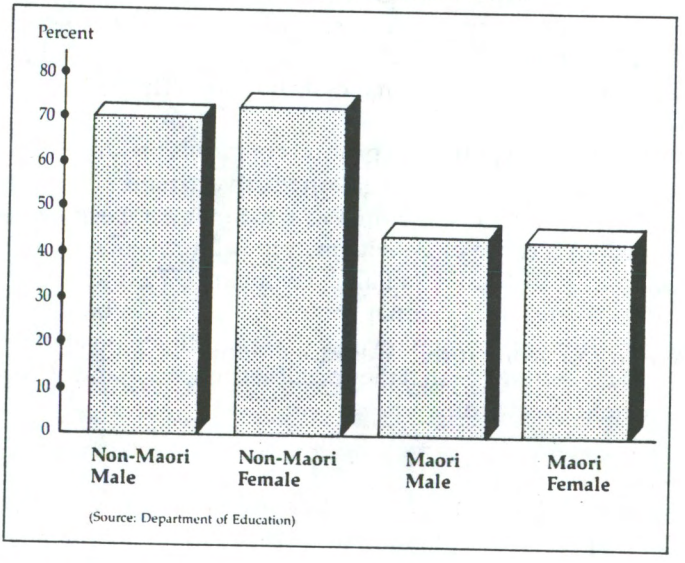


*Non-Maori statistics estimated

**Assuming that students who leave are at least 15 years, the graph shows the minimum time they would have spent in the first two classes.

(Based on graph prepared by Department of Education)

figure 3
Proportions awarded Grade B2 or higher pass across all subjects in School Certificate in 1986.



(Source: Department of Education)

tions gained at the same time. Such information on graduates is now being collected. Both Massey University and Waikato University have published data set out according to sex. I will be using statistics from Massey University (Gatenby, 1986) for four different types of qualification: Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences (leading to occupations with an androgynous image), Bachelor of Education (leading to occupations with an increasingly feminine image), Diploma of Business Administration which has a masculine image, and Bachelor of Agricultural Science and Honours which has a technological and, for women, non-traditional image. There is no information on Maori/non-Maori differences.

The principal finding is that women's incomes were lower than those of men with the same qualification gained in the same year from the same institution. The Waikato data confirmed this finding. Figure 4 shows the 'significance of gender in structuring earnings inequities' (Tienda, Smith and Ortiz, 1987). It gives the average incomes of men and women graduates with the four different types of qualification. Ages are comparable across gender. The distribution of incomes shows that when age is controlled, as in the education, social science and business administration groups, women's earnings are closely correlated with gender, while men's earnings vary according to qualification. Men's earnings from qualifications and occupations are sensitive to the market forces of the economy in a way in which women's earnings are not. Women in the work force exhibit both the segregation and the accompanying ceiling on earnings characteristics of a castelike minority. The investment value of a university qualification differs according to gender. This has implications for student loans and for assessing what users should pay as fees for courses.

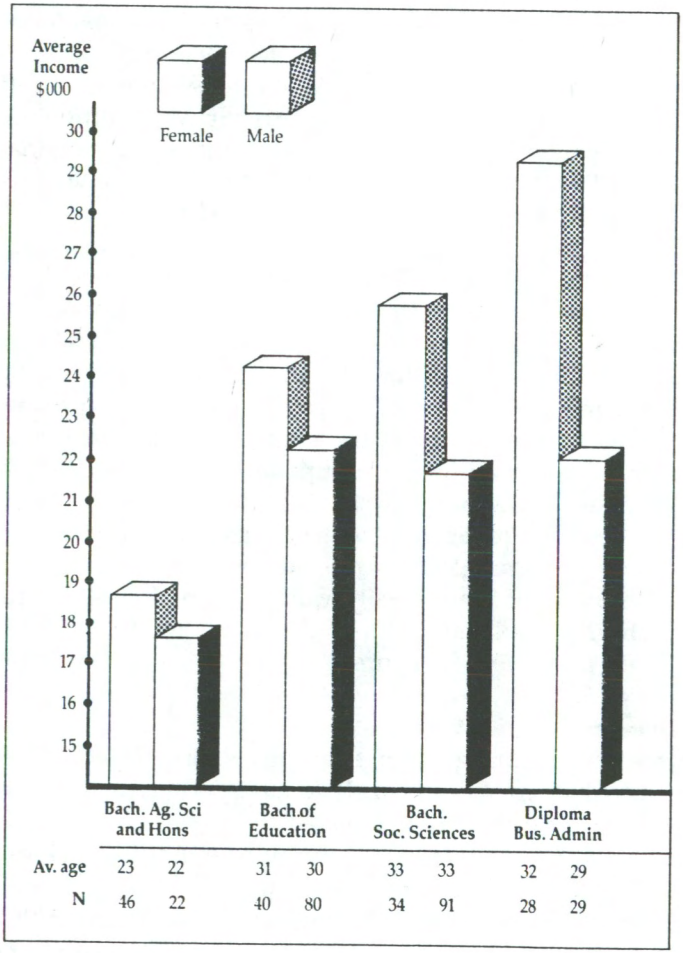
Maintenance of segregation

The current restructuring within the state and private sectors raises the question of what effect this is likely to have on the barriers of occupational segregation and median incomes.

Tienda, Smith and Ortiz (1987) examined trends in earnings within a framework of the industrial restructuring taking place in the United States in the 1970s. The main findings were that men benefited more from the entry of women into traditionally male-dominated occupations than did women. This fact lowers one's confidence in the economic value of women's entry into traditionally male occupations.

Girls may be able to do anything but where there are institutionalised barriers they cannot equalise their own financial rewards (Ryan, 1985). During economic restructuring in the United States, gender boundaries were redefined, but job segregation on the basis of sex

figure 4
Incomes of Massey University Graduates 1986
with four types of qualifications.



	Bach. Ag. Sci and Hons		Bach.of Education		Bach. Soc. Sciences		Diploma Bus. Admin	
Av. age	23	22	31	30	33	33	32	29
N	46	22	40	80	34	91	28	29

persisted. Tienda, Smith and Ortiz (1987) comment that attempts to close male-female wage differentials through a campaign for equal pay for work of comparable worth may merely result in the re-establishment of gender boundaries in new positions.

Conclusions

Evidence of both a Left and New Right kind has been presented to show that ceilings do exist for Maori and non-Maori women and for Maori men, but that these appear at different stages in the life cycle of members of each population group. For Maori boys and girls, a promotion ceiling appears within the first three years of schooling. By and large this is not a reflection of achievement (McDonald, 1988). The pattern of difference established at the point of promotion to the standards is maintained and intensified throughout the period of compulsory schooling. A further ceiling appears at the age of 15 years, when early school leaving is associated with being Maori but not with being Pakeha.

Within the period of compulsory schooling and beyond, no ceilings affecting Pakeha girls are visible, despite sex-stereotyping, the hidden curriculum and restricted access to some subjects. Pakeha girls and women appear to maintain academic superiority over boys and men in all areas in which they gain a toehold. Maori girls maintain superiority over Maori boys up to the time of the School Certificate examination. The promotion rates in the junior school of Pakeha girls show responsiveness to the 'market forces' of school characteristics.

We cannot assume that discriminatory treatment within education necessarily results in lower achievement by women relative to men (Thompson, 1984). In fact, it does not. In 1987, for example, Victoria University's Liaison Officer concluded that overall and on average, women performed appreciably better than men across all faculties. But that is no argument for not correcting unequal treatment wherever it exists. The danger is that women will endorse energy going mainly into altering conditions for girls in schools, when the evidence suggests that effort would be better placed in altering conditions in public life at the post-schooling level, including the position of women teachers. It is what happens in the sphere of public life, and particularly in paid employment, that holds the key to gender equality, race equality and the hidden curriculum in schools.

The incomes of Pakeha males show sensitivity to market forces as expressed in variability according to occupation and qualification. Within *education*, only the Maori, both female and male, exhibit Ogbu's castelike characteristics. Within the *occupational structure*, both women and Maori show castelike characteristics. Evidence for job ceilings for

Maori and for women appear in the lower median incomes of the occupations in which they are segregated. Massey graduate earnings show the association between income and gender, and Brosnan's data reveals the association between income and being Maori.

In academic achievement girls as a group surpass boys. To this extent the social order is not reproduced. Non-Maori as a group do better in school than Maori. To this extent the social order is reproduced. Job ceilings and other barriers mean that achievement as assessed by school measures, occupational status, or magnitude of income is primarily a function of gender and race in combination.

Action

Ogbu says that members of castelike minority groups, including the children, agree with everyone else that education is valuable but believe that they will be prevented from succeeding. The system, he says, leads people to want things and doesn't let them have them. The action suggested by Ogbu's theory and by the data presented in this paper is the reverse of prevailing ideas on improving learning and teaching or getting rid of streaming, both of which assume that schooling determines social structure. It is group action to remove job ceilings which is required first. Children in Maori families arrive at school having absorbed the information about their likelihood of employment, their likely future occupations and the evaluation by the majority of Maori scholastic ability. As Newsam (1987) says, 'society's valuations cannot be kept from the young people themselves'. An example is the common assumption that Maori children need to spend longer than Pakeha children in the junior classes.

Penetito (1988) has described the results for the Maori people:

> The feeling that a minority group member has about his or her status is a subjective aspect. This is the awareness of deprivation, feelings of powerlessness, the denial of recognition, the stereotyping and frustration that makes up the minority experience.

If job ceilings lifted, then the perception by Maori of the irrelevance of Pakeha schooling for Maori advancement would tend to break down. This would not be sufficient, however, to resolve the problems faced by Maori women.

Women as a group, as distinct from Maori as a group, do not suffer at school in the same manner from the existence of job ceilings, partly because they perceive their status, prestige and opportunities to lie as much in the private world and in unpaid labour as in the paid workforce. Ideas about women's 'fear of success' or lack of motive to achieve - if true

- could be explained by realities in the market place rather than by psychological lacks in women.

Both Maori and Pakeha women face the task of being able to use their education in the same market as men. For all women this market is anything but free. For Maori women it contains both gender and race barriers. Job ceilings are not the natural consequence of ability or qualifications, but are culturally constructed. They affect all women whether or not they are in the paid workforce.

But a feminist theory of education should be broader in scope than explanations of the purpose of education for work roles in the market economy. To repeat Gail Paradise Kelly's question, Does education allow women to obtain greater power in the spheres of both public and private life? At present the answer would appear to be no, it does not.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Nicholas Pole, Senior Statistician, Department of Education for information and for assistance with analysis of the data on promotion, Andrew McDonald for help with graphs, and Carol Chambers for drawing my attention to the information on Massey graduates.

Notes

1. Revision of a paper 'The Construction of Inequality for Women and Maori', delivered at the First Joint AARE-NZARE Conference, University of Canterbury, 3-6 December 1987.
2. 'Non-Maori' is used to make a distinction between those who identify as Maori and all other population groups. 'Pakeha' is used where the European majority is referred to. 'Race' is used in preference to 'ethnicity' and refers to both 'Pakeha' and 'Maori'.

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Geraldine McDonald is Assistant Director of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Maori Women and Health

Linda Erihe and Moana Herewini

The final submission to the Royal Commission on Social Policy from the Director General of the Department of Health states that:

> We recognise that New Zealand will succeed in the achievement of 'Health for All by the Year 2000' only if the particular health needs of the Maori people are met. Progress has been made, but further improvements will be dependent on the recognition of the three principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as the basis of good health, and on the establishment of effective structures and resource frameworks to support the delivery of culturally appropriate and accessible health services to the Maori people.[1]

In their submissions to the Royal Commission on Social Policy, Maori women deplored the low health status of Maori as a whole and Maori women in particular. They identified the broad range of changes that are required if the low health status of Maori is to be improved. These include:

- easier access to health facilities in rural areas;
- health programmes and clinics to be set up on marae;
- health services to incorporate Maori tradition and custom;
- encouragement of a closer liaison between community and medical services;
- positive action to encourage Maori people to enter the health areas;
- delivery of health services through tribal authorities;

- representation of Maori authorities on Area Health Boards;
- elimination of culturally inadequate, and at times offensive practices such as burning of the whenua after childbirth;
- further research into the causes of Maori health problems;
- education aimed at young Maori women regarding health hazards such as smoking, and aimed at raising contraceptive awareness.

Maori women also identified the paramount importance to their health and status of their spiritual link to the land.

Mana whenua - mana wahine

Land conservation and human reproduction are intimately related to the holistic concept of:

- providing a nurturing environment,
- nourishing and sustaining human life,
- expelling decomposing and reproducing human life in as natural a way as possible.

As Rose Pere reminds us, the physical, mental and spiritual affinity that was... ' and still is recognised between the placenta and the land, has bound up with it: survival, belonging, and a fierce pride of identity and worth'.[2]

Having the ability to control and conserve these vital elements in nature and in Maori women is crucial to the survival of the race and all humankind.

From a Maori perspective, the four dimensions of health have been well articulated and widely received

- **Te Taha Tinana:** the physical element
- **Te Taha Hinengaro:** the mental state
- **Te Taha Wairua:** the spiritual dimension
- **Te Taha Whanau:** the immediate and wider family.

The fifth dimension - **Te Taha Whenua** - must now be added to highlight Maori women's spiritual link with the land. Maori women are **Papa-tu-a-nuku.**

Energy arising from **Papa-tu-a-nuku** is in Maori women. This is their driving force. they are the land, their genitals are the whenua - **Whanau-Hapu-Kopu-Whenua.** They are the whare tangata, providing the first environment of the human being.

A comparison will now be drawn between the state of the land and what is happening to Maori women. The violence of physical abuse and the effects of introduced poisons and diseases are highlighted with examples and some statistics.

Violence - physical abuse of land and women

Violence to the land is evidenced in the increasing pollution of our waterways, rivers, lakes and air. It is to be seen in all aspects of mining, and soil erosion through the denuding of our native forests.

Violence to women is evidenced in the increasing numbers of survivors of rape, incest, brutality and emotional abuse.

All of these things have a devastating effect on the mental health of women, creating a loss of self-esteem and dignity, and feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness. It's no wonder that there are more Maori women than men admitted to psychiatric institutions in the 15 to 45 year age group, most being diagnosed as schizophrenic and/or with other related psychoses; and neurotic and/or with other depressive disorders.

There is also an ever increasing percentage of admissions for stress and adjustment reactions. From 1971 to 1982 the increase was 48 percent in Maori people for both sexes.

Poisons, diseases and their effects on land and women

The advent of introduced poisons and pests to Aotearoa is of grave concern to Maori women. Some of the poisons are in the form of sprays, chemicals, pesticides and herbicides. In fact, many European countries will not buy New Zealand food products because of the excessive use of chemical sprays on our food.

Other introduced pests are in the form of:

animals - such as fitches, rabbits, goats and oppossums;

fish - coy and grass carp;

people - immigrants who do not consider that any primary relationship with the 'host' people - tangata whenua - of this land is of any importance.

Every one of these introduced disease elements has a potential for producing great amounts of waste. Every one of these introduced disease elements is fully supported by deliberate laws enacted and enforced by New Zealand governments, all for the sake of Pakeha development. None of them contribute to Maori development but are destructive to it.

So where does all the waste go? At present, the main receptacles for the bulk of waste products are the land and the water. Both these resources have life-giving and spiritual elements, but the natural receptacle of waste products is **Papa-tu-a-nuku**, the land, not the water. Therefore, the pouring of raw sewage into our waterways is equivalent to pouring sewage and other wastes directly into our food bowls.

Maori women maintain that **Papa-tu-a-nuku**, as well as providing all

humankind with a life-giving force, is also the natural purifying and cleansing agent. But there is only so much that any natural resource can take before the effects of stress and overload are evident.

Maori women are now saying for the sake of their own health and that of their offspring and for the future of the whole race:

STOP!

No more poisons

No more pests

No more reneging on our rights under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Statistics highlighted by Dr Eru Pomare in a paper to the medical Research Council Jubilee Symposium in 1987 emphasised both the low health status and the lack of access to appropriate services experienced by Maori. For example:

- in the 24-44 age group, Maori people have over 3.5 times the rate of heart disease of non-Maori. Yet in 1983 and 1984, only 10-14 of over 800 coronary artery by-pass operations were performed on Maori people;
- Maori women have the highest lung cancer and ischaemic heart disease rates in the world. Indeed, heart and chest diseases are the main cause of death of Maori women and are prevalent from age 35 years and over;
- the cervical cancer rate is three times the Pakeha rate and one of the highest in the world. Cancer of the lungs, breast, bowel and cervix are the second major causes of death in Maori women and are prevalent from age 30 years and over.

A study of Maori health by Neil Pearce and Allan Smith in 1984 estimated that only 20 percent of excess Maori mortaility could be ascribed to socio-economic factors. The dramatic differences between Maori and non-Maori in mortality rates from some diseases, they suggested, could be explained by lack of equitable access to appropriate health services. This is not news to Maori women, who, in recognising the appalling shortcomings in the health services and the distribution of resources, have challenged existing systems and developed their own alternatives.

Maori women - agents for change

Maori women have fought long and hard for Maori health care. In the early 1900s, Princess Te Puea of the Waikato tribes sought to build a hospital in her tribal area so that her people, almost destroyed by the settler introduced disease of smallpox, could remain near their whanau. The public health authorities blocked this idea even then.[3]

To foster an interest in health matters has been a principal aim of the

Maori Women's Welfare League since its inception in 1951. The League's major health survey - *Rapuora, Health and Maori Women* - provides a unique source of information for current and future policy makers.[4] It also demonstrates the value of having Maori women control, plan, carry out and analyse substantial research projects within their communities. Practical outcomes from the study include the establishment of Whare Rapuora, that is, Maori health centres for clinical, social and health activities, preventative programmes such as 'smash the ash' (an anti-smoking campaign), and a campaign for the innoculation of Maori communities against hepatitis B.

Innovative health initiatives are developing on some marae, such as Waahi Marae in Huntly. Here Maori community health workers operate in partnership with Hospital and Area Health Boards, have close links with the Department of Health and promote preventative health care and the holistic aspects of Maori health. They cater for the person as a whole rather than parts of her or him (unlike ear, throat, or foot specialists).

There has also been an upsurge in the number of organisations bringing a Maori pespective to particular aspects of the health services. These include:

- the Maori Nurses Association, which has been instrumental in promoting and encouraging Maori women and men to enter the nursing profession by assisting in the establishment of a preparatory training course. It has also acted as a major channel through which Maori nurses support and promote Maori initiatives and actions within the health services;
- Te Waiora o Aotearoa Trust, which aims to educate and enhance the well-being of Maori people through the medium of video and the encouragement through Trust funding of Maori sporting, cultural and holistic health oriented activities;
- Te Kakano o te Whanau Trust, a national network of Maori women's groups working in the area of sexual abuse and violence with whanau members.

