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The last page of Dianne Snow's review article (p.92) was inadvertently omitted from Vol. 5 No. 2. It reads as follows:

On Women's Work

Franzway, S. 1986. 'With Problems of Their Own: Femocrats and the Welfare State'. *Australian Feminist Studies* 3.

Fraser, N. 1987. 'Women, Welfare and the Politics of Needs Interpretation'. *Thesis Eleven* 17.

MacKinnon, C. 1982. 'Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory'. In N. Keohane, M. Rosaldo & B. Gelpi (eds), *Feminist Theory. A Critique of Ideology*. Harvester Press.

Snell, M. 1986. 'Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination'. In Feminist Review (ed.), *Waged Work. A Reader*. Virago.

Dianne Snow is a lecturer in the Education Department at the University of Auckland. She is a socialist feminist with teaching and research interests in the social construction of childhood.

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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.

Maori Women:

An Annotated Bibliography and Computerised Data Base

Michelle Erai, Everdina Fuli, Kathie Irwin, Lenaire Wilcox

He tau pai te tau
He tau ora te tau
He tau ngehe te tau
He tau no te wahine
Rapua he purapura e tipu ai te tangata.

The year is good
The year is peaceful
The year is full of promise
It is the year of women (a time for peace and growth)
Seek, therefore, the seed from which will come
the greatest growth for all people.

Royal Commission on Social Policy (Volume II, 1988:155)

We would like to acknowledge first the Maori women of Aotearoa, those tipuna wahine, kuia, and whaea, that provide our culture and world with such a rich array of vision and knowledge. Without this matauranga

wahine Maori, research such as this could not be undertaken. This is but a meagre selection of those ideas that have been written down. The real repositories of knowledge about our culture, and the role and status of our women within it, are the kaumatua, kuia and koroua, and the women of other generations. It is an oral data base, guarded by the whanau — the hapu — and the iwi of Maoridom. We acknowledge its tuakana status. Our research, in comparison, barely touches the surface of what the oral base holds in store. We have searched the repositories of knowledge (such as libraries for example) that catalogue and store written materials on or by Maori women.

E kore e ngaro,
Te kakano i ruia mai i Rangiatea.

I shall never be lost,
the seed which was sown from Rangiatea.

We acknowledge also those younger Maori women, kotiro and mokopuna, who provide us with the motivation necessary to carry out this work. The future will be led in partnership by the women we are nurturing today. Our work has been guided by our projections of what they may want to know about their tipuna wahine Maori in years to come.

Ka pu te ruha,
Ka hao te rangatahi.

The worn net is put aside,
the new net goes fishing.

Finally, we acknowledge the Maori men of Aotearoa, our partners in our whanau, hapu and iwi. Our work is designed to contribute positively to the reaffirmation, and in places the reconstruction, of mana Maori motuhake by ensuring that our whole whanau, Maori women and men, are able to be visible, strong and proud in all we do. Through work such as this we are seeking to recreate the most important 'partnership' lost after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the partnership between Maori women and men.

In 1990, when the focus is on consideration of the Treaty of Waitangi and the partnership that the Treaty embodies, the needs of women must be specifically highlighted and considered. In particular, the needs of Maori women, the tangata whenua of this country, need to be a special

focus. As our experience so tragically shows us, 'history' has traditionally recorded men's experiences, in particular, men of the most powerful group in a society — in this country, Pakeha men. Feminist historians and writers have shown us that it is when we study history from a feminist perspective that we start to learn something of the women in our past.

For Maori women's experiences to be made visible and given a place in our story as a nation, for our double oppression as Maori and as women to be counteracted, Maori feminist studies need to be encouraged and supported. By that we mean studies in which Maori women are the central focus and their situation as a group is analysed from a feminist perspective. Research about the experiences and needs of Maori women is an urgent priority of the programmes of Maori Development and the women's movement, so that our invisibility is ended and our testimony placed on the record. There is a dearth of research available on Maori women. So significant is this, that the Women's Advisory Committee on Education stated in their submission to the Royal Commission on Social Policy that in itself it constituted '...a measure of the absence of educational equity' (WACE, 1987:22).

Importantly, all the women who have worked on this research project have been Maori women, tied by whakapapa to the women of the research. The significance of this bond cannot be overstated. Throughout the research process this bond has been continually strengthened. It is one thing to undertake research as an academic exercise; it is another matter altogether for Maori women to undertake such research as a part of a Maori feminist movement.

This bibliography will provide a resource which will give people interested in Maori women access to relevant research and publications. The references selected for inclusion in this bibliography will be written either by Maori women or about Maori women. The research has involved library based searches of published sources.