Activities by organisations such as these draw attention to the limitations of many existing services, the inadequacy of the information on which they are based, and the possibility of alternatives in decision-making processes and in the provision of services.

The final submission of the Department of Health continues by saying:

> Devolution of responsibility for health care for the Maori people is an issue which requires resolution within the wider move to create a network of area health boards. We

> are all aware that the health of the Maori people lags behind that of the non-Maori population in many respects. There is a need for formal recognition of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and for the identification of ways to foster biculturalism and partnership between Maori and non-Maori. It is hoped that options for the respective roles of central Governnment, Area Health Boards, iwi authorities and Maori people themselves will be identified in discussions with those most concerned with this issue.[5]

The Health Department, Hospital Boards and other medical institutions are beginning to respond to the pressure created by the facts of Maori ill-health. Maori women have already done much to bring about improvement in the health of their people but they stress that there is still much to be done. The need for comprehensive action is urgent. The involvement of Maori women in any future discussions such as the implications of the Gibbs report, 'Unshackling The Hospitals', and the composition and administration of Area Health Boards, is vital to any future planning in the area of health.

Directions

1. That legislation be brought in by Government to amend the Area Health Boards Act 1983 so that the following can be included:
   (a) Re-writing of the Act to recognise the Treaty of Waitangi, its spirit and principles as related to the health of the Maori;
   (b) That in true partnership, the Area Health Boards Act include membership to equal 50 percent Maori representation elected by the iwi, not through the present voting (democratic) system where Maori people can always be out-voted on numbers alone.
   (c) That direct allocation of Vote: Health resources and funding be based on people's needs in which a target area would be Maori health.
2. That a Maori Health Authority/Commission be set up in place of the existing Maori Health Standing Committee (under the New Zealand Board of Health) with direct allocation of Vote: Health resources and funding. This Authority/Commission to work in close liaison with:
   - Central Government - Minister of Health
   - Health Department, Head Office
   - Area Health Boards
   - Tribal/Iwi Authorities.

Personal safety

Maori women, already disadvantaged by poor health and poor education, are further threatened by male violence and sexual abuse.

A 1984 Department of Social Welfare study of sexual abuse indicated that 71 percent of 136 girls (Maori and non-Maori) in Social Welfare institutions had experienced some form of sexual abuse.[6]

In a paper written for the Royal Commission on Social Policy entitled 'Te Hono ki te Wairua', Kuni Jenkins states: 'Abuse against women and children is a painful example of the breaking of the rules of tapu and noa'.

Maori women are actively seeking support and assistance to stop the abuse they suffer from Maori and non-Maori men. In this area, as in the others examined earlier, Maori women are promoting approaches appropriate to their communities. Their need for resources was stated clearly and adamantly to the Royal Commission.

Te Kakano o te Whanau, for example, was established in 1985 by Maori women who felt that the services offered by Pakeha women and government institutions did not meet their needs and were lacking in cultural sensitivity. They aim to co-ordinate and find funding for Maori women working in the areas of sexual abuse and violence. In their submission to the Royal Commission, they argue that sexual abuse and violence must be seen in the context of cultural abuse arising as the result of the history of colonisation. In particular they identify the breakdown of the whanau-hapu-iwi structures where the whanau always took responsibility for its members.

Attempts by Maori women in the Women's Refuge movement, by Te Kakano o te Whanau and other Maori women's groups, and Te Kete o te Ora (Kaikohe), to respond effectively to the needs of Maori women survivors of sexual abuse and violence, have focussed on the need to encourage the respective whanau to take responsibility for supporting the woman and working with the offender. They identify the need for resources to support and train those working to establish whanau-based support and counselling. They emphasise that protection of the women and children must be the paramount aim.

Maori women, like non-Maori women, recognise however that little will change until men face up to and take responsibility for their behaviour. One submission called on Maori men to 'set up counselling teams to deal with violent and abusive men within the whanau', and to recognise 'that the cost of protecting their covert actions through our women's aroha for them and our shame of people knowing, is the physical and mental health of our women and children'. (Raukawa submissions, Nos 2297, 2563, 2568.)

As with non-Maori men, Maori men are beginning to take action by forming groups of 'Men Against Violence', such as Nga Tama A Rangi in Hastings and Te Whanau o Tane in Auckland. Maori women, however, are calling for more concerted effort from Maori men to work with those whose actions are at present hidden from authority but are known to whanau and community, and for government to facilitate this by providing financial support.

In general, Maori women working in the area are working towards a co-ordinated approach to the issues of family violence.

Notes

1. Department of Health. 1987. Final submission to the Royal Commission on Social Policy.
2. Pere, Rangimarie Rose. 1983. *Ako: Concepts and Learning in the Maori Tradition.* Department of Sociology Monograph, University of Waikato.
3. King, Michael. 1977. *Te Puea.* Hodder and Stoughton.
4. Murchie, Elizabeth. 1984. *Rapuora, Health and Maori Women.* Maori Women's Welfare League.
5. See note 1.
6. von Dadelson, Jane. 1987. *Sexual Abuse of Children.* Department of Social Welfare.

This paper was one of a number concerning Maori women, prepared for the Royal Commission on Social Policy, which did not receive wide circulation.

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The Enquiry into the Te Oranga Girls Home, 1908

Beryl Hughes

The Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives(1908) includes an enthralling Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Te Oranga Girls Home.[1] The commissioner for this enquiry , H.W. Bishop, was appointed to investigate the management of Te Oranga over the two previous years. Specifically, he was to assess the system of classification of the girls;[2] the methods of punishment; the duties and working conditions of staff; and the relations of staff and matron. What set the enquiry going was a letter to the *Lyttelton Times* from an Anglican clergyman, Dr F.P. Fendall, written after a conversation with a girl out on service. He criticised the corporal punishment in the Home, saying it suggested the savagery of some American slave-owners. Other letters followed: it is clear that many people were interested in Te Oranga and its regularly absconding inmates. The Official Visitors to the Home (voluntary workers, two women and one man, who were recognised by the Department of Education, which was responsible for the Home) then wrote to the Department of Education asking for an enquiry.

Te Oranga, the only reformatory for girls in the country, was situated in Burwood, in the outskirts of Christchurch. It was established in 1900 as part of a reorganisation of the education and training of problem girls and boys. To begin with, Te Oranga held only about a dozen girls, but

it quickly expanded, becoming a catch-all for girls from all over New Zealand. Magistrates could commit girls to it, girls could be removed from prison and sent to it under special warrant, while Industrial Schools could ease their own burdens by dispatching particularly troublesome girls there.[3] Most of the girls at Te Oranga were transfers from other schools.

The girls at Te Oranga are several times referred to in the enquiry as 'culls'. Chambers' *Twentieth Century Dictionary* defines a 'cull' as an unsuitable animal eliminated from a flock or herd, a description which echoes in a milder form the words often applied to inmates of Industrial Schools and reformatories. It was said in a ministerial report in 1901 that the 'leading idea in both reformatories and Industrial Schools proper is predominantly educational'. The purpose behind these schools seems to me to have been to prevent what were considered undesirable elements from 'polluting' society. But once in the schools, the young people were undoubtedly subjected to an educational programme of sorts, one which mirrored the sex-stereotyping of society. Boys at Burnham Industrial School were taught tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry. Girls at Te Oranga worked at 'feminine' tasks: they cleaned the buildings, helped with cooking and laundry, and learned plain sewing and dressmaking. It should not be thought that the girls disliked this in principle, as distinct from disliking the unpleasant conditions in which they often had to work. Miss Harrison, the school teacher at Te Oranga, who appears to be a relatively detached witness with loyalties clearly outside the Home, said that 'the girls complain they do not like outside work. They would like to be taught cooking and dressmaking and housework generally. They would like to be trained domestic servants or housewives' (p.34). This suggests that the girls could appraise their prospects realistically. It casts doubt on the value of the tasks the girls had to perform; in theory they learned dressmaking and cooking, but in practice they presumably spent much of their time in doing the least skilled work of the institution.

Te Oranga cannot have been a pleasant place to run or to be in and its rapid expansion meant that for some years the accommodation was inadequate. The Report gives no description of the place; it was from the educationist, A.G. Butchers (who observed 'the Te Oranga Home had little of a home to commend it'), that I learned that each building was enclosed by a twelve foot high iron fence, so that the girls lived in a kind of prison.[4] There were extensive grounds, but not enough buildings to permit proper organisation. At the time of the enquiry, plans for new buildings had been approved by the Department of Education which was responsible for the Home.

The inmates were clearly a mixed bag. In age they ranged from 12 to 21, and they included a few who were retarded. (Ordinary schooling at the time was not compulsory beyond the age of 12.) A number - we are not told how many - suffered from venereal disease. To quote the commissioner, 'Many of the girls are brought direct from the brothels, from Chinese dens, from the open streets, from the company of dissolute parents' (p.vii). Because of the inadequate accommodation, the 54 girls in the Home at the time of the enquiry were divided into only two groups: 11 of the better-behaved were in the first class, enjoying special privileges, and 43 were in the second class. Poor accommodation, leading to poor classification, leading to special problems, was a constant theme in the evidence.

Although in a semi-rural area, Te Oranga had good transport links with Christchurch. Some of the privileged girls were taken there occasionally, while some of the older girls had spells of domestic service in the area. Mrs Branting, the matron or manager of the Home, said in her evidence (p.133) that people constantly wrote to her for servants. It was in fact these links with the community which led to the enquiry.

The Minutes of Evidence, over 130 pages of small type, have to be carefully assessed.[5] A number of people had reasons for departing from the truth. The matron, whose management and humanity were on trial, said that she was not financially dependent on her job, but presumably she hoped to emerge with credit from the enquiry. Her staff may have believed their jobs depended on the support they gave to her version. Even the voluntary Official Visitors had an interest in presenting a rosy picture: a plain one might cast doubts on their own competence or kindness. I do not suggest that these people were necessarily lying, but that one must weigh their evidence.

The girls' evidence must also be weighed. Several of the adults said the girls were terrible liars and a few of the girls admitted they were in the habit of lying. Considering the power exercised by the staff, it would not be surprising if the girls lied as a strategy for survival. The girls were described as unstable and unreliable and some of the evidence supports this. It is hard not to sympathise with the girls, victims of poverty and neglect, but it is advisable to look critically at their testimony.

These people are faceless for me except for Bishop, the commissioner, whose photograph (firm, alert) appears in *The Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Vol. 3, p.243. Born in England and educated at Winchester, oldest of English public schools (motto: *Manners Makyth Man*), he might not seem a good choice for chairman of an enquiry into the workings of a girls' reformatory in one of the bleaker parts of Christchurch. In fact he seems to have been not a bad choice. A man of many parts, he had worked in

hop-culture in Motueka, taught in Wellington, was a licensed interpreter in Maori and a magistrate for many years. In some respects no more enlightened than most of his contemporaries, his aversion to corporal punishment separates him from almost all the adults who spoke on the subject.

As a magistrate Bishop had committed some of the girls to Te Oranga, and the Home appears to have been a familiar place to him (and probably to all Christchurch magistrates). This might seem a disqualification, but his knowledge had advantages: he would be a hard man to hoodwink. He had presented a report on the Burnham Industrial School for boys in 1906, so he had experience of institutions for young people.[6]

All who gave evidence were examined on oath. The matron was represented by T.G. Russell, a Christchurch lawyer who was aggressive in defending her reputation, asking leading questions repeatedly. C.E. Salter appeared for a member of the public interested in Te Oranga; in effect Salter represented the girls' interests. R.H. Pope appeared on behalf of the Education Department.

The Report is too long to discuss in detail here. Instead I will focus on particular people and themes.

First Mrs Branting, the matron. It would be easy to cast her as a villain. All Russell's skirmishings cannot hide her defects. Her attitude to finance was highly flexible. She spent money given by friends of the Home for Christmas treats on a piano, tennis-court and gymnasium and was saving for a swimming pool. She took money for tips out of special funds in a way that was misleading - though hardly wicked There was something odd in her handling of pocket-money and money for church collections. But her interpretation of Christmas treats seems reasonable and was approved by the Visitors.

More serious than her rough financial management was her failure to keep the punishment book properly. As Bishop pointed out, the recording of punishments long after the event 'from scribbled data or from memory' prevented the Department from monitoring punishments adequately. He also criticised departmental officers who had ignored the obvious defects in the register.

The worst thing about Mrs Branting was her callousness. Take the case of E.S., who absconded while out on service and then allegedly led an immoral life. She claimed on returning that she had been ill, and Mrs Branting admitted that she looked thin. Two days later she was punished for absconding with 12 cuts of the strap and detention in the punishment cell on dry bread. Three days later, she was hospitalised with pains in the head (p.108). According to Dr Alice Moorhouse, the authoritarian and unsympathetic medical officer at Te Oranga, her

ailment (appendicitis) could not be attributed to the punishment.[7] E.S. absconded again during the course of the enquiry. Mrs Branting's medical expertise, much emphasised at times (a nurse, a *doctor's* widow) seems to have failed her here, let alone her humanity.

Mrs Branting gave signs of being power-hungry, as we shall see in the case of A.G. Moreover, like her staff, she was quick to suspect the girls of sexual misconduct. Her language was unrefined. Although she denied it, I believe, after considering the evidence, that she did call two of the girls 'great big hulking hulls' and did say to A.G.'s prospective employer, 'Before you could get her there would probably be a few bastards in the world'. I could quote other examples of her vigorous speech, which probably shocked the ladies who frequented the Home more than the girls.

Yet something must be said on her behalf. She had to cope with 54 resident girls, many of them unruly. They knocked each other down, hit and kicked each other (and occasionally the staff), and often ran away. There were another 22 girls employed outside the Home as servants who were also her responsibility. With the help of the sub-matron, she had to keep in touch with employers and prospective employers, take girls to meet them and correspond with girls when they were out on service. In addition, she was responsible for a mini-farm: cows, chickens and bees were kept on the nine acres of land, while all firewood and nearly all vegetables for the Home came from the property.

Although the number of staff for 54 girls may seem high - matron, sub-matron, four attendants and a living-out school teacher - some of them were responsible (with the help of the girls) for the cooking, cleaning, laundry and mending for 60 people. The girls needed close, constant supervision indoors and in the outdoor work which took up several hours each day. (A man was also employed for outside work.)

Mrs Branting's work was tough and she was a tough woman; no gentle person could have survived 12 years at Te Oranga as she did.[8] But people with no obvious axe to grind - neighbours and girls who had left for ever - attested to her concern, at least for most of the girls, most of the time. I think she did a reasonable job in appalling conditions and occasionally she behaved harshly. Although she strapped freely she was not the most fierce. A.G. said she could take 12 from the Matron but hardly 6 from Miss Hunt.

Bishop criticised some aspects of her management, her failure to keep the punishment register properly, her liberal strappings, her boxing of ears and other points but did not condemn her overall. In fact he wrote (p.7):

> Yes, in spite of many shortcomings, many drawbacks,

> many weaknesses, one cannot but feel grateful to the management for much excellent work that is being done.

The management was Mrs Branting. Perhaps the verdict is too kind. But Mr Pope of the Education Department considered her position the hardest of all those under the Industrial Schools Act (p.125).

The case of Elizabeth Howden, who was on the staff for a few months, gives a glimpse of working life for women. She had been engaged under unclear conditions. She claimed she was engaged as a clerk, with occasional duties as an attendant; Mrs Branting claimed that duties as an attendant were an important part of the work (pp.51-2). Miss Howden was indignant at having to do what she called cow-work (supervision of girls while they milked). There was another misunderstanding over her salary. Then two months after starting work she left to nurse a sick relative. Two weeks later Mrs Branting recalled her. Soon afterwards, Miss Howden had a bad attack of flu and was dealt with unsympathetically by the matron (p.52). Miss Howden's response was to try to stir rebellious feelings among the girls. On being informed, the department ordered her dismissal. Bishop (p.vii) agreed the dismissal was justified but recommended that conditions of employment should be clearly stated in writing. Miss Howden, a rather foolish woman, was a victim of lax arrangements and the assumption that a woman's job could be put on hold while she cared for relatives. (Her absence and her recall injured her relationship with Mrs Branting.)

I wish I knew more about the girls, who are not even names. Obviously they were from the poorest levels of society: difficult girls from other levels would not be committed to Te Oranga. We learn nothing of their ethnic background except that one girl was said to be half Chinese. A little information can be gathered about a few girls. A.G. was sent to Te Oranga for theft. C.A. claimed she was committed solely for one visit to a Chinese house in Wellington. 'I only took some flowers to a woman named Mrs G.' Russell's questions showed he had reason not to believe her. G.J. said she was arrested when on the point of going to Sydney with a man. She was 14 at the time (p.3).

The girl whose misfortunes led to the enquiry was AG, committed to the Home for theft three years earlier by Bishop, when she was nearly 18. She disliked Te Oranga, finding the food inadequate and the work hard. When she complained to Mrs Branting, 'I was thumped on the back and told I was always complaining'. On the certificate of a magistrate (Bishop again) and two doctors she was committed to a mental hospital because of her violent temper and (possibly) a suicide attempt. After a stay of six weeks she was sent to the local Samaritan Home, where the matron, Miss Early, found her excitable at first but 'very amenable to

discipline' and fit to be tried in domestic service. Mrs Branting announced she intended to 'keep the girl in bolts and bars' as long as she could.

A power struggle in which the Department and Miss Early were involved developed between Mrs Branting and a clergyman's wife who wanted to employ A.G. It ended with A.G. going into service, as she wanted, and Miss Early, who had defied the authority of her chairman on A.G.'s behalf, losing her job.

A.G. was clearly a problem: she had attempted suicide and attacked a girl with a knife. Yet she had responded well to Miss Early. Mrs Branting was strongly prejudiced against her and, as Bishop pointed out (p.v), seemed less interested in helping A.G. than in getting her own way.

Apart from individuals, there are themes that stand out, such as sexuality. Every girl committed to Te Oranga or returned there after absconding was subjected to 'a physical examination of a highly private nature' (p.v). Girls transferred from other institutions were exempt. If Mrs Branting, who examined them, suspected VD, she informed the medical officer. The worst cases were sent to hospital. Bishop approved the examinations in principle, but insisted that they should be done by a doctor. There had been criticism of Mrs Branting's role and the examinations must have harmed her relationship with the girls.

Mrs Branting was convinced that the girls absconded chiefly to meet men, although conditions behind the iron fence provided an incentive to escape. The girls thought they were misjudged. H.M. complained that Mrs Branting 'tells the girls they cannot contain themselves when there is a man on the premises.' Mrs Branting and some of the other adults who gave evidence seem to have believed that all contacts the girls had with men, when in domestic service or when absconding, led to sexual intercourse and probably prostitution. The girls' evidence shows they did have contact with men when outside, though it's not clear if they absconded in order to meet them.

Masturbation was another bogey. Dr Moorhouse said it was very common in the Home. 'That would necessitate very constant and strict and almost excessive supervision?' Bishop asked, and was told that it did, day and night. The staff were alert to catch masturbators. Several girls complained that when a girl turned over in bed, 'Miss Mills sings out to us'.

The only time the possibility of lesbianism was raised was when F.B. was asked if she had been found in bed with N.H. She answered that she had been sitting on N.H.'s bed, talking to her. Any physical demonstration of love would have been difficult in the crowded conditions, with

staff sleeping nearby, ears tuned to the sound of bedsprings. Girls were everywhere and were diligent and imaginative tale-bearers. A letter written by a girl (A.Z.M.) out on service to one inside, signed 'Mack' and addressed to 'My own dear Cherry Ripe', suggests lesbianism, although the letter - apart from the opening words - has nothing particularly affectionate in it and is mainly concerned with 'Mack's' dislike of Te Oranga and Mrs Branting; it was read out in court as an illustration of her attitude (p.31).

An inevitable theme was punishment. There were various forms, from strapping to reducing a girl's bread allowance, but it was physical correction which roused most public interest. We learn what it involved from Bishop's condemnation (p.3):

> To think that a young woman of twenty years of age, laid on a bed, face down, clothed in a nightdress and receiving twelve strokes of a strap on her body is to my mind most repellent, beside being quite opposed to all modern methods of discipline.

Girls could receive fewer than 12 strokes but Mrs Branting seems to have preferred this number, the maximum the Department permitted. She also thumped backs and boxed ears freely; she boxed the ears of F.B. one Boxing Day and then sent her to bed for asking if the punishment was a celebration of the day (p.22). Girls could be shut in the punishment cell (an ordinary small room) and in spite of denials from the staff I believe, after studying the evidence, that girls were occasionally forgotten and missed a meal. Bishop thought the cell was not properly supervised.

Two kinds of punishment, designed to humiliate, had aroused comment. The first was a special punishment dress, 'an extraordinary garment of many and various hues', as Bishop said in condemning it. The second was compulsory cutting of the girls' hair, which at that period was worn long. If a girl absconded, short hair would identify her. Several adults were in favour of this punishment. Dr Moorhouse said that her hair was cut off when she was a girl 'and I thought it was very nice'. 'Yours was not cut off as a punishment?' asked Bishop, on target as usual. 'No,it was not' (p.77).

Mrs Branting said that punishments were used only after persuasion had failed. We can't check this, but we can read the details of punishments in an appendix to the Report. This shows that in the two previous years, 153 punishments had been inflicted on 43 girls, about one every five days. Some were relatively light - confinement to the cell for a few hours, or losing a slice of bread. The number of punishments is perhaps not surprising. The girls were undoubtedly turbulent. One of them, according to Mrs Branting, kicked a staff member so badly that she was

- the words are Mrs Branting's - under the doctor for nearly six months. Insubordination, fighting, spitting, striking another girl with a piece of timber, stealing, lying are some of the offences listed.

Many questions were asked about food, always important to captive eaters. Given that the girls must have varied in size and metabolism, it is not remarkable that they disagreed over the adequacy of meals. Most girls questioned said the amount was satisfactory, some said it wasn't, and a few claimed there was enough in summer but not in winter. Dr Moorhouse considered it 'very good plain food', while Bishop pronounced it 'good, wholesome and ample in quantity'. He based this partly on the 'healthy and robust appearance' of the girls, which seems a reasonable test.

But Bishop had two criticisms of the food. He had heard that Mrs Branting watered the syrup. The amount of jam and dripping put on the girls' bread by the staff was also earnestly debated and two slices of bread, one spread with dripping, one with jam, seem to have lain around for some time. Bishop was particularly interest in the syrup-watering and hardly rested until Mrs Branting promised the practice would cease.

His other complaint was the use of chamber-pots as containers for jam, sugar, rice and milk. When the girls complained of this, according to A.Z.M., Mrs Branting told them 'they never had better in their own homes'. Mrs Branting said that chamber-pots were used to store food in many institutions. She had bought more than were needed and used the spares as containers. She added rather snidely to Bishop, who was active in the questioning, 'Evil to him who evil thinks'. Bishop strongly condemned the practice (p.vi):

> The endeavour should be to refine and elevate these girls, and not to cause them to believe that we appraise them so low in the domestic scale as to store their food in a vessel that is not even mentioned in ordinary polite society.

Refining and elevating the girls - or even coping with them properly - was hardly feasible in existing conditions. Immediate reorganisation was urged by several witnesses. Bishop in the Report strongly supported the plan of the City Missioner who visited the Home regularly. This plan proposed that on arrival, girls should be held in a reception class for three months. There would be three other classes: the third class for particularly difficult girls, the second class into which most girls would be placed after the reception class, and the first class which would be reached by good behaviour. This plan was praised by several witnesses and Mr Pope of the Education Department said that it would be put into operation once the new building was completed.

Undoubtedly more space would improve life at Te Oranga; it would

also permit better control of the girls. Control was obviously the key issue. The instruction received by the girls in cookery, bee-keeping, poultry-rearing, gardening, dressmaking, plain and fancy sewing, designed, it was said, to fit them for work as servants or wives, their leisure activities of gymnastics, tennis and croquet, were not of primary importance to the authorities. The girls were at Te Oranga to be controlled and reformed and restored eventually to the world, clean, orderly and respectable and no longer a perceived threat to society.

But supposing girls were still unregenerate at 21, the age at which, under the Industrial Schools Act, they passed beyond the control of the authorities? Several witnesses, as well as the commissioner, believed the authorities should have power to detain young people beyond that age. Bishop pointed out (p.vii):

> Society protects itself today from the habitual criminal, it has an equal right to protect itself against the young sexual degenerate without waiting for him to first commit some horrible crime.

Hy hypothesised that a girl might be 'hopelessly bad. She is a sexual degenerate, and will be a source of contamination wherever she goes'. Such a girl ought not to be turned loose on society on reaching 21. Mr Pope believed that magistrates should have power to extend the period of detention to the age of 25 for inmates of Te Oranga who, in the opinion of the matron, were 'unfit to be at large' at the age of 21. He said that he and Mrs Branting had in fact kept the information from a girl that she had reached her majority. She was a 'half-caste Chinese and there was a grave danger of her going back to the Chinese life'.

These attitudes came directly or indirectly from the influential social hygiene movement, which was based on the hereditarian ideas of the nineteenth century. Many of the supporters of this movement wanted to sterilise those they considered unfit, or at least to limit their opportunities for breeding. They must have been delighted with the passing in 1909 of the Industrial Schools Act, soon after the Te Oranga enquiry and probably influenced by some of the evidence. This act gave magistrates power to detain beyond the age of 21 any inmate of an Industrial School who was found 'to be morally degenerate or otherwise not (in the public interest) a fit person to be free of control'. This detention could, with some safeguards for the person involved, be extended indefinitely. The act applied to both sexes, but the reports of the Minister of Education show that it was used against women more than men. The 1914 report shows 12 women detained under the act and 1 man. In 1915, the numbers of women and men respectively were 19 and 3; in 1916, 27 and 5. This is not surprising, since women seem to have been held solely

responsible for the spread of venereal disease and for the birth of illegitimate children.

Te Oranga's short history came to a rather abrupt end in 1918. In the two previous years there had been an average of 70-85 girls in residence, so it may have looked to be necessary and flourishing. But in fact, departmental policy was changing. A system of boarding-out children from Industrial Schools with relatives, friends or people not related to them was now adopted. The Minister of Education, in his report for 1918, claimed that according to departmental officials and the staff of Industrial Schools, the boarding-out system was superior to what he called, significantly, 'the barracks or institution system'. The preference for the boarding-out system in dealing with neglected and dependent children was 'practically world-wide' (*AJHR*, 1918, vol.2, E1, p.66). It was also cheaper to run - a point which probably carried weight with authorities everywhere - since the number of institutions could be reduced, with only the most intractable young people being kept inside. At Te Oranga, the majority of girls had always arrived as transfers from other schools, but 'with more careful scrutiny of each case and different methods of treatment' the number of transfers was reduced to a minimum. Moreover, 'young delinquent and uncontrollable children' were now to be supervised in their own homes, provided the conditions were favourable. (Previous reports gave the impression that the girls' home conditions were invariably appalling.) The better behaved girls were placed in domestic service, while a small number, who could not be dealt with in any other way, were sent to Caversham Industrial School (*AJHR*, 1919, vol.1, E1, pp.48-9).

Te Oranga was gone and not much lamented, I assume. Yet after eighty years the Report of the Commission of Enquiry can still enfold and enthral one with its details of ordinary life in all its obstreperous, bursting energy, barely contained behind the iron fence Some of the worst aspects of that life have, I hope, gone for ever, but many of the attitudes expressed by adult witnesses are alive and rampant to this day.

Notes

1. *AJHR*, 1908, vol.5, H21.
2. I welcome the comments of Sandra Coney on the use of the word 'girl'. See *Every Girl: A Social History of Women and the YWCA in Auckland 1885-1985*, Auckland YWCA, 1986:1.
3. Industrial Schools were intended for girls and boys who were 'destitute, or whose only faults are due to want of proper discipline and control...' Reformatories were for those who had 'shown criminal or vicious tendencies'. *AJHR*, 1901, vol.3, E3,p.2.
4. Butchers, A.G., *The Centennial History of Education in Canterbury*, published

by the Centennial Committee of the Canterbury Education Board (1950?):232-3.

5. I give page references to the evidence only where the person named gives evidence on more than one occasion or gives evidence which runs to more than a couple of pages. In other cases, the evidence can be traced through the Index to the Evidence of the Report. Girls are referred to throughout the Report by their initials. In the Index, the initial of the surname is given first, but in the evidence itself, the initial of the first name is given first. I have used the latter form throughout the article.
6. The terms of the enquiry into Burnham School had required Bishop to consider the same issues as he was to consider in the Te Oranga enquiry, with the additional matter of the treatment of sickness. The Burnham Report is less than a twelfth of the size of the Te Oranga Report and contains no evidence given by witnesses. Much the same problems are revealed as at Te Oranga, e.g. poor building and unsatisfactory classification of inmates. Relations between manager and staff appear to have been worse than at Te Oranga. As at Te Oranga, it was an outcry in the press which led to the enquiry. Bishop's Report can be found in *AJHR*, 1906, vol.2, E3B. The secretary of the commission was Ettie Rout the safe-sex campaigner, who worked as a shorthand-typist in Christchurch at that time.
7. Moorhouse was educated at Christchurch Girls' High School, when Helen Connon was principal. She gained her MB ChB at the University of Glasgow in 1901 and practised in Christchurch for a number of years. She was at one time medical officer at St Helen's, Christchurch.
8. She retired in 1912.

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If You Want to See the Goddess...

An Introduction to Feminist Women's Sprituality

Jill McLaren

> and from your name Eve we shall take
> the word Evil.
> and from God's the word Good.
> now you understand patriarchal morality
>
> Judy Grahn
> from *The Work of a Common Woman*

> i found god in myself
> and i loved her/i loved her fiercely
>
> Ntozake Shange
> 'Poem'

Feminist women's spirituality is gaining ground in New Zealand. In Auckland it has advanced from city to suburbs. A local handout entitled *North Shore Schools: Adult Day and Evening Classes: 1988 Programme* arrived in my letterbox in February. It included: *'Womenspirit.* A course for women to explore their inner strengths and wisdom through music,

literature, meditation, ritual, fun and laughter... Tutor: Peta Joyce.'

Last year Peta was a member of the *Broadsheet* collective. Nevertheless many feminists share the view which Pat Rosier sets out in her *Broadsheet* article, 'Goddess Imagery and Radical/Socialist Feminism', that 'exploring/changing one's spiritual dimension through the recreation of goddess myths is seen as individual, apolitical, avoiding the realities of the material world' (Rosier, 1987: 46).

Meanwhile, pakeha feminists, heterosexual and lesbian, crowd classes in Women's Spirituality, including those run by Lea Holford who uses goddess imagery extensively in the courses she has held at the Auckland University Centre for Continuing Education since 1984. Lea finds the 'Goddess' empowering for women.

Such fundamental disagreement among feminists brings me to reopen a topic not touched on by the Women's Studies Association since the Eighth Annual Conference in Hamilton, 1984, when Juliet Batten held a workshop on 'The Politics of Ritual', and Cathy Benland one on 'Feminist Witchcraft'. Unfortunately my experience of feminist women's spiritual practice in New Zealand is limited to Auckland where no official network exists, although open rituals at summer and winter solstice help to bring women from different groups together. In June 1988, around 60 women celebrated Winter Solstice to the pounding of surf in a huge cave ringed with home-made candle lamps at Te Henga on Auckland's west coast.

Apart from such occasions, the main connection between ritual groups spun off from various courses andinterest groups is the *Women's Spirituality Newsletter*, begun by Lea, to which any woman is welcome to contribute. In 1987 production of the Newsletter devolved on groups, and its appearance became somewhat haphazard until a solid basis for sharing was established early in 1988. The latest issue at the time of writing, Autumn, Vol. 13. (Crone, 1988), is a photocopied publication of 11 pages. It offers useful information, from how to take out a subscription or play elvish chess to directions for making an Agee jar lantern for the solstice cave journey. It provides atmospheric black-and-white graphics, personal experiences (including Ruth's three-day camp with the American activist witch Starhawk), an enthusiastic introduction to the Lazaris tapes, descriptions of personal and group rituals and a summary of the first day of Lea's Gaia course.

This study is no more than a sprat dangled in the hope of eliciting more solid and geographically diverse information. The image of feminist women's spirituality presented here is inevitably affected by my background as a middle class heterosexual pakeha crone - a ritual group member with an agnostic cast of mind. I concentrate on theory

and practice outside religious systems, with full acknowledgement of the great debt owed feminist theologians still within them. I include a bibliography, details from Lea's teaching practice and an account of a ritual art project organised by Juliet.

Definitions come first since, at 60, I find the words 'spirit', 'spiritual' and 'spirituality' difficult. Like 'God', they carry heavy negative connotations for me. The *OED* (1973) terms 'spirit' the 'animating or vital principle in man' (sic). Charlene Spretnak, editor of *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (1982), explains that 'the life of the spirit, or soul, refers merely to functions of the mind. Hence spirituality is an intrinsic dimension of human consciousness'. Just as we need food and shelter, so we need relationships with people, animals, the earth, and must determine our identity as creatures of the world and the universe. Later in the same collection, Judy Davis and Juanita Weaver write, 'In its broadest context, spirituality is being open to reality in all of its dimensions - in its rational, irrational, and super-rational complexity, and acting on that understanding' (Davis & Weaver, 1982).

Pat's article continues: 'I can't dismiss spirituality either as an experience or as a need, but neither can I see it as a "solution". I'm for paradise on earth and think we'll only get it by achieving economic and social justice. But my paradise does include a sense of the connectedness of things, past, present and future, and that's usually called spiritual' (Rosier, 1987:46).

Feminist Women's Spirituality is not synonymous with goddess spirituality (some groups seldom, if ever, use the goddess image) or with group ritual. It has no 'law' or 'book', or approved dogma; each woman is free, like Pat, to discover, develop and discard her own myths, symbols and definitions as they arise from her experience. What joining a group and sharing this process of exploration and creation with other women can do is to build a sense of community. Naomi Goldenberg, psychologist of religion and feminist theologian, writes:

> I am going to argue that it is not necessary that human beings share the *same* myths, images and symbols. Instead it is more important that human beings share the *process* of symbol creation itself. This is an age in which pluralism is a fact of life... One of the great ideals of the feminist cultural revolution is that all human beings be encouraged to find their own dignity and pursue their own truth. The creation of a new set of stereotypes would be sad indeed (Goldenberg, 1975).

Maori women have always valued spirituality for strength as well as dignity. They do not oppose it to social action. In a recent *Broadsheet*

article, 'Maori Women and Health', Christina Lyndon says: 'Both traditionally and in pre-European times and still today, Maori people regard good health and wellbeing in a holistic sense. We think of everything together - taha wairua, which is spiritual good health, taha tinana which is bodily health, taha hinengaro which is mental health and taha whanau which is family and societal good health' (Hammond *et al*, 1988:15).

Radical feminists find spirituality in Maori women acceptable: 'The integration of the spiritual and the worldly is not a problem for all cultures - for Maori people, for example, it's a matter of course' Pat writes. Yet for pakeha women to explore their spirituality is suspect. 'Those of us for whom it is difficult seem to put the two in opposition to each other, rather than see them as aspects of the same reality.' As feminists, 'we are often working from a rejection of the ideology and trappings of christian religions and will be suspicious of forms of exploration that echo them' (Rosier, 1987:46).

Feminists have reason to be suspicious of the 'ideology and trappings' of religion. Our Judeo-Greek-Christian patriarchy has twisted both into an instrument of sex and class and race oppression. It has denied women any share of divinity, vilified them as vessels of corruption, and scapegoated them for men's sins. Church teaching elevates the male-normative image of a male 'God' - above women and nature, terming both 'other'. They are objects for his control while man triumphant proclaims himself 'imago dei', the image of 'God'.

Symbols have power to shape experience independently of any conceptual denotation. One essential function of Women's Spirituality is to make us realise just how pervasively 'God' underlies education, politics and law-making in New Zealand today. Women of secular orientation are not necessarily exempt from a restrictive but unformulated sense of cosmic threat embodied in secular authority figures. I discovered this in myself when I read *A Life of One's Own* by Marian Milner. Her account of her diary, begun in 1926 in order to discover her real feelings, led me belatedly to examine my own. To Milner's astonishment, her free association writing erupted into: 'God-rod-sod - this is absurd-kill-ill-sin-suffering... God-rod-Almighty -spread over the sky-like a coming thunderstorm...' She comments:

> I was surprised at God coming into it. At that time if anyone had asked me what I thought about God I would probably have given a noncommittal agnostic opinion, taking into acount the latest fashion in science. I would have assumed that I had thus satisfactorily dealt with the question, taking it for granted that emotional troubles

> about it were things of the past, no doubt quite suitable during adolescence, but no concern of the twentieth century adult (Field, 1936).