The bibliography will be entered into a computerised data base at Victoria University. As well as contributing to the development of the bibliography in the long term computerisation will also mean ready access to those who want specific information, e.g. writing by women from a particular tribe, or papers written about a particular topic, e.g. postgraduate theses written by Maori women.

Phase One of this project is to publish this bibliography in booklet form, containing over 700 references, to be distributed free of charge to interested people in 1990 (see box) so that their work can include Maori women. Following the publication of the bibliography this year, copies will be available on a cost recovery basis. We will be applying to various

organisations for funding so that we can keep costs to a minimum, preferably to be able to reprint free of charge. Phase Two is to create a permanent computerised data base on Maori Women, to be located in the Education Department of Victoria University, and to be continuously upgraded as new knowledge becomes available. Phase Three is to engage in whanau-hapu-iwi based research on the oral histories of Maori women.

Nau te rourou, naku te rourou
Ka ora ai te iwi.

From the principle of partnership,
The well being of the people will be assured.

Maori Women: An Annotated Bibliography

is published by Michelle Erai, Everdina Fuli, Kathie Irwin and Lenaire Wilcox, in conjunction with Learning Media, Ministry of Education. One hundred copies will be distributed free to tertiary institutions and the Ministry of Education. Hundreds more will be distributed free to Maori organisations throughout the country. A limited number will be available from the Project Director. The remaining copies from the initial print run will be given away. Requests from Maori women and Maori organisations are most welcome. Library requests will have high priority.

Anyone reading this article can help us by sending in bibliographic references for work written by or about Maori women.

All enquiries about the bibliography or the data base should be sent to:

Kathie Irwin, Project Director
Maori Women's Data Base
Education Department
Victoria University
PO Box 600
Wellington

Funding
The 1990 Commission funded this project with a $10,000 grant which enabled the work for the first stage to be completed. It is an Official 1990 Commission Funded Project. We were able to pay for this work to be done at competitive rates. For a project of this nature, this was important. So often, Maori women's work is devalued or expected to be done for free, in the name of 'aroha'. We would like to record our sincere thanks to the 1990 Commission for the support shown to us in this venture. As well as the capital support which the grant provided, the idea was well received and this added to the confidence necessary to undertake the work. The Internal Grants committee, Victoria University, provided us with a grant of $3,000 for the purchase of a computer so that the project could function as an independent computerised data base. This has been invaluable thus far; it will be even more significant in future stages of the project when we open up access to the data base to individual users. The Jack Shallcrass Trust made a grant to the project of $500 to cover the postage costs of distributing the bibliography to Maori organisations free of charge. Copies will be sent to all branches of the Maori Women's Welfare League, Iwi Authorities, Maori organisations and all marae committees which we can find addresses for. We are most grateful for this grant as it enables us to offer this work as a koha to Maori organisations that do not routinely receive the resources that are distributed free to institutions. The Ministry of Women's Affairs Project Fund made a grant of $1,000 to cover the cost of final editing and the preparation of the text for publication. In the final stages we were able to insert a 'macron programme' into our word processing software so that the final text has macrons, essential language symbols for Maori, inserted into it. This addition has meant that the text had added meaning as a language and cultural resource. We were able to use this grant to employ Everdina Fuli, whose specialist Maori language skills ensured that macrons were inserted in the text where necessary.

Mate atu he tete kura,
whakaeke mai he tete kura.

A fern frond dies,
but another frond rises to take its place.

Organisation of the Bibliography

Puhi wahine e pao i runga i to kuru pounamu
Araa ki te ahau
Ko au tonu te mekameka ka noho i runga i nga take o nga puhi
maunga
puha i te korero
Ko au tonu te uha o tuku mana
Ko au tonu

Noble women, chant upon your greenstone rock
That if I am to be shattered
I am to be the greenstone necklaces that will sit upon the base of
every female mountain that activates the words
I am the source of my own power
I am

Rangitunoa Black (*Herstory Diary*, 1983)

The organisation and layout of this bibliography reflects the nature of the knowledge that we have been researching. It is organised by **whakapapa,** that is by name. Bibliographies are often organised using the keywords that are found in library cataloguing systems, e.g. health, education, justice. These keywords, however, are generated from a Pakeha cultural knowledge code which does not readily accommodate Maori knowledge. Accessing knowledge about Maori women becomes almost impossible. The bibliography contains a detailed subject and author index at the back which will serve as alternative searching guides. We have used the list of keywords which was generated to catalogue the submissions made to the Royal Commission on Social Policy for the preparation of the subject index. A copy of these keywords is included in Appendix Two of the bibliography.