Reading this, I found that I too needed to deal with 'God'. Lifelong agnosticism and an abhorrence of theology had left my deepest feelings about the universe undeveloped, childish and fearful. Somewhere in the background a whiskery old man in a nightgown lurked, 'He-who-must-be obeyed'. In this psychic constraint I was not so different from the many women of strict religious upbringing who attend spirituality groups as I had imagined.

Why was I so surprised? From infancy we are soaked in shit, and shit - like mud - sticks. The four-page reading list for Lea's 1985 course in Women's Spirituality introduced me to feminist theologians for the first time - Rosemary Ruether, Naomi Goldenberg, Mary Daly, Carol Christ, and many others. Their call for a psychic revolution as well as a political and economic one taught me how blatantly the posthumous church founded in the name of Jesus has reified the inferiority of women. The Apostle Paul writes in the first century A.D., 'I permit no woman to teach or have authoirty over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor' (quoted in Strachan, 1985).

Tirades more vitriolic if no more absolute than these continue through the lurid horror of the sixteenth/seventeenth century witch burnings, in which it has been estimated that at the very least over a milion women perished. Yet in 1948 the Reverend Montagu Summers, translating the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum (Hammer of Witches)* into English, pronounces: 'It is not too much to say that the *Malleus Maleficarum* is among the most important wisest and weightiest books in the world' (quote in Strachan, 1985).

In our own day, Protestant and Roman Catholic alike continue to hammer home the message. Karl Barth, reformed theologian, pontificates: 'Like children in relation to parents, slaves to their masters, the younger to the elder, Christians to the powers that be, women are exhorted and invited to accept their subordination to men not merely as a given fact but in clear self-consciousness with free will and full responsibility' (quoted in Strachan, 1985). And Pope Paul VI affirms the Vatican's ban on the ordination of women, charging that to change the sex of God's representatives would be to change the nature of God *Himself.* 'The priest is a sign. A sign which must be perceptible and which the faithful must be able to recognise with ease' (quoted in Goldenberg, 1975).

The pursuit of the past has been termed a substitute for trying to change the present, yet Starhawk, a US licensed witch and 'priestess of the Old Religion', feels that history led her to activism. It made her see the relationships among consciousness, power, and the reality - the structures and institutions - that they shape. She feels that to be free to change western culture, we must recognise the myths which underlie it and the structures that they create in us. Four stories are basic.

The first, *Apocalypse,* has a beginning, a middle and a big-bang-end, which will hoist us forcibly out of this world to God in a better one. It insists that absolutes outside our world take precedence over our own values. It stops our working for long-term change by leading us to expect that change must be swift and clearly defined. We may yet make this a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The second story, *Dualism or Goodies versus Baddies,* splits spirituality from politics - as Pat noted - black from white, spirit from matter, woman from man, nature from culture and so on and on. The third, *The Great Man Receives the Truth and Gives it to a Chosen Few,* declares that all knowledge other than that taught by the Man or his followers is invalid. Truth is to be found in outside authority, never within. The last tale, *Making It/The Fall or The Saved/Damned,* comes in two versions. A person who lacks value makes it into the elect, or a person who has value falls through weakness or inherent evil. This pushes us into aspiring endlessly yuppiewards instead of challenging the devaluation of what we already are. And it fixes responsibility for failure on individual inadequacy. All four stories are patriarchal stories of estrangement from a transcendent God removed from our living world (Starhawk, 1982).

'No "god" or "goddess" ', writes Pat, 'is ever at hand to deal with poverty or violence'. 'If you want to see the "goddess",' we might counter, 'look in your mirror. Or turn to the woman beside you.'

Power within is our 'goddess', immanent in the world and always at hand if only we can learn to evoke her. Starhawk's initiation into activism came with helping to set up the blockade of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in 1981 and creating rituals there. Sent to prison twice, she describes her experience as 'a journey through fear, a descent into the dark, and a return with knowledge and empowerment from within' (1982). She writes in *The Spiral Dance,* preferred handbook of many ritualists:

> In the past few years, a spate of secular gurus have traded heavily on our cultural longing for simple organising principles around which to base our lives. The basis of many 'growth' movements and human potential movements is the absolutist concept, 'I create my own reality'...

> It seems to be true that we do create more of our lives, our opportunities, our physical health, than we ordinarily take responsiblity for. If I blame my unhappiness on my mother, on the 'system', on bad luck, I will continue being unhappy rather than taking action to change my situation. I am, of course, like most members of these movements, white and middle class. If my skin was another colour, if I were mentally retarded because of early malnutrition, or disabled, I doubt that I would be quite so sublime about my ability to create reality...
>
> Much of reality - the welfare system, war, the social roles ordained for women and men - are created collectively and can only be changed collectively. One of the clearest insights of feminism is that our struggles are not just individual, and our pain is not private pain; it is created by ways in which our culture treats women as a class. Sexism, racism, poverty and blind accident do shape people's lives, and they are not created by their victims. If sprituality is to be truly life-serving, it must stress that we are all responsible for each other. Its focus should not be individual enlightenment, but recognition of our interconnectedness (Starhawk, 1979).

Lea Holford, teacher of Woman's Spirituality and practising clinical psychologist, has worked with Starhawk in the USA. Lea was for many years a graduate student of East-West psychology, mythology, cross-cultural symbolism and altered states of consciousness. She feels strongly that myths and archetypes have too compelling a hold on our psyches to be left to the patriarchy. In the handout to her course in Women's Spirituality, she answers the question *Why Study the Goddess Religons?* as follows:

> In the Goddess religions, there exist many models of the Feminine. In fact, prior to the patriarchal takeovers, the Great Goddess embodied numerous qualities which made Her multidimensional, with many powers and talents. Part of the Goddess' demise resulted from the revision of Her myths so that She was divested of many of her powers and qualities. Among women today, many feel a lack of wholeness in their lives. This is due partly to the restrictiveness that society places on sex roles, and its expectations for women. But even more significantly, women wall away parts of themselves intrapsychically.

> The intent of this course is not to revive the ancient religions as a substitute for modern patriarchal religions... the importance of this study is to help us realise our inherent divinity as women and how this has manifested in the past. In this way, we can expand our personal sense of spirituality as well as stimulate the emergence of new qualities of character (Holford, 1984).

The aims of Lea's courses are self-transformation, integration, healing and manifestation of goals. Her practice provides stimulus for crippled imaginations, promotes bonding among women and creates conditions which help us visualise our internal blockages and strengths and our external objectives in concrete form. Lea believes that the inner Self is always trying to help people grow beyond their limitations; that the unconscious is not 'just this and this and this', but an endless flow containing every potential. That we are vehicles of universal energies. She uses a powerful mix of ideas, images, ritual, personal symbols and the experience of women sharing with women to open us to new aspects of self.

Each course begins with a herstory session on holistic goddess cults from prepatriarchal times when the Great Goddess was Giver of All - life, water, milk, blood, food, happiness, as well as Taker of All - death. Our group sat in a ring of 40 on the floor around a ritual centre while Lea introduced and circulated books, retold myths, showed us slides of goddess images from world religions and traditional symbols of the Feminine - World Egg, Tree of Life, moon, ocean, circle, spiral, slashed triangle, seed, fruit, corn sheaf, cauldron, chalice, horn, owl, serpent... I found my first viewing of Lea's slides mind-blowing - monolithic, solidly planted fertility figures, often triumphantly pregnant, with huge breasts, huge buttocks, well-marked genitals, huge thighs. And from further East, Kali, in her necklace of skills, danced on a heap of the dead.

According to Carol Christ, 'The simplest and most basic meaning of the symbol of Goddess is the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of female power' (Christ, 1979). This is why the goddess image is so liberating and disturbing in a society which consistently portrays power in a woman as dangerous and somehow inhuman. (Compare the media treatment of Ann Hercus as Minister of Police with that accorded her successor, Peter Tapsell.)

As women, most of us have a problem with the idea of getting and using power. We may feel less threatened in the roll of dependant or even victim. We tend to hide from ourselves, and so fail to control, the fact of the power we already have. Whether or not we believe in the historical existence of widespread matriarchies, we have real need to

reclaim indubitably solid traditional images represented in the powers and tales of the goddesses. Such radical re-vision engenders a new perception of our autonomous reality, a new awareness of our dependent and distorted relation to 'the brotherhood of man' - which purports to include women generically - and to the language in which we are collectively symbolised as 'object' and our experience as 'other'. As Rosemary Ruether (1983) tells us, to find glimmers of truth 'in submerged or alternative traditions is to assure oneself one is not mad or duped' or 'just subjectively criticising the dominant tradition'.

With Lea we used six goddesses of ancient Greece to explore different aspects of our psyches. They served as vast mirror images with whom we could identify and as models to whom we could aspire. Each week we brought to class personal symbols of the way we experienced their energies in our own lives. For Demeter, a symbol of what 'mother' signifies to us; signs of Amazon wildness and independence and ability to focus for Artemis; passionate reminders of our darkness, fear and anger for Hecate; fruits of our creativity for Athene; tokens of our intuitive/spiritual life for Hestia. Images of our love and our wounds of love for Aphrodite. Sharing symbols in small groups helped us to uncover and articulate socially unacceptable aspects of the Archetypal Feminine in ourselves which we had never previously acknowledged. To speak the unspeakable and yet find ourselves so lovingly accepted by other women helped to free us into new vitality. It was always immensely moving.

Ritual brought release too. When we quit our groups to rejoin the large circle, we concentrated on the creation of sacred space, the transformation and integration of negative energies. For Hecate, we burned our fears, passionately scribbled on bits of paper, in a black cauldron in the centre. As the flames danced we affirmed the new lively shapes we envisaged our angers taking, naming them in validation as each of us dropped a pinch of herbs into a pot of soup passed ritually around the circle.

Symbol and song and ritual act are used to precipitate altered states of awareness where insights go beyond worlds and facilitate change. When other women support us, the power increases. Ritual intensity depends on individual involvement and group connection. It is better conveyed in the impressionism of metaphor than in the linear mode of reason, a fact which artists accept more easily than political feminists. Sally Gearhart, Utopian novelist and author of *The Feminist Tarot*, is convinced that the orthodox strategies of political feminism - revolutionary action, seizing power from within the system, putting energy into alternative structures - have failed. She calls for new ways of

understanding reality and a new value system - a *re-sourcing* of energy. The first step in making a victim, she believes, is to alienate her from her individual energy source, and the first milestone in developing a feminist consciousness is to embrace the self lovingly as a whole entity and an internal energy flow. She writes:

> It is no wonder that feminists devoted to 'real' political work doubt the value of the re-sourcement approach... I should use my earning power or my brain or my energy struggling every day against the dehumanizing establishment while some listless unpolitical sisters chant round a solstice fire or space out their dreams?... (claiming) that by burning their menstrual blood in the light of the full moon they will be in touch with the Great Mother and somehow make the patriarchy go 'poof'?... And I should do all this, if you please, because the Tarot speaks and Taurus is at the midheaven and perseverance furthers, while a little comfrey, Goddess be praised, heals all? The answer I am making to all that is yes... Of course it's kooky...But not to allow it is in itself fascism...it's good to remind ourselves that Marx' fundamental view (*Early Philosophical Manuscripts)* was a religious one of *unalienated* humanity... I suggest that no mass movement will ever be more than mimicry if it is not founded on just such an individual base. Of course it's slow...But...like it or not, there's no forcing any other woman into a gallop...(Gearhart, 1982).

For those of us not up to galloping, rituals, as Kay Turner (1982) reminds us, provide a safe place 'to feel better, to feel more, to feel the past as well as the future...' Rituals validate feeling and fuse thought with intensity. They attract women who are scarred by what they perceive as limited, self-righteous attacks on feminist women by feminist women. Many feel particularly vulnerable while relinquishing old belief systems, an act which can create deep anxiety. They are in no state to face the pain of a hostility which rejects them totally for being what they are.

Michele Dominy's analysis of the fourth and largest - 2,000 participants - New Zealand Women's Convention at Hamilton in 1979 depicts such a conflict between groups of women whose modes of classifying symbolising and understanding the world and their role in society were, she writes, fundamentally opposed (Dominy, 1986:26). Lesbian and Maori radical feminist activists used tactics of confrontation, withdrawal and graffiti writing in order, they said, to force straight women to confront lesbianism (and non-whiteness) as a political force. Also to subvert what they saw as the rigid', 'middle class' structure of the

convention; 'patriarchal control' by the organisers; 'heterosexism' and 'racism'.

The organising committee, on the other hand, felt that their commitment to feminist principles - organising the convention by consensus and refusing to assert authority to quell the disruption - countered separatist accusations. This was the first 'clearly feminist' conference and the attacks were unexpected by a third major group, the many politically inexperienced women who had nerved themselves to attend. (I was one.) Shocked and bewildered, they failed to understand defacement of buildings and verbal abuse as a demand for them to rethink cultural systems of classification. 'What was the anger about?', asked one woman, 'I had no idea. All I knew it was directed against other women, jeopardising other conventions...' (Dominy, 1986:32-34).

That was in fact the last convention. Now we have what Chrissy Duggan (1988:12) recently termed 'a disjointed, isolated feminist movement', inside which Women's Spirituality spreads almost at random as a place where, at its simplest, feminist (and non-feminist but probably not anti-feminist) women can meet in tolerance to work at recreating themselves and a possible world. Mary Daly (1973) warns us that when 'sacred space is discovered, the possibility of deterioration into escapism or of absolutising the space into a particular form is there. However the real danger is that women will succumb to *accusations* of escapism of single-mindedness by those who do not see the transcendent dimensions of feminism'. Rituals allow us to share the energy flowing through our bodies and through the material world. They enable women to bond at a deep non-verbal level:

> I know myself linked by chains of fires
> To every woman who has kept a hearth.
> In the resinous smoke
> I smell hut, castle, cave,
> Mansion and hovel,
> See in the shifting smoke my mothers
> And grandmothers all over the world.
> (Gidlow, 1970)

Whether the intention be ideological or not, hurling words in the form of prescription and personal accusation is to deny transcendence to feminism and love and understanding to other women because we deny love to ourselves. Rituals which affirm the female body and the life cycle from Maiden to Mother to Crone expressed in it have a collective as well as an individual value. Rites of passage help us to reclaim our physical past and sanction transitions from the old to the new, enabling us to see our growing, changing and aging as a rich, if often painful,

tapestry of experience. Juliet Batten, artist and teacher of feminist ritual, describes *Threshold*, a 'collaborative installation drawing on the lives of thirteen women' which she designed in 1987 to celebrate women's emergence through menopause, as follows:

> Menopause has been a negative concept, a guilty secret, something not declared, something regarded as an end rather than a beginning... *Threshold* seeks to challenge all this - to celebrate and reclaim the ancient concept of the Crone as the free wild wise spirit that she is, to honour the inner experience of women in their bloodwane... The process began with a number of *Threshold* workshops, held in Auckland during the first half of 1987. Women came to share their experiences of menopause through creative visual work, writing, guided meditation and ritual... (Batten, 1987).

Over the months of preparation, those of us involved with the project felt our life perspectives change. 'I've let go of my props - husband, church, hell, damnation, sense of guilt', said Tess. 'And reproduction - the one thing that once gave me the sense that I was a woman. I have lost my feeling of powerlessness at last, let go of my family, my need to prove that I'm OK.' The climax came at the opening ritual as each 'crone', ceremonially draped in black, reversed her cloak regally, in the centre of a tight-packed circle of girls and women, to flourish the lining of gleaming satin stitched with multicoloured symbols beneath.

Those of us embarrassed by public ceremony can still benefit from a short course in ritual practice to help us dignify our private lives and to make us more conscious of the ways in which we habitually symbolise our experience. Ritual puts us in touch with our personal life cycles and connects us to earth, air, fire and water - all the energies of the universe: the waxing and waning moon, seasonal growth and decay, the ebb and flow of our inner tides. (One profoundly reassuring spin-off is a feminisation of the landscape. Phallic rock upthrusts are eased from the foreground of consciousness by our growing sensitivity to lake and vulva cleft, yoni shell and menstrual moon.)

Most of us, in this age of transition, have no model for the women we need to become or for the society which will most truly express us. In the same way as getting in touch with the values of our foremothers through symbols and goddess images extends and deepens our life process, so too does increased awareness of what speaks to us physically from earth and sky. (Both aspects attract painters, sculptors, potters, photographers, film makers and writers.) By enriching our appreciation of possibilities, they forward the alchemical work of change.

Ritual courses also teach us physical ease with women whom we would not ordinarily meet. Ages at rituals I have attended have ranged from Liz at 10 to Irene at nearly 70. Lesian separatists mix with heterosexuals. Everyone seems to enjoy this. Nevertheless, realising that we can create sacred space at home is valuable. Asked to demonstrate private 'altars', women at Lea's class brought natural objects such as shells, rocks, feathers, flowers, fruit, favourite paintings, their own work, photographs of figures significant in their lives, tarot cards, statuettes, pottery, gifts. The simplest and most movable 'altar' was a meditating cushion. In our 'space', we can reconstruct dreams, practise creative visualisation, work with limiting negative emotions, discover symbols, write in a 'shadow' journal. We can use meditation for focusing, projecting good will, problem solving, concentration and detachment. Basically we need time daily to be alone and connect, however briefly, with our inner self, Hestia, goddess of the hearth, whose only image is the flame of inner light.

Why work and work and work to be conscious and whole? To distinguish our angers? To discard and oppose patriarchal patterns of dualism and aggression? Susan Griffin pictures the alternative:

> He says that woman speaks with nature. That she hears voices from under the earth. That wind blows in her ears and trees whisper to her. That the dead sing through her mouth and the cries of infants are clear to her. But for him this dialogue is over. He says he is not part of this world, that he was set on this world as a stranger. He sets himself apart from woman and nature' (Griffin, 1984).

Such estrangement leads to disaster. Modern physics teaches us that time and space are not absolute, matter and energy not separate, the universe not independent of its participators/observers. Twenty years ago James Lovelock gave his concept of an integrated, self-organising, self-regulating planet of which we are an inextricable part the name of Gaia, earth goddess of ancient Greece. 'Gaian consciousness', writes Lea, 'suggests that our physical and spiritual vitality depends on the health of the natural world... In these 4 one day workshops ... the classic four elements will be explored in order to clarify personal issues and commitments towards preserving aspects of life...' (Holford, 1988:20).

The goddess exists in ourselves and those around us and all living creatures. But supremely she is Gaia, the nurturing earth in whom we live and move and have our being. Our personal commitment to preserving our planet involves spiritual commitment to our own integrity - reclaiming our individual and our collective past, working multidimensionally for social change in the present, taking time to envision

a more life-affirming future. Those concerned at the pakeha nature of the women's spirituality movement in this country might ponder a challenge which I have never forgotten, issued in 1985 by Donna Awatere to her audience in an overflowing lecture theatre at Auckland University:

> I repeat, the search for identity in this country is a white people's search. It is a search through the artificially created reality back to nature. It requires that white people come to terms with white culture and see it for the barbaric evil that it is, and to follow this up with action. To your credit some of you have begun.
>
> When I was very young, a book by Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, had a big impact on me. White people were once, like Maori people, rooted in nature. You, too, once moved to her rhythms before you got all clever and decided man was greater than nature and cut yourselves and progressively the rest of us off from spiritual communion with her. But there is always hope. Time is endless. The time of 'The White Goddess' may seem a long time ago by measured time, by generations, but in real time it is as close as yesterday, today and tomorrow. Let time, not space, be the element of your co-mingling, and you, the Pakeha, can't go wrong (Awatere, 1985:61).

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New Zealand Women Artists Before and After 1893

Ann Calhoun

I was motivated by Patricia Grimshaw's book *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand* to explore the circumstances of women artists in 1893 - the year New Zealand women gained the right to vote in parliamentary elections. As students of New Zealand art history know, change in the visual arts in New Zealand in the 1890s was rapid. Women aspiring to be artists profited most from these changes.

It seemed important to address the achievements of women artists collectively. An examination of critical commentary and images by and of women determined the importance of 1893. In that year new publications on art appeared locally and from Britain - 'Home'. Today, the power of language and image are recognised for the influential part they play in shaping attitudes.

Political manipulation within the visual arts is as endemic as in government. For a woman striving to be an artist, her social, cultural, and political community can influence her progress decisively. Without power in that community, those factors which shape her aspirations as

an artist are out of her control. To place these women 'within the context of their time and place', to use Patricia Grimshaw's apt phrase (Grimshaw, 1987:116), I looked at a number of key issues.

> The Prohibitionists are full of spirits - in a metaphorical sense of course - at the mutilation of the Liquor Bill, and the passing of the Women's Franchise Bill ... But what has all this to do with Music, Science or Art? Well, more than we think. When woman is officially recognised as a man's equal, and she is acknowledged by all sensible men as more than his equal in most things, then will men have to look to their laurels in every department of life.
>
> 'The Editor's Note Book', *Triad*, 15 September 1893

The first issue of the *Triad* had been published on 15 April 1893 - 'A Monthly Magazine of Music, Science and Art'. Why was the editor of an arts magazine giving his personal views on suffrage? Baeyertz, the editor, frequently expressed opinions on women in the *Triad*. Women were seen to have a natural affinity for the arts and Baeyertz seems to have taken this as a mandate for comments on women in general.

More questionable was Baeyertz's assumption that women's issues were a suitable subject for satire. That the editor of a respected magazine on the arts could print such hypocritical opinions on women's issues indicates the general acceptability of such journalism at that time.

Baeyertz's knowledge of the visual arts was limited. This constraint seems to have modified his normally paternalistic manner, and women artists are given due credit in reports on exhibitions. Not just Baeyertz, but other commentators as well, repeatedly singled out the same few women for praise. It is noteworthy that these same few are remembered today - Frances Hodgkins, Grace Joel, Margaret Stoddart, Mabel Hill, Mary Richardson (Tripe), Dorothy Richmond, Maud Kimbell (Sherwood).

Baeyertz continued his thoughts on suffrage with an aside about 'the little misunderstanding which arose about Adam and an apple' and went on:

> But, joking apart, the preponderance of women's influence in politics, science, or art, must be for good. May our art be enobled, our politics become purer, and our land be blessed by the advent at the polling booth of our mothers, our sisters, and our wives.

With phrases such as 'art ... enobled' and 'politics ... purer', Baeyertz conveyed the current attitude that art was educationally and morally uplifting. In art, as in politics, women were to act as the guardians of

purity, while simultaneously being blamed yet again for original sin.

Britain then dictated matters of taste. Before 1893, the official picture and word on British Art had been presented by, among other publications, the *Art Journal* and *The Illustrated London News*. By the 1880s cheap, accurate photo-mechanical processes of reproduction had been developed. *Studio*, first published in 1893, and *Royal Academy Pictures*, appearing in 1889, represented major sources of additional images and comment for a New Zealand audience. By 1896, *Studio* included full colour reproductions of art works.

So many quality reproductions appearing in New Zealand over such a short period must have had an effect on artists and the appreciation of art. How were women portrayed? What were the predominant subjects, styles and media used by women artists? Women artists tended to conform. But those barely veiled erotic images of women so beloved by many of Britain's leading artists were not so easily emulated. Their depiction of women was regressive and the formulae these artists developed were repeated endlessly by less adept imitators. Such images were still in vogue in New Zealand when the *Triad* produced an art supplement in 1913.

What we call 'originals' had not generally been available here for 'study'. Rather audacious international industrial exhibitions and the gradual establishment of art societies provided spasmodic direct 'instruction' in art (on payment of an admission fee). Examples of British and European art might be lent for study by gracious owners.

Prints of 'original' art were less prestigious but entirely acceptable. Artist's images had been reproduced by various print-making methods since the Renaissance, these slower techniques now being superseded by photo-mechanical methods. Covering both, under 'Zealandia Art', the *Triad* in its 15 May 1894 issue mentioned: 'M'Gregor Wright and Co. are now showing some very fine engravings and photogravures of the latest pictures of Alma Tadema, F. Leighton, Orchardson and others'. All were noted Royal Academicians, and their art is thereby given tacit approval.

A woman, to be an 'artist', had to deal with the effects of these images and the accompanying commentary. As noted, *Triad* and *Studio* were first published in 1893 and *Royal Academy Pictures* slightly earlier in 1889: such publications well illustrate and describe how women had to adapt to assert themselves as artists. But, positively, in the same year, New Zealand women had gained the national franchise and individual women artists achieved distinction. To this end, the 15 May 1894 *Triad* also recorded Baeyertz's praise for 'a strong watercolour (portrait) sketch [of Nairn]... by that clever Wellington artist Miss Mabel Hill', ap-

pearing in the recent Academy exhibition, and 10 works by Jas. M. Nairn in M'Gregor Wright's window. The few words on Mabel Hill were supportive, not patronising. Nairn was an import with new ideas. Together they represented the new era in New Zealand art.

History

Until this time, pakeha women had not seen themselves as artists. Building a Colony left little time for niceties. An interest in culture was not lacking but for women other concerns took precedence (Kirker, 1986:7).

However nascent 'culture' was in New Zealand, the visual arts were run by men. The Wellington Working Men's Club was stirred into action and opened a Fine Arts and Industrial Exhibition on 6 July 1878. The event merited four pages in the *New Zealand Mail*. In attendance were the Governor General, the Mayor, Members of Parliament and City Councillors. 'There were not many ladies inthe hall, an idea that there would be a great crush having doubtless tended to keep them away.' The exhibition was important culturally for Wellington, if not for women.

A reported speech credited one 'young woman' with 'true artistic manipulation'. The audience applauded. Copies by three other women were noted. (By the 1890s, individual women artists were named and their work singled out.) But, also important for women artists, the report's expected endorsements of the exhibition underlined the power of language to dictate fashion: 'simply beautiful', 'aesthetic faculty', 'purity of taste', 'noble purpose', 'art exhibitions have become one of our grand means of instruction and international intercourse'.

The system of art distribution was comparatively easy to change in New Zealand. Attitudes changed and women reassessed their options. The art establishment in Britain was more securely in male hands. Pamela Gerrish Nunn, in *Victorian Women Artists* (1987), charts the struggle by these women between 1850 and 1880, and their partial success.[1]

But reaction in the 1880s and 1890s was 'marked', says Nunn; she cites Fred Millar's outburst in the April 1896 issue of *Art Journal*, which was available in New Zealand:

> [W]omen are doing excellent work in the art crafts; so excellent, indeed, that it occurs to me it would be wise if many who are now trying to win positions as painters and sculptors were to direct their energies and abilities into the less ambitious groove of applied art; success of a quite satisfactory kind might be theirs (Nunn, 1987:213).

In fact, female students at the Wellington School of Design subsequently

adapted well to training in the fine arts.

By 1893 both progressive and regressive ideas on women (and women artists) had reached New Zealand. In 1889 Nerli and in 1890 Nairn and Van der Velden immigrated to New Zealand. They were professional artists, not amateurs. They were also flesh and blood examples of a refreshing approach to life and art. All three were important for New Zealand women artists. Nairn, from an association with the Glasgow School of painters, brought what has aptly been called 'the domestication of French Impressionism without prejudice to the native tradition';[2] Van der Velden was a Dutch romantic realist and Nerli, an Italian, well known as Frances Hodgkins' teacher, used a style that parallels that of the Impressionists.

New Zealand women were granted the franchise on 19 September 1893. The *Evening Post* congratulated itself for the helping hand it had given. Elsewhere in the same issue, the 1893 Academy annual exhibition was reviewed. The critic damned an exhibitor (who must have been Nairn) for his 'emerald greens and crude purples' and 'streaks splashes and dabs'. The standard line on 'proper' art was given. Drawing skills were lacking; detail and a 'fidelity to nature' had been lost, 'inadmissable in a work of art, whether landscape, figure, flower or marine'. The last phrase listed the subjects dealt with by New Zealand artists at the time - in ways acknowledging their British and European origins.

Among Nairn's students at the Wellington School of Design, established in 1886, were Mary Richardson, Mabel Hill, Elizabeth Abbott and Grace Butler. Photographs of this period show that students in art classes in New Zealand and overseas, certainly in Britain and the United States, were predominantly women, the instructors male. But in New Zealand, a few female students advanced to be art instructors. New Zealand women seem to have achieved another first in this respect. Besides Nairn and two others, Mary Richardson and Mabel Hill were instructors for the 1894 School of Design class in drawing and painting. In the same year, Mary Richardson obtained 'the Colony's first art master's certificate entitling the holder to take charge of an art school' (Harrison, 1961:44). In 1897, five of the 14 School instructors were women; in 1914 the ratio was still approximately the same - nine out of 21 instructors were women. When Nairn died in 1904, another woman, Maud Kimbell, took over his still-life and sketching classes.

The New Zealand high school system - available to those families who could both support a student and pay the school fees - was especially beneficial to women desiring to further themselves by attending art school or by becoming art teachers. The high school curriculum favoured vocational training for both men and women (Murdoch,

1943:5). New Zealand women adapted enthusiastically to the opportunities for advanced education (Grimshaw, 1987:116); and it would not have seemed unusual for a young woman to proceed after high school to one of the Colony's newly founded art schools. Training was for a career, not to hone their accomplishments as ladies. A career was a necessity for some, either from reduced financial support as a result of the depression, or because the increasing numbers of women over men in towns had reduced the possibility of marriage (Phillips, 1987:10).

To move toward recognition as a professional artist, male and female students exhibited at one or more of the art societies being formed. Then, usually through the sale of a work, the artist became eligible for artist or working membership of the art society. Election to the council of the society was a desirable step, placing the artist in line for membership of the selection and hanging committees for annual and other exhibitions. The power held by such council committees will be obvious. Even if selected, a work could be 'skied', or, as bad, hung in the corridor or an ante-room. It was best to be 'hung on the line'; that is, hung within a comfortable viewing range.

The local art society was in most instances the organisation responsible for establishing the local art gallery. The society usually also presided over the formation of the gallery collection. Such collections included of course the work of council members. This largely male infrastructure, motivated by civic and national pride, was based on developments in both England and the United States. A writer in that first issue of *Studio* in April 1893, C.T.J. Hiatt, asked:

> It would be curious to enquire why civilised nations, including even the United States of America, are unanimous in considering a national gallery of painting indispensable to their dignity. Is it because the permanent exhibition of a number of masterpieces is calculated to raise the moral tone of the nation? Or is the maintenance of a national gallery to be looked at as an act of generosity from the artistically ignorant mass to the artistically educated few?

The coincidence of the formation of art societies in New Zealand and the beginnings of the women's movement should have helped New Zealand women artists. It did mean that as early as 1885, at the age of 20, Margaret Stoddart was elected to the Council of the Canterbury Society of Arts. But, sadly, too few women were elected to art society councils for their presence to be effective. If, as Baeyertz claimed, women's influence in all spheres was desirable, then their participation in other than the socialising activities of an art society should have been sought.

Insufficient numbers of women were elected to councils to ensure that adequate purchases of work by women artists were made, or that other preconceptions of women's art were challenged.

For both male and female artists at that time, a sojourn overseas was obligatory, for travel, study and possible exhibition with a 'name' art society. Patricia Grimshaw (1987:116) records the respect forthcoming overseas when New Zealand women gained the franchise in 1893. This event may have contributed to the esteem New Zealand women artists and their work enjoyed overseas. The strength of character displayed by these women must also have helped, as would the support they gave each other.

For a few women artists their time overseas ensured on their return election to their local art society council and sales of their work. Others were undeservedly shunned: it appears that by the time they returned, reactionary attitudes to women had reappeared. The relatively few female achievers from this time who remained in New Zealand were retained by their councils, it seems, mainly as tokens, as excuses for ignoring the rest. Dorothy Richmond is an example.

Women as artists

By definition, the word 'artist' is a loose collective term for those whose creative activities are based around particular art forms. But in the nineteenth century, and still today, the connotations of the term are weighted more favourably towards a male being accredited as an 'artist' than a female. The notion of 'genius' favoured in the nineteenth century precluded women artists.

Baeyertz in the *Triad* wrote for the middle and more well-to-do classes of New Zealand society. He paraded the liberal sentiments of the 1890s in language women must have found more offensive than humorous. In the 15 December 1894 issue, professing to report on a speech by a Mrs Hislop in Victoria, he used the occasion to mock women's 'afternoon gatherings':

> Marvellous, truly! Now the enemies of the new woman's rights programme can understand what they are doing in denying to the ladies the privilege of going to the poll. Not only are they withholding from them their just rights, but they deprive their sisters and wives of an interesting theme for discussion at afternoon teas and 'at homes' and leave them only such trivialities as health, dress, scandal, babies and their ailments, births, deaths, marriages and divorces.

Baeyertz's statement spelt out the preoccupations seen as correct for a woman. Included are just those so-called female responsibilities which

limit a woman's ability to look beyond her immediate circumstances. The standards required of a woman were dictated in, for example, *The New Zealand Graphic and Ladies' Journal.* Added to the difficulties Baeyertz enjoyed citing, a woman artist faced the problems posed by:

> the power of the critic, the prejudice of the dealer, the resentment of the fellow artist, the tradition of history, the divisive categorisation of creative fields, never mind a factor which feminist scholarship in our own time has revealed as so influential in determining a woman's executive relation to art, those images of women presented as Art (Nunn, 1987:221).

This last factor, the images society put forward of women, was crucial. Already women artists in the nineteenth century had subjects, styles and media prescribed by male artists. For New Zealand women artists the formulae were the same.

> Not surprisingly, many Victorian women artists sought conventional and established subjects and styles in order to make the grade: being a *female* artist was handicap enough and to produce female *art* would have made success quite unattainable - or so the ideology went (Nunn, 1987:130).

Even then, choice was limited by the continued acclaim for the work of leading Academicians and other Royal Academy exhibitors pandering to the predilection for sensuality in a variety of disguises. As noted, such images were available in the magazines, prints and reproductions coming to New Zealand.

'Circe' by Arthur Hacker in the *Royal Academy Pictures* publication for 1893 is one such image. The publishers felt obliged to explain this and other paintings in end notes. The explanation (p. 201) compounds the degradation of women that these images represent. Of this indifferent painting of a nude woman half turning to the audience and inviting inspection and, for the owner, possession , we are told:

> In the case of Mr Hacker's realisation of the fable, attention should perhaps be drawn to the originality and novelty which the painter has shown in the treatment... [Circe] as woman of arts and wiles, trusting to her own damning charms of body alone, with no bait of luxury or dazzling glory in her surroundings to entrap her half-willing victims. And to emphasise the moral of the story... he has mingled with the enchanted pigs the men not yet metamorphosed, ... He has thus sought to accentuate the degradation of bestiality and sensual depravity, the depth of which is clearly surrounded by the indifference of the human

> beings to the horrible change which is taking place around them.

Few images of this ilk are found in New Zealand public art collections. Colonial prudery, the gradual fall from favour of such imagery in Britain and, surely, the assertive role women had assumed in New Zealand society and their appearance in the art establishment must all have contributed. Nevertheless, these images enjoyed considerable respect.

When following an interest or artistic talent, women had seemingly correctly chosen to be amateurs and to produce small scale work on domestic subjects in watercolour or in a 'black-and-white' medium. (The women's movement in New Zealand shifted attitudes sufficiently for a wood-carving class at the Wellington School of Design in 1897 to include a good proportion of women students.[3])

For women artists in New Zealand, Nairn, Van der Velden and Nerli provided role models. But as well as these men, it is not unreasonable to suggest a British female artist, Elizabeth Armstrong Forbes, as a further role model.[4] This artist was an accepted and acclaimed exhibitor at the Royal Academy before and after her marriage to Stanhope Forbes. An early issue of *Studio* (December 1894) reproduced and commended one of her oils, 'The edge of the wood', of a young man and woman conversing in the woods where she minds the turkeys:

> It is a well-painted, well-composed picture of pastoral life. Its sentiment is as old as humanity, its arrangement decorative and true to Nature; its colour singularly harmonious, and its technical qualities peculiarly satisfying. You may dislike *genre* subjects, or the *plein-air* treatment, but you cannot honestly say this is other than a singularly good example of a school which since the days of Bastien-Lepage has received favour everywhere.

The reviewer epitomises what was expected in women's art (though men's art could also contain these attributes): sentiment, decorative arrangement, harmonious colour, genre, plein-air treatment. The range of subjects and approach for a woman artist - that is, for art by women - was restricted by her male peers, those artists and critics who determined her status as an artist.

Employment and education

Girls benefited from the education system in New Zealand as early as the 1860s when Miss Dalrymple moved to ensure that a girls' high school was also opened in Dunedin (Grimshaw, 1987:2). Basics for girls were much the same as for boys. Skills needed by a lady were also taught,

including 'correct moral culture' (Murdoch, 1943:34-5). This would, in part, have been supplied by Art, repeatedly described in the press and elsewhere as morally instructive.

Great emphasis was placed on an ability to draw. The passion for drawing skills was carried on into the art schools then being established. The 15 November 1893 *Triad* carried in its column 'Zealandia Art' the comment: 'The State aid in the form of schools of art in all principal centres has been a great assistance, teaching the never-to-be forgotten canon - learn to draw'. The preponderance of women in art classes suggests the emphasis on drawing was largely continued in high schools through its female teachers.