Research process

Lenaire Wilcox and Michelle Erai started this project with a list of one hundred and twenty references which had been compiled from research undertaken into the role and status of Maori women by the Project Director. In four months they turned this list into a computerised data base on Maori women. Finally, Everdina Fuli joined the team with the task of inserting macrons in the text.

As a group, the team came from diverse tribal affiliations, ages and experiences. Our youngest member was 22 and the oldest 49. As well

as working as a research team in the academic sense, we also became a whanau as a result of working on this project.

Early in the project, as a strategy in information gathering, we wrote to hundreds of organisations and individuals seeking references to include in this project. Many people replied to us personally and on behalf of the organisations that they represented. This strategy of networking with people and organisations outside the education system worked very well. We were given good support by people throughout the country. This support was significant at two levels. First, it gave us access to materials that we would never have found using traditional search methods in the library — for example, books which contained one chapter on Maori women, but whose title gave no indication that such content would be forthcoming. Second, it helped to affirm the worth of the project and the support from the furtherest corners of this country for such an initiative, designed as it was to contribute positively to the empowerment of Maori women.

In undertaking the research for this bibliography we found that we faced a number of issues which are specifically related to doing research on Maori women. In the following section we will discuss some of these issues, in the hope that future researchers will have some guidelines to help in their work.

Maori Women, their names and tribal affiliations

1 Women usually change their names due to marriage. The difficulty that we had with this social practice is that we lost the continuity in a woman's writing. For example, Jacqueline Sturm was also known as J.C. Sturm and Jacqueline Baxter.
2 Maori women often have names which are traditionally treated as Pakeha names, e.g. Evans, Smith. This can make initial recognition of Maori women's work complicated, especially when women use Maori transliterations of English names, disguising their ethnicity. Contemporary writers and editors are beginning to include details of tribal affiliations, which we feel is a positive move for Maori women's visibility.
3 A common practice for Maori women is to change their names to incorporate Maori personal or family names. A good example is Rosemary Kohu, who throughout various references has appeared as Rosemary Kohu, Hinewirangi Kohu, Hinewirangi, Rosemary Kohu Hinewirangi.
4 Some work was only published under an initial and surname, so that it took us a long time to connect N. Volkerling with Ngahuia Te Awekotuku. This practice also makes establishing the gender of the author or artist difficult.

5 Where stated, iwi and hapu were noted, but no whakapapa searches were undertaken to establish tribal affiliations.

Indexing

1 In most catalogues (including computerised sources) Maori women are treated as a cross between 'Maori' and 'Women' subject headings. We found it necessary to review everything under 'Maori' and everything under 'Women' in order to locate material about or by Maori women. We feel that we are entitled to our own heading.
2 Much of the information for and about Maori women (and other 'minority groups') is held in publications which are not well known, and therefore invisible and unobtainable. We also found that significant work by and about Maori women is unpublished, e.g., submissions, research, reports, theses, and conference papers. Much of this information is held only in departmental libraries, and this can be intimidating for people from outside the organisation to access.

Accessing

1 Libraries do not always provide clear instructions on how to obtain information. In some cases it was necessary to fill out forms requesting material to be picked up at appointed times, sign a register and indicate research purpose, use pencil only, etc., with no opportunity to browse.
2 Physical access to libraries was sometimes made uncomfortable by the atmosphere, noise, temperature, and security requirements which meant 'no bags'.
3 At the time we were researching, it was difficult to obtain information from the Department of Maori Affairs (devolved to Iwi Authorities), the Department of Education (changed to the new Ministry), and Victoria University Library (undergoing building alterations).

The main objective of this project is to raise the visibility of the lives and work of Maori women. In this sense, the bibliography is part of an ongoing process of reclaiming our herstory and celebrating our achievements. This project is also ongoing, in that we hope it will be added to and built upon in the future. In doing the research, we have noticed areas which we feel could be further developed. These are:

Maori Magazines: e.g. *Te Kaea, Te Iwi o Aotearoa, Te Karanga.* These magazines require careful and methodical study. We found *Te Ao Hou* contained many interesting and useful references; however, it is often a laborious task.

Maori Legends: Patricia Grace and Robyn Kahukiwa's beautiful book *Wahinetoa* tells of central women characters in the Maori creation myths. There are many myths which include strong, adventurous, wise Maori women. Further collections of these legends, which highlight the role of Maori women in the way that *Wahinetoa* does, are needed.