The bias in art education was toward a South Kensington model. The programme was based on the belief that standards of manufacture would be raised by a felicitous union of art and product design. A.D. Riley put these concerns into practice when he founded the Wellington School of Design in 1886 (see Harrison, 1961).

The establishment of art schools in New Zealand coincided with the continued strength of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain, a coincidence of benefit to women artists in New Zealand. The Movement, heralded in the pages of *Studio* from 1893, promoted the handcrafted product (long seen as a suitable outlet for a women's creativity). What had been very much secondary art forms assumed a new importance.

Two School of Design students, later to become instructors, Mabel Hill and Mary Richardson, distinguished themselves by exhibiting 10 and 12 pieces respectively of applied art at the 1889 Academy annual exhibition. Academy catalogues from 1900 included applied art work: repoussé copper, wood carving, a decorative screen. The 1907 catalogue expanded the offering to include enamelling, jewellery, silver smithing, furniture, painted china and tooled leather work - all from women exhibitors.

The pragmatic basis for art education in New Zealand, with its broad base and positive approach, should have given female students the confidence to pursue a variety of careers in the applied arts. The South Kensington system produced good female art teachers and a few 'artists'. Little seems to be known of other positive results. Art schools here lacked the prestige of the Royal Academy Schools, the Slade, or atelier training on the Continent; art students travelled overseas for further training. After such a promising start, the vocational emphasis of schooling for women was modified. Women were seduced back into the home (Phillips, 1987: 224-5). But the abiding importance of the South Kensington system was the female role models it provided. Women

found that they could consider art as a profession, rather than a pleasant frill, apart from the main thrust of their lives. Such direction for women had previously almost always come from their families.

Art societies, exhibitions and acquisitions

Women seeking professional status as artists had to use the art society exhibition scheme. In England, dealer galleries appeared in the last decades of the century and were supportive of women artists. It was 1920 before a dealer became established in New Zealand offering artists similar advantages.

Despite the taint of 'salesmanship' for women exhibiting with an arts society, at least 37 of 90 exhibitors in the 1893 Academy annual were women; in 1900, 31 of 68 exhibitors were women. Thereafter, women started to disappear behind initials, a fashion Baeyertz in the *Triad* failed to see as advantageous to women. It is still possible in the 1908 catalogue to count 42 women among 82 artist members. The real return of a sale in one of these exhibitions was the self-worth engendered and the promise of independence.

To further sales, women artists held private exhibitions. They also joined alternative exhibition groupings set up to stretch the limited approach of the art societies: the Palette Club in Christchurch, the Wellington Art Club (with Nairn) and the Easel Club in Dunedin. The success story is The Group, founded in Christchurch in 1927. Of nine members exhibiting in 1929, seven were women.

Only two women were elected to the Academy Council in 1893, a disproportionately low number considering the number of women exhibitors. For an organisation concerned with collecting for a future National Art Gallery, more women should have been on the Council. Briefly, from 1901-04, half of the eight Council members were women; but the other five Council positions of President, two Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary were all given to men. Until recently no woman was elected to one of these positions of supposed additional responsibility.

An opportunity came with the New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch in 1906-07 for women to be given a decisive role in the selection of purchases for the future national collection. Only one woman, Dorothy Kate Richmond, was on the Council. (In the decades that this woman spent on the Council, why was she not made at least a Vice-President?) Despite her lonely role, Richmond would have had some effect on purchases in 1907. Four works by British woman artists were acquired at this time: two from the Christchurch exhibition (Annie Blacke, 'Chrysanthemums' 1907, oil, and Flora Reid, 'Poor Motherless

Bairns' 1907, oil) and two from Britain by Royal Academy exhibitors (Elizabeth Armstrong Forbes, 'Charity', pastel, and Laura Knight, 'Mending Linen', watercolour). The titles of the four works purchased cover the gamut of subjects seen as appropriate for women artists. Up until 1936, when the Academy gifted its collection to the newly founded National Art Gallery, only one additional work by a woman artist entered the collection of 120 works by British or European artists.

New Zealand women artists fared no better. By 1936, only 27 of the 179 acquired works by New Zealanders were by women. Prerequisites for multiple purchases seem to have been a place on the Council or standing overseas: D.K. Richmond (3), M.E.R. Tripe (Mary Richardson referred to earlier) (4), both long serving Academy Council members; Margaret Stoddart (5), a member of the Council of the Canterbury Society of Arts: and from overseas, Frances Hodgkins (3) and Maud Sherwood (2). Most of the significant collections of work by women artists held by the National Art Gallery have come as gifts from their families, a few from the artists themselves (Calhoun, 1984: 18).

Nude studies

The word 'nude' most often means a female nude. Shulamith Firestone argues with validity that the restricted meaning of the term arose with the changing aspirations of the middle class from the sixteenth century (Firestone, 1970:176). Individuals (male) sought affirmation of their power through their possessions. A painting of a female nude conferred on the spectator/owner his importance. The first of that line of acclaimed *supine* nudes seems to be Titan's 'Venus of Urbino' of 1538. The woman is not the idealised nude of Classical Greece, but a living person 'tidied up'. John Berger, in *Ways of Seeing* (1972), argues much the same thing. He distinguishes between 'naked' and 'nude'. To be naked is to be yourself; to be nude is to be observed, always watched, wearing a form of dress.

A page in the April 1895 issue of the *Studio* (p.105) illustrates the double standard which existed between the ideal and the human body without clothes. The page contains (above) a photograph of a classic nude male figure, a Michelangelo 'Dying Slave' imitation, and (below) a reproduction of a chalk drawing of a reclining male nude - complete with jock strap, the latter a sop to modesty not required by naked female models.

Only in the 1880s and 1890s did female artists in Britain produce work containing nudes, and then according to criteria established by male artists. To hone drawing skills, studies from the nude were thought essential. Up until this time, few women artists had access to

such classes, and drew instead from plaster casts. The hypocrisy of Victorian strictures on women artists is most apparent here. If studies made of living naked bodies were truly asexual, as was believed, then surely women artists would have been admitted to classes (Nunn, 1987: 128).

Those modes of Victorian art appealing to suppressed eroticism were losing their appeal. Perhaps in part for this reason, the opposition to studies from nude models in New Zelaand was not sustained. Nairn instituted classes where studies were made from the nude model in 1891. The matter was debated in the press, but the classes were not stopped. Nairn's class seems to have been a step formalising an existent practice. In 1890 'Study from Life' in oils, by Mary Richardson (Tripe), was included in the second annual Academy exhibition.

The exhibition catalogue also shows that life study classes were available in the capital (probably not for female students) at W.L. Morison's School of Art. For the Academy annual, Mr Morison's students provided 15 life studies in 80 School works exhibited. Each of the former was described as a 'Study from Life'; the note at the bottom of the page explained that they were 'painted under gaslight'.

Throughout the decade, nude studies by women artists appeared in art society exhibitions and in private exhibitions, the fashion then seeming to fade as in Britain. The 1892 Academy catalogue included competitions for students in various categories; but studies from the nude model were not then or subsequently introduced as a category in the competitions.

Conclusion

Equal political privileges for women with men in this country were the intended corollary to suffrage in 1893. Negative attitudes to women mitigated against further substantive successes. Similarly, for women artists the dialogue and images surrounding their art were crucial, as Pamela Gerrish Nunn points out (1987:128)

> Because western art practice and its documentation spring from a class-, race- and gender-bound perception of the world, they tend to exclude women's achievement or distort it, either through an inability to 'read' it at all, or a misreading of it.

New Zealand's liberalised education system in the latter part of the nineteenth century was beneficial to women entering the visual arts. But the art exhibition and sales structure was prohibitively male dominated. Further progress for women artists took stamina and courage. The inroads made by women artists were therefore extremely important. A

few women achieved the status of 'artist'. That we keep referring to these same few women underlines their importance as role models.

Notes

1. Dorothy Richmond attended the influential Slade School of Fine Arts in London, 1878-80.
2. Read (1951:14) quoting Charles Marriott, *Modern Movements in Painting*, London, 1920.
3. Information from a photograph in the *Wellington Technical College and High School Review*, Jubilee Number 1886-1936, opp. p. 17.
4. Anne Kirker mentions, for example (1986:21), that Dorothy Richmond studied with Elizabeth and Stanhope Forbes.

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Women and Information Technology

Jan Churchman

Women have been involved in information technology from the outset. The development of the information technology industry created opportunities for many careers that did not necessarily require an early commitment to a long and vigorous programme of training, as is the case with engineeering and the physical sciences. These new professional activities did not so clearly require that women challenge males in one of their established domains. Concurrent with the growth of the information technology industry was the accepted image of the computer as an instrument to use in office, school and home - all areas in which women predominate.

Initially, too, women made valuable contributions to the development and application of computers. The world's first 'programmer' was Augusta Ada Lovelace, who wrote the instructions for Babbage's computing machine in the 1880s. Adele Goldstine wrote the first programs for the ENIAC, built in the 1940s. Grace Hooper was the central figure in the development of the language COBOL, and she was also the first person to use the term 'bug' to refer to a computer malfunction, with reference to a moth in the machine (Lockheed, 1986).

However, despite these historical developments, research supports the view that currently computers are being defined as male machines.

The numbers of male students learning to use microcomputers far exceeds the number of female students; more boys than girls are taking the time to use microcomputers available to them in schools; the extracurricular use of microcomputers in schools is predominantly by boys, and computer programming and playing computer games are also primarily male activities (Pherson, 1986; Hess and Miura, 1985; Deakin, 1984).

The 1981 New Zealand Census revealed that there were 669 male full-time systems analysts and 126 females; 1,047 full-time male computer programmers and 510 female full-time computer programmers. In 1985, 33 women, but 185 men, received an undergraduate degree in computer science (Department of Education, 1986). In 1986, there were 131 men studying full-time for a New Zealand Certificate in Data Processing, and 63 women; 72 men were studying full-time for a New Zealand Certificate in Electronic and Computer Technology, and 2 women (Department of Education, 1986).

Thus the use of computers in education and training has followed traditional lines of gender bias in society. The origins of these differences in appeal to women and men that information technology seems to have are multifarious. Research has offered the following explanations: that the public stereotype of information technology projects images of sciences, mathematics, engineering and other male-dominated professions; that girls and young women are often not given adequate support or appropriate contexts for learning with computers; that interest in computer programming follows traditional sex bias in mathematics; and that games and educational software designed for computers are based on male-oriented themes.

One study has found that boys and men are more positively disposed towards computers than are girls and women (Fetler, 1985). The media image of information technology may be a significant factor in the negative attitude among women. The image of information technology conveys neither personal gratification nor social interaction; yet in reality, these are as much a part of information technology as of any other human activity.

Impressions of computers as equipment controlled by males have been promulgated by movies such as *2001: A Space Odyssey*, and *Star Wars*, and by articles in the press and programmes on television. Males dominate scientific areas, and computers are often shown as part of science in the mass media. But computers rarely appear in connection with activities in which women have a significant degree of competence and experience. Word processing and data base access activities (for example, airline ticket operators) are the exceptions. But in these

activities, the role of women is secretarial, rather than the role of one who controls the machine, or its information.

One research study (Ware and Stuck, 1985) analysed gender in illustrations in computer magazines. Even though women comprise a majority of the population, only one woman appeared for every two men. Women were significantly more often shown in clerical roles, while men were more often depicted as managers, experts and repair technicians. Women had no technical relationship with the equipment; instead they were depicted as sex objects, while men were never portrayed as such. Women were more often portrayed in passive roles, with men in active 'hands-on' roles. If anyone was shown to be avoiding a computer, it was a woman.

Microcomputers offer powerful environments for learning. These environments are interactive, in that they respond to users, and precise, in that they provide detailed feedback on the information presented. These features of the computer learning environment offer great potention for education, and differentiate it from much of the traditional classroom instructional media. Furthermore, many computer activities, especially programming, require problem-solving skills and abilities, and are therefore seen as educationally valuable.

Yet girls and young women are often not given adequate support or appropriate contexts for learning with computers. Studies indicate that particular characteristics of children's learning tasks may be an important factor in the development of sex differences (Hawkins, 1985). Achievement orientations may be different for the two sexes in various subject areas. Girls and boys interpret failure feedback differently: girls are more likely to attribute difficulty in solving problems to their own lack of ability; boys are more likely to attribute failure to other situational factors (Hawkins, 1985).

Mathematical tasks are commonly organised in such a way that the occurrence of failure is greater than for verbal tasks. That is, the solution of a mathematical problem is either correct or incorrect, and the correct solution of a new mathematical problem is often preceded by a series of failures. In contrast, many verbal tasks are interpretive (for example, writing an essay) and therefore subject to more flexibile evaluation which, in turn, may lead to further development of the ideas expressed. Frequent encounters with failure in mathematical tasks may thus be interpreted differently by girls and boys with respect to their self-assessed abilities.

The association of information technology with the subject areas of mathematics and science has important educational implications. Computers are commonly thought of as 'built' from mathematical ele-

ments and concepts. This leads to the inference that, in order to work with computers, people must be mathematically inclined or have previously developed maths skills, an inference that is not accurate. This association of information technology with maths and science leads to a particular kind of treatment in educational and training settings. Because information technology is most often linked with an area that has long been dominated by males, computers usually enter the classroom with a 'masculine' image that has an impact on both learners and teachers.

Many people fail to differentiate science and mathematics from information technology, despite the fact that the content and substance of information technology is very different. The substance of information technology is information, which is expressed in words as well as numbers. One study (Anderson, 1987) showed that secondary school girls performed better than boys in some specific areas of programming, where the problems were expressed verbally rather than mathematically. Thus it would appear from this study that young women are better with verbal and language tasks, and that the methods by which information technology is taught are of considerable importance.

Research indicates that women's self-confidence is affected by specific task characteristics: the kind and quality of feedback offered, and the degree of competition and evaluation. Women also appear to be less confident than men in situations where there is little or ambiguous feedback. Therefore women may be more sensitive to particular characteristics of an achievement situation in assessing their own competence (Hawkins, 1985).

As illustrated, aspects of the work context are very important in understanding the appearance of sex differences in achievement. An examination of the pattern of sex differences in the educational use of the computer as a tool is therefore important. Studies examining the different uses of computers in classrooms have demonstrated patterns of sex differences (Hawkins, 1985). Two situational factors appear to be major determinants of the engagement of girls and boys with information technology: the function for which the computer is used, and the organisation of the setting in which children work.

One survey of schools (Hawkins, 1985) revealed that there were clear trends indicating that boys were more likely than girls to use the machines. However, this pattern was related to the fact that computers were frequently used for teaching programming, mathematics or data processing in business studies, where boys were the dominant users. Boys also made opportunities to use computers outside regular classtime. In contrast, the teachers in one school reported that girls'

interest was aroused in the form of graphics tools that allowed them to create pictures and designs. The study concluded that gender was the most obvious factor affecting differential use of the machines at all levels in the schools surveyed. These differences tended to polarise at the higher levels when students entered the departmental system, where computers were concentrated in the mathematics and business subject areas.

Another research project was concerned with the research and development of software for use in the science and mathematics curricula of junior schools (Hawkins, 1985). The software was designed to use the unique and powerful features of computers and to model ways in which the tools are actually used by adults in their work. One requirement of the project was to encourage girls to develop an interest in science and maths. The three pieces of software included tools to gather data about physical phenomena (temperature, light, sound) and to display these measurements in various types of graphic formats, a simulation to introduce principles of navigation and the geometry involved, and a series of games designed to introduce children to programming concepts in LOGO.

The variations in the design of the software illustrated the importance of two factors in the emergence of such differences: the type of software as it fitted into the maths/science environment (tool, simulation, game), and the way in which the work was organised and put into context by the teacher. Differences between girls and boys were most notable for one of the three pieces of software - the tool used to gather and display data. Boys tended to make more use of this software than girls, often working in groups, with the girls either apparently lacking in interest or watching from a distance. Overall, boys reported a greater perceived degree of interest and used the software more frequently. However, reported appeal was also a function of what was done with the software. In one classroom where children used the software to do 'experiments' of interest to them (for example, personalised activities in which they measured their own body temperatures) 80% of both girls and boys reported that they liked the software.

While the other two peices of software were no less technical or mathematical, there were few apparent sex differences in their use or appeal. There were two features of the software that contributed to their appeal for girls. First, learning experiences with these two pieces of software tended to be collaborative exercises. The simulation game was designed so that children were required to play co-operatively. Teachers also chose to organise the programming games as collaborative work between pairs of children. Secondly, the goals of these two pieces of soft-

ware were less explicitly scientific than was the case for the data gathering tool. The latter was introduced as part of the science curriculum, using the scientific method.

One method of incorporating computers into educational environments that is likely to be more effective for general equality is to view them as tools that can be adapted to a wide variety of purposes in all subject areas - language, art, music, information gathering and organising, as well as maths, science and technology. To achieve this, it is essential that information technology be treated as a general purpose skill to be used in *every* subject, and provide opportunities for young women at all levels. It is particularly important to build on those areas where computers are already being usefully applied in the outside world in areas where women traditionally predominate, such as librarianship. In this way, girls and women may see clearly the relevance of information technology to their own lives and learning.

One motivational factor in learning to use a computer is its game playing capabilities. Although the microcomputer has a variety of uses, games are usually its primary attraction for school pupils. Many computer games have militaristic titles, for example 'Space Wars', 'Destroy All Subs'; few express themes associated with female-oriented activities. Education computer programs are most often found in maths and science courses with titles such as 'Race Car Facts'.

One survey (Hess and Miura, 1985) of sex-role stereotyping in titles of computer games and educational programs revealed that 37% of the titles were perceived to be written primarily for males, but only 5% were judged to be primarily of interest to females.

As a greater range of ways to use computers in schools is developed, with application in subjects with more women teachers than are currently found in maths and science, both female teachers and female students will become adept computer users and advocates in their schools. The presence of large numbers of women teachers using computers, and thus providing implicit role models for female students, may be an important factor in overcoming the present association of computer skills with males.

It has become increasingly obvious that the dominance of the computer in society derives from its overall information processing capacity, rather than merely its ability to calculate numbers. Words, not numbers, allow computer technology to be applied to the solution of information problems in commerce, industry, government and the uncomputerised sectors of society. Since the computer is as much a logic machine as a number machine, computer programming tests should contain more problems expressed in words than problems focussing on numbers,

symbols or charts. In fact, one study (Anderson, 1987) found that most computer tests are just the opposite, and most computer instruction is mathematically rather than linguistically and logically oriented. Because of the bias of women and girls towards the arts and humanities, the mathematical bias in computer testing and teaching may well be one of the major barriers to women seeking competence and entrance to careers within the information technology industry.

All of the obstacles which may prevent women from becoming knowledgeable about information technology can be overcome, removed or changed. But if the current trends in information technology training continue it is likely that men, not women, will control information technology in the future. Intervention by schools and other training institutions is needed to prevent gender inequities from becoming even more deeply ingrained in society.

Technology can be understood only in the light of its historical development, and is not simply the result of applying the laws of natural science. Since any technology is created by human beings, it can be shaped and altered according to social and human criteria. Information technology education and training should not only incorporate components of how the technology functions in a technical sense, but also its social functions and historical development. The role played by women in the history of information technology should be a prominent theme.

Information technology is part of everyday life. Driving a car, shopping, banking and many other daily activities are all affected by this technology. There will be a continuing need for highly skilled people to build the computer hardware and to develop the applications that will benefit society. To be less knowledgeable about the basic aspects of information technology is to be less able to participate in society. If women are learning less about information technology than men and have less opportunity to learn and to practise neither society's needs nor individuals' needs are being adequately served. Women intrinsically involved in information technology are a vital part of society.

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Women in the Historical Profession

Women Historians in the 1940s[1]

Mary Boyd

Mary Boyd taught in the History Department at Victoria University from 1947 until she retired in 1986. She was taken on, at a few weeks' notice, as a temporary junior lecturer to help with large post-war rehabilitation classes ,and it was not until the mid-1950s that she became a full lecturer. From 1943 until 1947 Mary worked in the Historical Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs and in Army Archives. During this time she was involved in the campaign for equal pay within the public service.

In this article Mary Boyd recalls her own early years as an historian, and those of the small group of women who qualified and entered professional life around the same time. It is based on an address to the NZ Historical Association Conference in 1987. Other speakers at the Conference talked about the careers of women and men who had recently graduated in history (Dorothy Page), the representation of women among university staff (Phillida Bunkle), and feminist history (Jill Matthews).

Women seeking a professional life in the 1940s and 1950s were few in number and they occupied an uncomfortable territory - poised between their male colleagues on one side (with whom they were rarely in a position of full equivalence) and the majority of women on the other (who were leading very

different lives). In the professional context, the very fact of being a woman was problematic. Differences between women and men tended to be downplayed rather than highlighted. As Mary Boyd describes, this was expressed in the way in which women were viewed as historical subjects, as well as how they were treated as historians.

Practically the only women in the historical profession before the second world war and centennial celebrations were secondary school teachers. Most taught British or European history to girls taking academic courses. The only woman teaching history on the academic staff at Victoria University College as Dr Hilda Heine, a lecturer in the Economics Department whose bookshelves contained more works on German literature than history. She lectured on British economic history to commerce and accountancy students and handed out notes summarising J.H. Clapham's three-volume *An Economic History of Modern Britain.* A former student and senior scholar of Victoria University College, she graduated with first class honours in English and German in 1923, won a Jacob Joseph and a travelling scholarship in 1924, and obtained a PhD from Berlin. She was lecturer in economics 1929-47, senior lecturer 1947-53 and part-time lecturer 1954. She is not mentioned in J.C. Beaglehole's *Victoria University College: an essay towards a history,* yet she started out with academic qualifications similar to his.

In 1940, Sylvia Smith (formerly Masterman) helped mark Stage 1 history essays and gave a couple of end-of-course lectures based on the subject of her London MA thesis (published by Allen & Unwin in 1934): *The Origins of International Rivalry in Samoa 1845-1884.* Later, when her husband was deputy high commissioner of Western Samoa, she wrote *An Outline of Samoan History* for use in Samoan schools. But it was kept out, so I have been told, because Samoan leaders objected to what it contained on the Mau. It was reprinted in Apia in 1980. Sylvia Smith also wrote a post-primary bulletin for New Zealand schools on *Village Life in Western Samoa,* Wellington, 1966, which was widely used.

Canterbury University College History Department, for many years, consisted of Professor James Hight and Alice Candy, a past graduate with first class honours in Political Science. She taught in several schools before she was appointed assistant lecturer in history in 1921. Apart from an exchange year lecturing at Bedford College in London, she worked in the Department until she retired in 1948. She was also warden of Helen Connon Hall from 1936-1951. She has been described as Hight's 'glorified secretary' and 'unofficial dean of women'. With Hight, she wrote *A Short History of the Canterbury University College* to

mark its jubilee. She was remembered by students for her warm personality and enthusiasm.[2]

This lack of women in the profession needs to be viewed in its wider perspective. Until the end of the war there were four history departments, each with a professor and a lecturer and little part-time help. There were no courses for postgraduate studies, no New Zealand PhDs, and one travelling scholarship in arts annually for the whole of the New Zealand University.

On the other hand, there were a surprisingly large number of women history graduates. The 'List of Theses' 1927-37 compiled for the National Historical Committee, New Zealand Centennial 1940, reveals that 152 of 483 thesis writers were women. All wrote on New Zealand subjects, though little or no New Zealand history was taught for degree courses.[3] So far as I am aware, only one of these theses was published.[4] Obviously there were university-trained women who could have been employed in the historical profession. Some became secondary school teachers, and one a lecturer at the teachers' training college; none was appointed to the academic staff of a university. One was to write the letterpress for an issue of *Making New Zealand*, a centennial publication.

The idea of commemorating the 1940 centenary by a series of historical publications was J.W. Heenan's. He was undersecretary of the Department of Internal Affairs and had considerable influence on Peter Fraser, then Minister of Education. Under their benevolent patronage, a most ambitious programme of state-funded historical research and publications was launched; it was designed to lay solid foundations for the New Zealand history profession. A National Historical Organisation was established, headed by the National Historical Committee consisting of eight men.[5] A letter to the editor of the *Evening Post*, 6 October 1938, signed 'Church, Children, Kitchen', protested:

> If women of New Zealand have any respect at all for the memory of their pioneer ancestors, they will rise in vigorous protest against the way they have been pushed into the background by the people organising the centennial preparations. Up to date the name of not a single woman appears on the Committee constituting the higher command.

The New Zealand Labour Party, the protestor concluded, believed in 'keeping women of this country as the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. That's their "place".'

The Centennial Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs was staffed from outside the public service with university-trained men - the three editors, the secretary of the Atlas committee, R.I.M. Burnett,

and research assistants, Frank Lingard, J.W. Davidson and R.R. Cunninghame. As the men left, mainly to join the armed forces, women were added to the staff as research assistants - Ruth Allan (then Fletcher) 1940, Janet Paul (then Wilkinson) 1942, Ruth Ross (then Guscott) January 1942, and Nancy Taylor (then Wheeler), November 1942.

Thirteen centennial surveys were commissioned from writers, journalists and historians; 12 were written and 11 published. They included *The Women of New Zealand* by Helen Simpson (formerly Richmond). She was regarded by the men who commissioned her as equipped to write this pioneering history of New Zealand women because of her 'wide culture, her several visits to Europe, her experiences as a contributor to newspapers and her humanity' (see biographical notes on the dust jacket of the survey). Descended from 'distinguished pioneer stock', she had 'had a brilliant academic career at Victoria and Canterbury University Colleges, before she was awarded a scholarship which enabled her after three years' residence at Royal Holloway College, University of London, to obtain the London PhD. She...had extensive experience as a teacher and lecturer-in-English at the Christchurch Training College and at Canterbury University College.'

Thirty issues were produced of *Making New Zealand - Pictorial Surveys of a Century*. Doris McIntosh (formerly Pow) prepared the letterpress on 'Dress' (vol.2 no.24), Ernest and Pearl Beaglehole that on 'Polynesians' (vol.2 no.29). Two pictures were taken by women, five references were to works by women, 23 women and five women's organisations were indexed. For the rest it was men's work!

The New Zealand Centennial Atlas project begun by Burnett and male research assistants was kept alive by women research assistants under Dr J.C. Beaglehole while Burnett was serving overseas.

Eleven provincial historical committees were established to produce provincial histories. All the chairmen and most of the members were men, as were most of the editors and most of the authors. As a member of an old family, Mrs S.T. Evatt was a member of the Marlborough Committee, and women in the provinces did an immense amount of voluntary work collecting information and records and helping stage historical pageants.

Two national women's organisations, without even token representation on the national historical organisation, produced their own centennial histories. *Tales of Pioneer Women* was published by Whitcombe and Tombs in 1940 for the Women's Institutes. (It has recently been reprinted.) Each province contributed a section. Their work was edited by Airini E.W. Woodhouse, Blue Cliffs Station, St Andrews, South Canterbury. The secretary of the National Historical Committee asked the

secretaries of the provincial historical committees to name some local authority willing and able to check the accuracy of the manuscript.[6] *Brave New Days: Tales of Pioneer Women*, published by A.H. & A.W. Reed in 1939, was compiled and written by three women editors, Mrs T.A. Barrer, Mrs C.K. Wilson and Mrs F. Spurdle, from information supplied by 16 official collectors for the Women's Division of the New Zealand Farmers' Union.

The three women's centennial histories were all commemorative records of the courage, resourcefulness and perseverance of pioneer women. Maori women had almost no place in them. Nor did they have any place in I.L.G Sutherland (ed.), *The Maori People Today*, which contained two chapters by Sir Apirana Ngata who had been invited, in vain, to write a centennial survey on the Maori. The place of women in centennial histories was in keeping with traditional attitudes. Women were presented with cut and dried proposals. Their role was separate, subsidiary and supportive. They had little or no scope for initiative or originality.

Significantly, in Otago, the first province to establish a state secondary high school and admit women students to the university, women refused to be put down by men. In 1936, 44 women's organisations sent representatives to a meeting that had set up an Otago Women's Centennial Council to provide a memorial to the pioneer women of Otago. The president was Dr Emily Siedeberg McKinnon, who proposed a scheme for a women's community building in Dunedin modelled on one she had visited in Vancouver, where town and country women could pursue their interests.[7]

In Wellington, by way of contrast, T. Lindsay Buick, chairman of the provincial historical committee, proposed a women's week during the centennial celebrations, and the chairman of the board of directors of the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition suggested a women's hall at the Exhibition. This latter proposal was presented to a few women leaders and wives of local dignitaries invited to a mayoral afternoon tea.[8]

In 1945-6, when the Otago Centennial Historical Committee was formed to publish a history of Otago during its centennial year, 1948, two women were made members: Eileen Soper (formerly Service), an Otago graduate with a BA who had worked on the editorial staff of the *Otago Daily Times* until 1938 when she married,[9] and Margaret Pryde, secretary of the Otago Early Settlers, Museum. Dr A.H. McLintock, who was appointed Director of Historical Publications by the Committee, employed three of his graduate students for a year on 'routine research': Noreen Murray, Barbara Angus, and Michael Standish, later National Archivist. Eileen Soper was also author of one of the Otago centennial

publications, *The Mothers of Otago*, Dunedin, 1948. Noreen Murray made 'investigations' for the last chapter of this book. Like Helen Simpson, Eileen Soper was not a trained historian but a writer and journalist. Noreen Murray and Barbara Angus also provided assistance to A.H.H. Webster, author of *Teviot Tapestry*, another Otago Centennial Publication.

After most of the centennial publications except the Atlas were completed, the Centennial Branch was transformed into the Historical Branch, and Dr J.C. Beaglehole was appointed historical adviser to the Department of Internal Affairs. The Branch became what he described as a 'sort of editorial-cum-historical-typographical-literary public relations office' and devoted much of its time to wartime publications. John Pascoe, the only remaining man, became official photographer of the war effort on the home front. Janet Paul and Nan Taylor helped Beaglehole produce *An Introduction to New Zealand*, a beautifully designed and well-illustrated book with a text written for American allies. Atlas research was carried on mainly by Ruth Ross, who also wrote *New Zealand's First Capital*, published as the first bulletin of the Branch in 1946. It grew out of her work on the early trade and settlement maps, and was one of the earliest monographs based on National Archives' records (for example, old land claims files).

When I joined the Branch in November 1943, I was put to work on maps of Maori schools and villages, then mission stations. The Public Service during the war was an essential industry and, believe it or not, this saved me from being manpowered to the hospital as a wardsmaid! At the same time, I was writing an MA thesis on early race relations in New Zealand and researching a case for equal pay and equal opportunities for women in the Public Service for the women's sub-committee of the Wellington Branch of the Public Service Association.[10] Mr Heenan regarded such activities with benign tolerance.

As the war continued Atlas work seemed increasingly irrelevant and more and more a lost cause. However, it revived when Bob Burnett returned and new staff were appointed who included Frances Porter (formerly Fyfe), another Victoria history graduate. It was nearing the final stages of mapping and publication when it fell victim to the change of government in 1949. Meanwhile several of us had moved on. I took over Ruth Fletcher's job in Army Archives when she went to Canada and worked with Barbara Kay (formerly Wall), also a Victoria history graduate, calendaring sources for war history. John Pascoe and Ruth Ross moved to the War History Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs when it was established to produced the official war history, with Sir Howard Kippenberger as editor-in-chief.

The war history consisted of four series: 24 campaign and service volumes, 21 unit histories, 24 episodes and studies for a wide public (like *Making New Zealand*) and a three-volume history of *The New Zealand People at War: Political and External Affairs, The War Economy* and *The Home Front*. Three volumes of war history documents were also published.

The pattern of participation by women did not differ greatly from that in the centennial histories. The only separate women's history was a booklet in the Episodes and Studies series, *Women at War* - written by a man, D.O.W. Hall. Women were again employed as research assistants, mainly to compile war history narratives for authorities of *The New Zealand People at War*. Professor F.L.W. Wood, author of *Political and External Affairs*, had five former students as narrative writers, and two were women: M.P. (Pat) Lissington and Judith Hornabrook. Barbara Angus from Otago, who in late 1947 had applied to the Public Service commission for a job, also became a narrative writer 1948-50. Pat Lissington wrote four narratives on external relations and one with Barbara Angus on Americans in New Zealand. Barbara Angus also wrote four on women - in industry, the land corps, war workers' hostels, and the Women's War Service Auxiliary - and five on external affairs. Judith Hornabrook wrote one on the Tongan Defence Force. Phyllis Pettit, whose thesis on Wellington watersiders was published by their Wellington Branch, compiled a narrative on the Waterfront Control Commission.

In May 1957, when the official war history was nearing completion, Nan Taylor, who had retired from the Historical Branch to have a baby, and had combined motherhood with editing manuscripts for publication, was appointed to write *The Home Front*. About the time she started, the rump of the War History Branch (now all men) was absorbed into a new branch, Historical Publications. Its functions were to complete the publication of the war histories, undertake further historical research and prepare material for publication, and assist scholars and students to do the same.[11] More than 20 years' research, writing, editing and revision went into *The Home Front*, published in 1986 in two volumes. Nan and her husband used to make jokes that she could only afford to do this work because she was 'a kept woman'![12]

Women were far slower than they had been in centennial days to write their own war histories. Before 1985-86, the bumper years, the only women's war history was Christina K. Guy's pamphlet, published in 1943 by the Progressive Publishing Society, *Women on the Home Front: an SOS from Mothers*. Then in quick succession came Eve Ebbett, *When the Boys Were Away*, Iris Latham, *The WAAC Story*, and Lauris Edmond (ed.),

Women in Wartime, adding a personal and human dimension to the official history. Meanwhile Pat Lissington had a year off secondary school teaching in the Historical Publications branch to revise her war history narratives on *New Zealand and the United States 1840-1944* and *New Zealand and Japan 1900-1941,* which were published in 1972.

Why was there no unit history of the WAACs? Iris Latham, one of the first 30 women to be sent overseas to work in the NZ Forces Club in Cairo, spent three years and $13,500 to produce hers.[13]

The separate, subsidiary and supportive place assigned to women in centennial publications and official war histories was in keeping with traditional attitudes about their place in New Zealand society; but this is only one side of the coin. For the younger, university-trained history graduates employed as research assistants, this was a great opening into the historical profession in the days before postgraduate courses and junior lectureships in the New Zealand universities. Their attitudes were different from the older generation of women, and not well understood by the present-day women's movement. They had little or no interest in separate women's organisations or women's history. They wanted to be part of the world outside the home and women's organisations, and enter a profession in the same way as men, not as token women. But they would have found it incredible to be accused of being unfeminine, or honorary men. They believed that they could fill any occupation provided they had the necessary qualifications. They expected to get married and give up their careers, at least for a time, if they had children and if they chose to do so. But they believed married as well as single women had the right to work.

From 1921 to 1947 women were denied permanent status in the public service. Women research assistants in the Centennial and Historical Branch were classified as wartime temporaries in the Clerical Division, and paid less than men in equivalent positions. They supported the campaign for equal pay, meaning a rate of pay for the job regardless of who performed it, and equal opportunities for employment and promotion. Although the Public Service Commission accepted the principle of equal pay in 1946, it was still policy to pay women research assistants in the Historical Branch and in War History less than men. A new male had to get more than the longest serving, better-qualified, more experienced female. A female's salary could not be increased because she would receive more than a hopeless male. To appeal seemed useless. But pay was not the only consideration.

The women thought they were lucky to have interesting jobs and to be part of a community of scholars, writers and artists. They were grateful to the university teachers who recommended their appoint-

ments. They liked and respected the men they worked with even if they felt that these men did not understand professional women. They did not feel put down when they were dubbed 'Beaglehole's babies' or 'McLintock's pets'. They did not feel a need for role models. They did not feel subservient to men even if they were expected to be dogsbodies or shop for the wife of the editor-in-chief. They were happy in their work for the time being but they did not intend to spend their whole working life doing basic research.

Some married and gave up work when they had children. Others moved on. Judith Hornabrook joined the staff of National Archives and later became chief archivist. Barbara Angus transferred to the administration division of the Department of External Affairs on the same salary she had received working for McLintock and War History (£300 per annum, top of the MA scale). After two years the Public Service Commission said she was too highly qualified to be an accounts clerk and made her a file clerk! It was 14 years before she received a salary increase. Professional life for her began at 38, when she was posted to Singapore as third secretary. Despite this late start, she eventually became a senior diplomat. Pat Lissington became senior history mistress at Wellington East Girls' College (where Nita McMaster, another Victoria University history graduate, was principal) and later moved on to Onslow College. After she retired from teaching she was employed by the Treasury as their historian. In 1947, when Dr Beaglehole was given leave by Victoria University College to edit Cook's Journals, I became a temporary junior lecturer in the History Department, and when the permanent junior lecturer, John Owen, went to Oxford on a rehabilitation scholarship, I was made permanent. At least we had equal pay in the university, although there was a move to change this in the late 1940s.