Maori Proverbs; The use of the proverb, whakatauki, is valued as a way of passing on knowledge and expressing complex ideas. Many of the proverbs directly concern Maori women and so are an important part of our history. Specific collections of the proverbs which are of central relevance to Maori women are needed, as is a Maori feminist critique of the current proverb collections to ascertain how Maori women are being depicted in proverbs.

Newspapers: Unfortunately our time and resources could not allow an indepth survey of newspaper articles. The Ministry of Women's Affairs Library holds files of relevant clippings, which would be a good place to start.

Oral histories: Although oral archives are a recent feature for public libraries, the National Library of New Zealand now has an Oral History Division, and the Mormon Church has an Oral History Archive (which charges for searches). There is much valuable information held in these, and other, oral archives.

Art: The references to Maori Women's Art in our bibliography have illustrated that there is a need for more detailed research into the work of our artists, not only in the areas of writing, painting, and weaving, but also music, dance, and drama.

Sport: Maori women compete and excel in sport at all levels. We have contributed greatly to women's sport in Aotearoa, but unfortunately this is not always acknowledged.

There are many other worthy areas requiring further research, e.g. Maori women in community work, Maori women in policy making, and Maori women and health. We look forward to seeing the bibliography grow and develop to include the many areas in which Maori women are involved.

The project team

Kathie Irwin, Ngati Kahungunu, Ngati Porou

Driving from my home in Otaki to work in Wellington one morning, I heard a radio broadcast about the then newly established 1990 Commission. The broadcast was advertising the aims and activities of the Commission and I automatically found myself thinking, cynically, 'I bet

they don't do anything for Maori women'. It occurred to me that they couldn't say no to Maori women if they weren't asked, and so I decided that I was going to put in a proposal to the Commission for funds to do research on Maori women. Over the years I had collected about a hundred and twenty references from my own research, but had never had the time to undertake indepth research of the kind that would produce a substantial annotated bibliography. I set to work immediately and the rest, as they say in cliched movies, is our story: the Commission responded warmly to the idea immediately and funded us some time later.

I will never forget the feeling that came over me when we heard that we had the funding. It was such a wonderful feeling. It was as if at last, after years as an academic and researcher involved in many research projects, from my honours research on the Maori Education Foundation (1978) to the Government Review of Te Kohanga Reo (1988), I had come of age. An idea that I thought was important about Maori women, someone else did too. When I made the decision to apply for the 1990 funding for the bibliography, I kept it quiet until the idea had already been partially endorsed by the Commission and funding was a possibility. I have learnt over the years not to share so many of my dreams about Maori women with quite so many people. On so many occasions in my past, ideas that I thought were good, involving Maori women, have been knocked by others. The first idea that I had for my doctoral studies was treated in this way. I wanted to do my PhD on the experiences of Maori women in secondary schools. I wanted to work with a group of Maori women who were school leavers, to find out what their experiences of secondary schooling had been. I was also interested to find out in detail what impact being women and Maori had had on their schooling, and how this affected choices made and chances perceived beyond the period of compulsory schooling. I went to see a senior professor, told him of my idea, and was shattered by the response. The message was quite clear: at the end of this study, what would we really know about education that would be of any worth, and who would want to know about it? I walked out of that office feeling embarrassed for having the idea, for telling him, for being so foolhardy to think that I could ever dream of being a PhD. Later, I felt incredibly angry about the whole incident, his reaction and mine. It took me some time to work through it, but work through it I did. I will do this research one day, when I am a PhD. And when I do, it will be impossible to ignore its significance for a number of reasons, including the fact that I will have learnt to have faith in my own judgement, if no one else has.

After we had been told that we had the funding for the research, I was

driving in to work one day listening to Piripi Walker interview Ranginui Walker on the local Maori radio station, Te Upoko o Te Ika, about the 1990 Commission and the funding that they were making available. Dreading the 'politically correct' answer that I feared might come over the air, I switched the radio off (with all due respect) so that I could honestly say (if challenged) that I hadn't heard what he counselled Maori people to do in relation to the Commission. As I turned the radio off I thought to myself 'I haven't heard of the New Zealand Maori Council giving Maori women $10,000 to undertake research to make our women visible', so I took the money and ran. It also occurred to me that the Waka Project, mainly involving Maori men, had been funded by the Commission.

I made a decision before sending in the application that, if successful, I would employ only Maori women on the research project. Over the years I have worked on a number of research projects and have come to learn how empowering the research process can be. I was determined that any empowering that was going to eventuate from this research would go straight back to the women to whom it belonged: Maori women. The decision has paid off in very significant ways. I needed researchers with the following credentials: Maori whakapapa, a commitment to Maori women and Maori society, some skills in using the library, and a good sense of humour.