The knowledge and skills of those who 'retired' on marriage were not lost to the profession. Indeed the spin-off was considerable - school bulletins for the Department of Education, research, editorial work, committee work and publications for the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, editing Turnbull library manuscripts for publication, contributions to McLintock's *Encyclopedia of New Zealand* and Ray Knox's *New Zealand Heritage*, articles in the *Turnbull Library Record*, the *New Zealand Journal of History* and other periodicals, local histories, and, most recently, filling in basic information sheets and writing entries for the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. The quality of the work of these part-time, freelance women in the historical profession has been outstanding.

A bibliography of all the books and articles written and edited by the ten women of my generation in the historical profession who served their apprenticeships on centennial publications and war histories would run to many pages. The select bibliography that follows must suffice to illustrate the substantial contribution they have made to New Zealand historical studies. Books cited in this paper are not included. Nor are all the articles, bulletins and minor works generally described in the previous paragraph. How much more they might have achieved had they enjoyed equal opportunities with men in the history profession!

Notes

1. I am grateful to Pat Lissington and Barbara Angus for talking to me about their experiences in the War History Branch of Internal Affairs, to Sherrah Francis for finding me a file in National Archives containing newspaper clippings about women and the centennial celebrations (IA 1956/195/138), and to Charlotte Macdonald for introducing me to the booklet *Otago Pioneer Women's Memorial* and helping me to produce this paper.
2. NZ Biographies, 1977, vol.1, pp.29-30, Alexander Turnbull Library.
3. Twelve wrote on national and general history (three on women's history), 49 on provincial history (a third on Canterbury and a sixth each on Auckland and Otago), 23 on biography, 13 on church history, 10 on external affairs, 15 on Maori, 12 on politics and administration, 9 on economics, 7 on education and 2 on science.
4. H.C. Fancourt, *The Advance of the Missionaries*, Dunedin, 1939. E.M. Wilson, *Land Problems of the New Zealand Settlers of the 'Forties*, Reed 1936, was an unlisted Canterbury thesis, 1933.
5. Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon W.E. Parry; undersecretary, J.W. Heenan CBE; chairman, James Thorn MP; editor, E.H. McCormick; illustrations editor, J.D. Pascoe; associate editor, D.O.W. Hall; advisory editor, Oliver Duff; typographical advisor, J.C. Beaglehole.
6. IA 1956/195/138.
7. After the Provincial Centennial Council had approved the proposal, the men on the Memorials Committee and the Council rescinded the approval, which cost the women a government subsidy. The Otago Women's Centennial Council was dissolved and the Otago Pioneer Women's Memorial Association was formed. In 1941, it purchased a building, 326 Moray Place, which was opened and dedicated on 23 February 1942. (*Otago Pioneer Women's Memorial: Being a brief history of the foundation of a memorial building dedicated to the pioneer women of Otago to serve the interests of present and future generations of women an organised societies in civic welfare.)*
8. IA 1956/195/138.

9. Eileen Service graduated BA in 1924. She majored in English with additional subjects of French and Education. She was offered £1 a week as a journalist; after complaints she received 30/- a week, which was still considerably lower than wages paid to male journalists.
10. Margaret Corner, *No Easy Victory: towards equal pay for women in the government service 1890-1960*, NZ Public Service Association with the Dan Long Trust, 1988.
11. *AJHR*, 1963, H-22.
12. *NZ Listener*, 21 June 1986.
13. *Evening Post*, 12 August 1986.

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Catalogue cover, Elizabeth Abbott, 1898.
(see pages 54-67)

Abortion Politics

A review article by
Barbara Brookes

Abortion and Woman's Choice
Rosalind Pollack Petchesky. Verso, 1986.

Induced Abortion in New Zealand, 1976-1983
Janet Sceats. Government Printer, 1985.

Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood
Kristin Luker. University of California Press, 1984.

The New Politics of Abortion
Ed. Joni Lovenduski and Joyce Outshoorn. Sage Publications, 1986.

New Zealand ran counter to a world-wide trend in 1977 when the Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Act (CSA Act) tightened rather than liberalised access to abortion services (Francome, 1984). The Act, which has been called a 'social charade' (Kennedy, 1987:31), has done little to satisfy feminists who support a woman's right to choose, or the anti-abortion movement who regard abortion as murder and want it outlawed. The heat of the debate over the subject was intense at a national level in the 1970s and in many local areas the battle rages on as hospital superintendents and boards decide whether or not to renew their licences to perform abortions. Members of the Society for the

Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) continue their campaign of harassment of certifying consultants and of women going to clinics and hospitals for abortions. If the recent British and American experiences are any guide, the so-called 'pro-life movement' is gaining ground. Feminists here would like to see new legislation decriminalising abortion and giving women, rather than medical 'experts', the right to decide the matter. WONAAC (Women's National Abortion Action Campaign) is currently seeking a liberal MP to introduce a private member's bill. The problem of raising the issue at a national level once again is in ensuring that we have the time and the resources to counter what is sure to be a massive onslaught of lobbying from the anti-abortion camp. In considering the issues that make the debate so intense and one that politicians shy away from, I want to review some recent American and European analyses of the topic and to investigate their relevance to the New Zealand situation.

The acrimonious debate that the subject arouses here tends to confirm the argument that is at the heart of Rosalind Pollack Petchesky's excellent analysis of the American situation: 'that abortion is the fulcrum in a much broader ideological struggle in which the very meaning of the family, the state, motherhood, and young women's sexuality are contested'. Her book could provide a useful model for exploring the history and politics of abortion in New Zealand, a subject awaiting an in-depth examination. The most recent book on the issue, Marilyn Pryor's *The Right to Live* (1986), which I have reviewed elsewhere (*Listener*, 11/4/87), is a caricature of the issues involved. It needs to be read alongside Janet Sceats' *Induced Abortion in New Zealand, 1976-1983*, a study prepared for the Abortion Supervisory Committee which presents factual demographic data and the results of a survey of women who received first trimester abortions during a three month period in 1983. It would be easy to dismiss Pryor's partisan account (she is a former President of SPUC) as of being of little value. Nevertheless, it is well worth considering what motivates women like her to commit themselves to the anti-abortion position. Of interest here is Kristin Luker's *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, a Californian case study of the membership of both sides of the abortion debate. Luker gives a fascinating insight into the different social worlds and value systems of the women committed to the pro-choice and anti-abortion positions. It is difficult to know how similar the groupings are in New Zealand, but until research proves the contrary there seems little reason to doubt that the broad picture is similar. Apart from the conservative pressure groups that devote themselves to the issue (and have been recently successful in Britain, with the introduction of David Alton's bill to

restrict the time-limit under which abortions may be performed), it is important to consider just how successful liberalised legislation has been. Useful discussions of this can be found in the articles in *The New Politics of Abortion* (Lovenduski and Outshoorn, 1986), a collection which presents material on seven European countries and the USA, and concludes by suggesting that the practical effects of abortion legislation have often been marginal.

In *Abortion and Woman's Choice*, Petchesky writes from a feminist-socialist perspective and draws on a wealth of material. Her study takes a broad perspective, examining theoretical approaches to reproductive rights; the nineteenth century criminalistation of abortion in the USA; the 1970s legalisation of medical abortion; abortion practice in the 1970s; and sexual politics in the 1980s. The introduction sets out the two essential ideas which, she argues, underlie a feminist view of reproductive freedom: the *individual* and *social* dimensions of reproduction. The first posits that women have a right to bodily integrity; that they 'must be able to control their bodies and procreative capacities'. The *social* dimension, historically rooted and open to change, suggests that women, under the existing division of labour between the sexes, are the most responsible for the care and rearing of children, and therefore should have the right to decide about childbearing. The critical issue for feminists, Petchesky argues, is 'not so much the content of women's choices, or even the "right to choose", as it is the social and material conditions under which choices are made' (1986:11). A 'right to choose' is meaningless where no provision is made for accessible, safe and efficient abortion facilities. In the USA at present, Petchesky makes clear, the options available to women are crucially different according to one's class and race.

Abortion and Woman's Choice demands careful reading as it analyses the way in which choices about reproduction are shaped by medical, religious, legal, corporate and state interests. Petchesky examines the nature of these choices in an historical context and in the present day. The latter focus provides a thoughtful critique of the shortcomings of current contraceptive techniques and of the cultural dilemmas surrounding young women's sexuality in a heterosexual culture. In a highly relevant section, Petchesky examines the rise of the New Right and the symbolic role of abortion in a crusade to preserve the patriarchal family in the face of the very real changes brought about by the women's and gay liberation movements. She cites studies sampling 'pro-life' activists which have found that their 'pro-life' stance does not extend to opposition to capital punishment, war, and military spending (1986:263). Their most consistently shared stance was a conservative ap-

proach to sexuality, including disapproval of premarital sex, birth control for teenagers, sex education and divorce. This is evident in the response of American President of the National Right to Life Campaign to charges of firebombings and harassment at abortion clinics. Petchesky quotes his statements (1986:263) that it was those who advocated free choice who were

> doing violence to our beloved nation by their systematic undermining of the basic unit of our society, the family. They do violence by their so-called sex education which is encouraging sexual promiscuity in our children and leading to more and more abortions... They do violence to marriage by helping to remove *the right of the husband to protect the life of the child he has fathered in his wife's womb.*

The fetus has become the symbol of purity and vulnerability in need of protection from rampant anti-family values. It is a convenient symbol, for unlike the women whose rights it is pitted against, the fetus is seen, in the 'pro-life' view, to be asexual and therefore innocent (Petchesky, 1986:263).

Kristin Luker in *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* argues that by focusing on the relative rights of women and embryos, the abortion debate has become *'a referendum on the place and meaning of motherhood'*. She traces the medicalisation of abortion in the nineteenth century and suggests that by stressing the importance of fetal life, doctors claimed for themselves the role of impartial arbiters between the rights of self-interested women and the rights of the defenceless embryo (1984:44). In more recent decades, the participants in the debate have widened to include 'ordinary women' (1984:192). Women may be found in both the 'pro-' and 'anti-' choice camps, and Luker's study seeks to understand why they hold contrary positions. Those on the pro-choice side usually identify as feminists and most work in the paid labour force (94% in Luker's case study). They are well educated, likely to regard religion as unimportant (75%), have one or two children, and are not committed to stereotyped roles. In contrast, the women who are anti-abortion are much less likely to work in the paid labour force (63% do not), are more likely to be married than those in the pro-choice camp, and to have two or three children. These women, predominantly Catholic (80%), stated that religion was important in their lives and they are committed to traditional female roles (1984:193). Attitudes to abortion therefore are an important indicator of those who wish to maintain the sexual division of labour and those who wish to challenge it (1984:201). Luker argues that it is a deep-seated commitment to traditional family values, rather than money, which is the mainspring of the 'pro-life' movement

(1984:223). As Petchesky suggests, this clinging to traditional values may be the undoing of the 'pro-life' movement in the long run, since it is based on 'a basic misunderstanding of current economic realities' which mean that the possibility of a one income family is fading fast (Luker, 1984:275).

New Zealand activists against abortion, such as Marilyn Pryor, certainly regard feminists (along with an assortment of other liberals) as enemies of the family, and largely ignore the impact of the changing economy. It would be interesting to know how many other members of SPUC are, like her, mothers of substantial families and committed to home life. It may be from women such as this, feeling beleaguered at a time of economic insecurity and rapid social change, that the support comes for more anti-abortion action along the lines of the 1983 Status of the Unborn Child Bill. The latter, by conferring full legal status on the fetus, aimed to ensure only the most restricted access to abortion (Kennedy, 1987:205).

The current New Zealand legislation on abortion differs from England and Canada in that the long title states quite clearly that full regard must be paid to the rights of the unborn child before an abortion may be authorised (Kennedy, 1987:186). Allanah Ryan has pointed out how the CSA Act buttresses 'an ideology of the nuclear family which supports the oppression of women by defining them as wives and mothers whose place is in the family' (Ryan, 1986:67). Under the Act abortion is not unlawful if, in the opinion of two consultants, the continuance of pregnancy would result in 'serious danger' to the woman's life or physical or mental health or if there is a 'substantial risk' of the child being born either physically or mentally 'seriously handicapped'. Other factors which may be taken into account include whether the mother is 'subnormal', her extreme youth or age, or if the pregnancy resulted from rape. In fact, the overwhelming majority of abortions (98% in 1984) were done on the grounds that the continuance of the pregnancy would be a serious danger to the physical or mental health of the woman (Kennedy, 1987:100).

Janet Sceats' study shows that more than half the total number of abortions carried out in New Zealand are on women under the age of twenty-five and a similar proportion on women who have never been married. The latter point suggests that abortion serves to reinforce 'existing social relationships' (Young, 1975:54), in that marriage is regarded as the proper site for the bearing and raising of children. Nevertheless Sceats' analysis reveals that there have been two important recent changes for the under twenty age group: higher rates of contraceptive usage, and the introduction of the domestic purposes

benefit enabling young women to keep their babies (1985:88). It is these factors, rather than induced abortion, that have had an impact on the numbers of babies available for adoption.

Ninety percent of abortions take place in the first trimester of pregnancy, and in 1983 82% were carried out in public hospital facilities. The study does not analyse the proportions of married and single women using public and private facilities. In England unmarried women are over-represented as users of private facilities, suggesting, perhaps, that they are expected 'to pay for their sins' (Young, 1975:57). In total, New Zealand's abortion rates are low compared to those of similar countries.

Some points that emerge from the Sceats Report deserve further attention. First, Pacific Island and Maori women are over-represented among abortion patients. Second, abortions on very young women (14 years or younger) constitute a higher proportion of all abortions in New Zealand than in other countries, and the level of fertility of 14-17-year-olds is one of the highest of all the developed countries (Sceats, 1985:97). In view of these facts, it is not surprising to learn that Pacific Island, Maori and young women (under 20) are less likely than other women to use contraception. Sceats does not delve into the cultural issues raised by these findings.

A third important though well-known point is that the availability of abortion and the quality of the service varies regionally, with a marked 'service short-fall' existing on the East Coast, and in Wellington (outside the urban area), Westland and Southland (Sceats, 1985:33, 109). Women in Christchurch were more likely to have to consult a number of doctors, to experience delays in getting through the system, and to report having had insufficient help.

Sceats' survey of women is limited, as she notes, by the fact that it included only those women who had made it through the system. Women who lacked the knowledge or opportunity to enter the system, those who were refused certification, or who obtained an abortion later than the first trimester, deserve attention in future research. The overwhelming majority of the women (90%) stated that they had received enough assistance and information in the abortion process. Above all, most women regarded the decision to seek an abortion as a personal one and rejected the idea that they needed any professional advice about what they should do (Sceats, 1985:183-4). This reinforces the point that feminists have long made, and which the CSA Act denies: that women themselves, and they alone, should make the moral decision that abortion entails.

In *The New Politics of Abortion* Ketting and Van Praag argue that

women will get abortions 'even under the most extreme prohibitive legal and cultural conditions' (1986:157). The traffic from New Zealand to Australia in 1978-79, aided by the Sisters Overseas Service (Sceats, 1985:18-26), reinforces this point, as does historical work on abortion (Brookes, 1988; Allen, 1982; McLaren, 1978; Mohr, 1978). Abortion legislation, therefore, has a marginal effect on the number of abortions. By comparing the incidence of abortion in countries where abortion is restricted to certain legal grounds with those where abortion is available on request, it is clear that restricted access does not lead to substantially lower abortion rates. In fact the Netherlands, with an 'accepted practice' of abortion on request, has much lower rates than the three countries where legal restrictions apply (Lovenduski and Outshoorn, 1984:163). In comparing the rates per legal ground (medical, psychiatric, etc) Ketting and Van Praag found that in England the overwhelming majority of abortions are performed on medical grounds, in Germany most are done on social grounds, whereas in Switzerland most are carried out for psychiatric reasons. The abortion rates of these countries, however, do not differ much. They conclude that the main function of legal grounds 'is to justify an operation which will be performed anyway' (Lovenduski and Outshoorn, 1984:164). Resort to abortion does not primarily relate to the liberal or restrictive nature of the relevant abortion law in each country, but rather to the 'level of contraceptive information' and the effective use of contraceptive measures (1984:168). In New Zealand, Section 3 of the CSA Act remains a significant barrier to provision of contraceptive information to those under 16; yet this is the group with a disproportionately high incidence of abortion, compared with other countries.

Joni Lovenduski's analysis of abortion politics in Britain since the 1967 reform points out two weaknesses of the 1967 Act which have equal relevance to New Zealand. The first is that women do not have the right to choose an abortion; two doctors have to be convinced of their case. Secondly, in Britain, as in New Zealand, no obligation is placed on the public health service to make provision for terminations. Thus, while providing for abortion on certain grounds, neither country backs up this stand by providing the necessary facilities. A pattern seems to be becoming apparent in New Zealand whereby the anti-abortion movement is putting pressure on individual health professionals and hospital boards to prevent the renewal of abortion licences. In the Wairarapa in 1987, for example, the Medical Superintendent of the hospital took it upon himself not to hold an abortion licence, against the wishes of the board. This resulted in women having to travel to Auckland and Wellington (*Wairarapa Times-Age*, 12/6/87; 16/6/87). The West Coast

has had continual battles over the issue and recently, in Dunedin, the local Women's Studies Association was active in lobbying the Hospital Board to renew its licence, in the face of a concerted campaign against renewal by anti-abortion activists. At the general committee meeting of the Board, the motion for renewal was carried by eight votes to three, but against the wishes of two of the four women members of that committee (*Otago Daily Times*, 5/2/88).

To rectify this situation, WONAAC is advocating an amendment to the Hospitals' Act which would specifically require boards to establish abortion facilities. WONAAC advocates the repeal of Sections 182-187 (excepting section 182B) of the Crimes Act which is currently under revision. They also seek repeal of the CSA Act which, given the preoccupation with AIDS education, is coming under scrutiny.[1] Such changes would give women the right to make the moral choice that abortion involves, and ensure that those who choose abortion will get it under the best possible conditions. To feminists, this is just recognition of women's rights. To the anti-abortion movement, as the above books suggest, moves towards liberalisation signal further erosion of patriarchal family. It may be that the only compromise for the irreconcilable views on abortion is, as Ketting and Van Praag suggest, that anti-abortion views 'provide the morality of the law' while pro-choice views 'supply the practical regulations' (Lovenduski and Outshoorn, 1984:159). Together with the other books reviewed here, this analysis helps us to understand the politics of the abortion debate. By understanding the forces opposed to change, we may be better equipped to fight them.

Note

1. WONAAC has support from the Abortion Law Reform Association and the Women's Electoral Lobby for the shape of repeal that they favour. They have produced a kitset with detailed policy notes and the relevant Acts which may be ordered for $10.They also produce a Newsletter available for a $10 subscription. The address is WONAAC, PO Box 25-067, Wellington.

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