We also decided to employ two people to work for three months together, rather than one person for six months, so the researchers had support and company from each other as well as from me.

The first two women that I approached were unable to work with me because of their commitments. Lenaire Wilcox had been a student in three of the third year classes that I had taught in, Gender and Education, Race Relations and Education, and Maori Education. She had impressed me very much and I asked her if she would join the team. Michelle Erai came to my office one day in the company of a friend, Roma Potiki. Michelle was studying with Women's Studies and was having difficulties with some inquiries she was trying to make. As I listened to who she was, what she was doing and what had happened to her I was appalled at the way in which she was being treated by a Maori male who should have known better! Something felt intuitively right about this woman and I invited her to join the team. Later, when we needed help with the inserting of macrons into the text, Dina was an obvious choice. She had been in the course on Maori Education, undertaking a major assignment on the education of Maori women and girls, she had tutored in the Maori Studies Department in language classes, when she smiled the whole room lit up! In the end our whanau was multi-tribal. We

were representative of a range of ages and experiences.

The women involved in this research have gone from strength to strength and found it to a person to have been a tremendously empowering experience. Michelle concentrated on completing her first degree in 1990, a BA with a double major in Sociology and Women's Studies; she is planning to enrol in a masters programme next year, then to do a PhD. Lenaire and Everdina spent 1990 as fulltime students enrolled in a masters programme in educational policy analysis. They have already been approached about a number of jobs as policy analysts.

Our time together has been special, the bonds between us very strong. This experience has been a very affirming one for me. I have put my Maori feminist politics to the test throughout this research, and been empowered and affirmed by the process and outcome. This project has taught me that I have a responsibility, as an educator, to create opportunities for learning such as this for Maori women, which also adds to what we know about the world, thus challenging the middle class male capture of knowledge, still so prevalent in this country; to support and nurture Maori women as they do this work; to provide supportive environments in which to work; to ensure that personal and professional development is able to occur in a culturally safe environment; and to encourage Maori women to publish and share their work in whatever forum they choose as appropriate, be it oral or written, such as whanau-hapu-iwi based wananga or journals. As well as requiring myself to do this work, I also have the expectation that other educators can and should take similar responsibility to put the empowerment of Maori women at the top of the educational agenda.

Michelle Erai, Ngapuhi

The Maori Women's Bibliography was, for me, a cycle quite complete in itself, but with consequences reaching into my future, so that I will always feel the difference that it made to my life. There are three significant parts of the processes which stand out in my mind, interrelated but distinct, and which best illustrate what working on the Bibliography meant for me.

First was the way I was hired. I remember sitting in Roma Potiki's office in Women's Studies at Victoria University. She had just given a lecture telling us of her life and what was important to her as an artist/poet/mother/Maori woman, and I was trying to tell her how it had made me feel. I was an average grade second year student, struggling with my identity as a Maori woman, a very low self-esteem, and an unsigned Maori Education Foundation financial assistance form. It was unsigned because I couldn't produce whakapapa. Roma took me to see

Kathie Irwin. The first thing she did was hug and kiss me. I had been brought up by my widowed Pakeha mother in a very safe but non-demonstrative environment, so a warm hug from a complete stranger left me speechless. I sat and watched as phones rang and were dealt with, Maori women students and friends were acknowledged, bits of paper received and dispatched, all while she caught up with Roma and made me feel welcome. I soon came to learn how much in demand Kathie is. Roma explained my situation and Kathie offered me a job. I couldn't believe it. Everything she did affirmed the experiences of Maori women, and her hiring of me at more or less face value was an expression of her deep commitment to us. I felt as if she had invited me to take part in something very special because of who I was, not because of my ability to hurdle academic obstacles. This was incredibly empowering on two levels, both personally and politically. I felt accepted as a Maori woman for the first time, ever; Kathie's belief in me raised my self-confidence so that I began (among other things) to achieve much better grades; and, also for the first time, I saw someone really put their political convictions into action. As a young Maori woman, to be accepted by a woman with so much mana was an experience I can never forget.

The second significant event to me was the entry onto my first marae. By then we were about half way through the research for the Bibliography. Lenaire Wilcox (the other researcher) and I had spent a lot of time in libraries, I was feeling dusty and frustrated by our struggle with the sphinxes who guarded the knowledge there, and was in need of inspiration. Then we heard that Rose Pere was coming. I didn't really know who she was, but Kathie and Lenaire were both busy with the preparations. There was mysterious, serious korero about things like kawa, protocol, waewae tapu — things that I knew nothing about. I felt like a child eavesdropping on grownups discussing something very important.

When the day arrived I was nervous. For 22 years I had carried the responsibility of 'You're a Maori aren't you, you should know what to do/say/think!' Well, I didn't know. I knew the consequences of brown skin, dark hair and a flat nose in a society which equates those characteristics with stupidity, poverty and ugliness, but I didn't know the feeling of sitting with my kuia or koro, or singing with my Aunties and Uncles,or going to a tangi. I was nervous, and ashamed.

There was no mistaking Rangimarie Rose Pere, I could feel her before seeing her, and we went on to Te Tumu Herenga Waka marae as part of her roopu. I followed Lenaire, taking part in the charged rituals of powhiri, ignorant but unable to miss the rush of mixed emotions, the timelessness and meaning of the old chants and whaikorero.

Later in the wharenui, snuggling under Lenaire's coat, I listened to Rose Pere talk about *Ako*, learning and education for Maori, and I knew that for me there was no turning back.

Finally, about six months after we had finished work on the project, I received a phone call from David, my father's nephew, my cousin. We had not had any contact with my father's family since his death, when I was two and my mother was pregnant with my brother Steven. The phone call was a surprise to say the least, and they wanted to meet me. Most of my cousins live in Auckland, but David was coming to Wellington for business. He asked, did I want to see them? David told me that one of our Aunties had seen a photo of Kathie, Lenaire and myself in the *Woman's Weekly*, recognised the name 'Erai', and decided it was time to re-establish contact if I wanted. If I wanted! When I visited them, a few months later in Auckland, I sat at my cousin Joanne's kitchen table, my tummy full after a huge lunch, having spent the earlier part of the day looking at old photos, surrounded by children, laboriously drawing up a family tree. My Whakapapa.

There have been many other important experiences from working on the Bibliography, like working with Kathie and Lenaire, the excellent grounding it has given me for my future career, listening to Irihapeti Ramsden, finally working up the courage to learn te reo, and being on Te Upoko o Te Ika (Maori Radio in Wellington), but the three I have shared will give you some idea of what it meant to me to be a researcher for the first edition of the Maori Women's Bibliography.

Everdina Fuli, Ngati Porou, Tokelauan

To My Nanny Polly and whanau members,

E nga reo, e nga iwi tenei te mihi nui ki a koutou katoa. No ngati Porou te korero nei, no reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.

I feel privileged to have been asked to comment about my involvement with the Maaori Women's Bibliography. Personally, the affirmation of 'mana wahine Maaori' was specially endorsed while I worked on this project.

Emphasised throughout my work was the need to edit and macronise nga Kupu Maaori. This was the main feature. Also with respect to the Maaori tribes and people with which nga Kupu Maaori ataahua belonged, it was vital that the Maaori words were 'tika' so that in the cultural sense these words, handed down to us from our tipuna, would be correctly represented.

On reflection, two elements of great interest emerge when I think about this bibliography. First, I was, and am, inspired by the work and knowledge the Maaori women in this bibliography projected. Their

literature for me has made Maaori women visible. I pay tribute to those women, of the past, and present, and believe their work to be the examples of our Maaori women in the future.

Secondly, the impact of this inspiration has had such a profound effect on me, that I have directed myself to specialise on Maaori women for a Masters thesis. Deep down, my main concern is study Maaori women, and to do so with commitment and aroha.

The team, Kathie, Lenaire and Michelle, were great to work with. There were many times when the thinking caps got stretched, for example, meeting deadlines. Yet there was always laughter and the cracking of jokes! And jokes they were!

My thanks go out to these women for being my pillars of strength and support. While I worked on this project, I lost my paternal grandmother. Kia ora wahine ma. I am sure our tipuna would be proud for your mahi and aroha.

1990 is an appropriate year to launch the Maaori Women's Bibliography. It will give Maaori women a sense of pride, and reinforce the fact that Maaori women are agents for change.

Lenaire Wilcox, Te Arawa, Tuwharetoa

Papatuanuku te matua o te tangata.

This proverb is translated as 'mother earth is man's parent'. For me, the translation should read 'mother earth, the source for people'. It then encompasses the strengths, skills and sensitivities to issues that Maori women have demonstrated for many years. The bibliography recognises the examples of these women and the women of our times.

When the offer was made to undertake research for the bibliography, I was both challenged and excited by it. Challenged, because I felt that I had no skills in this field, and excited, because I had no knowledge of any literature which dealt specifically with Maori women. I accepted the offer. Earlier that year, when working on a group assignment, I became aware of the difficulties in referencing Maori material through a Pakeha system. The methods for research necessitated knowledge in both areas and cross referencing between the two. Fortunately we were able to cope with all aspects. I started out as a researcher and found, at the end of the project, that I had become committed to Maori women's literature, often spending hours in the library scanning books, magazines and articles in journals.

The difficulties we faced during the project included time and access. Inaccessibility to Maori material was highlighted during this research. For me, the most tedious process involved gaining access to archival material. Documents had to be located through the reference system,

request forms had to be filled out and submitted to the librarian, then there was an appointed time before documents could be collected. Also, the documents had to be used on the premises. Although the time factor may have been relatively short, usually fifteen minutes, there were longer delays if several documents were required. However, the resulting entries for the bibliography offset these difficulties, e.g. Ngata's article on the education of Maori girls. Sometimes there was confusion over the use of maiden and married surnames or Maori and Pakeha personal names, but in each instance more references resulted.

In my opinion, the Maori magazines provided wide ranging references for Maori women. *Broadsheet* magazine provides many articles on Maori women, but there are few relating to the traditional aspects. *Te Ao Hou*, in particular, paid tribute to kuia and brought traditional ties to new world activities. The series which featured the life and work of Puhiwahine, Maori waiata composer, was of very great interest to me. Throughout the project the versatility and achievements of Maori women amazed me — from fire fighters and artists, to signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi and Harvard graduates. I became totally absorbed in the research and did not want to bring it to a close. In many of the women researched I had recognised much loved kuia, whanau members and friends, and similarities between their lives and mine. For me, the bibliography was a tribute to them and to Maori women everywhere.

When we had ended the research, other areas to explore came to mind, such as Maori women in Parliament and their submissions and literature, and oral tapes and recordings. Perhaps these and other areas will be included in future research on Maori women.

My participation in the project was in partnership with Michelle and Everdina whose skills and talents helped unearth taonga. Kathie Irwin, as project supervisor, gave us the inspirational guidance to produce this bibliography as a taonga for all Maori women. No reira e nga wahine Maori e tu!

Recording the History of the Maori Women's Welfare League

Mira Szaszy
(Interviewed by Anne Else)

The idea of compiling a history of the League goes back to the 1960s, when Mrs Kaye Green came to the League offices and asked for permission to research and write the history of the League. She was an American — I believe her husband had a position at the University of Auckland.

She looked at all the files from the beginning of the organisation and even before, to see what the background was and how the idea of forming the League had started — she went back to during the war and the war effort organisation. She had access to everything, more than anyone else had had before — I believe she managed to get hold of material which was later lost, I think in a fire.

However, she stopped short of completing the history. She told me she had left a microfilm of what she'd written at the League office, but it never came to light. Another woman was supposed to pick up the project, but nothing came of that either, and we received nothing of what they had done until recently, when a request to Kaye resulted in her papers being forwarded to us.

Years passed, June Mariu became president, and we talked about the history again. The idea came up that perhaps I should interview the

remaining women who were foundation members. I said yes, I probably would be a suitable person to do that, because I had been there from the beginning and I knew many of these women, though the greater proportion had passed away. I did have a wish to see them and talk with them again.

At the Rotorua conference last year (you were there, Anne) the idea was passed to the League, and June told them I would travel around to interview the women with a view to preparing a book. However, I have been very heavily committed and I was unable to move around a great deal, so because of the pressure on me we haven't yet done very much. But the other problem is that there have been no real finances for it. June spoke to the 1990 Commission and they came up with $9,000, but it wasn't adequate. Bev McCombs, who offered to help me with this project, has been approaching various possible sources of funding, but we haven't gained much up till now.

However, I was still keen on going round to visit those women, even if it's not possible to finally do the book in my time — I was worried about the foundation members' lifespan. I have been able to see a few — I've interviewed about twelve. We were thinking there would be possibly around thirty altogether, but there might even be more.

We've been asking the League's area representatives to find out how many of those women still exist in their regions, but that seems to be a problem. We have some of the names. When I was National President — it was for four years, from 1974 to 1977 — I had copies of all the information on the League, everything we had, sent to the Turnbull Library. We had files of every branch, all the members, going right back to the foundation of the first branches. But there now seems to be some material missing.

This is the national organisation with the longest lifespan in the Maori world, and it's really worthy of recording — its history is worthy of writing. It's unique in its own way. Despite the status of women on some marae, yet this organisation was established and actually became the voice of the Maori world for as long as ten years. It spearheaded everything within the Maori world for that period of time. There was no question raised as to the women speaking on behalf of Maoridom, as it were — and they certainly were doing that, because they were really supported by the men. Many of the papers recorded its activities in those days. Even Government members were very interested in it and were involved in the establishment of the League as a national body — Peter Fraser, Corbett...

The Maori Women's Welfare League really started off as Health League branches, under the Health Department — I'm not sure, but I

think they tried to form them throughout the country. But seemingly they were most successful in the Rotorua area. The aim was helping with the health of the children and babies, care, food, etc. They had a very good Constitution.

When Rangi Royal took over as the first Controller of Maori Welfare, he was aware of the work of the Health Leagues, because he had worked in the Rotorua area before he went away to war. In implementing the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act, and establishing machinery for its policies, he discovered after a while that by and large the tribal committees were dealing with issues that centred around the community and the marae. The members were men, because women were unable to speak on the marae and they weren't really included. Nothing was being done with regard to one of the greatest needs of the Maori people — housing, and the conditions of the family, the women, and the children.

So that was really the basis of the move by him to establish what he considered sister organisations to the tribal committees, to involve Maori women. The Maori Welfare Officers were directed by Rangi Royal to form these 'welfare committees'. But then the women decided they wanted a national organisation, and they wanted the name to include the words 'Maori Women'.

The leader of the Health Leagues in Rotorua was Nurse Cameron, who was very stubborn about accepting the name 'Maori'. That was the stumbling block — she didn't want the word 'Maori' included! They even brought her down here to meet the Prime Minister, who was Peter Fraser at that time, and Corbett the Minister of Maori Affairs, and they tried to persuade her to accept that idea — but she refused. So they decided to leave the Rotorua area to the Health Leagues, and continue establishing Maori Women's Welfare League branches elsewhere.

The inaugural conference was in Wellington in 1951, and Whina Cooper became the first President. But the actual branches were beginning to be established from as early as 1949. It went ahead like wildfire. All the Maori Welfare Officers were involved — the men with the tribal committees, the women with the League branches, as advisers. Delegates came down here to the first conference from all the different areas. And it's those foundation delegates that I want to include in this history.

Mira went to the University of Hawaii, now known as the East-West Centre, in 1948 to study social science. 'There was no such course here—I think I must have been the first from New Zealand to study social science'. She returned in time for the inaugural conference, became a member of the executive as a representative of the Tai Tokerau region, and in 1952 was appointed secretary of the League.

I've talked to Judith Binney, and she said the best way was to get the women to talk about themselves and see what they say about the League, as they tell their own story. So I set out a few questions that I thought would extract the kind of information we needed, and that's what we've done so far.

It's quite draining — there's a technique of getting them to talk. I did it my way. For our women, when you get to Maori homes, you don't immediately sit down with your recorder. You have to spend quite a bit of time talking together, crying together maybe, recalling memories together, before you begin to talk. Also they prepare food, a cup of tea, lunch — it takes a whole day to record one person. You can't just walk in and expect to do it in one hour — except the ones I know really well and can say 'Look, I have only so much time'. But the ones I haven't seen for a long long time, years and years, I give them that time. We have a lot to exchange and recall together.

But it's limited because of my excessive commitments. And I didn't really commit myself to the actual job of writing. It's probably necessary to find someone — almost a ghost writer — to put it all together. Then the costs of travelling throughout the country are high — there aren't enough funds for the expenses. So these things are handicaps also at the moment. We have a photographer, Margaret Kawharu — she has already taken photos of all the women I've interviewed. But she needs financial support too. The Maori Women's Development Fund may be able to help. We need to establish a small committee and get outsiders to advise us on how to proceed. We want to get it done.

There are all sorts of things the League instigated... They did marvellous things, those early women. The planted kumaras to sell, gardens of kumaras — some even built a road so their children wouldn't have to go to catch the school bus kneedeep in mud.

After the project was announced, one of the old ladies expected me to see her right away! But I decided to call on the older ones first. One in Dunedin is in her eighties. I've lost one already. She was a great mover in the League on the early days — she was in Whina's age group — and I've lost her, at the age of ninety-six years.

Miraka (Mira) Szaszy was born at Waihopo, north of Kaitaia, in 1921, the seventh of eight children. Her mother, Makareta Raharuhi, had Ngati Kuri, Rarawa, Aupouri and other tribal connections; her father, Lawrence Petricevich, was Yugoslav-born. As well as the Maori Women's Welfare League and women's and children's welfare in general, her extremely wide range of work and interests has included race relations, Maori studies, broadcasting, vocational training, and peace studies. She is a Social Welfare Commissioner and a member of the Bishopric of Aotearoa and the Anglican Church Synod. After living in Auckland for most of her life, she has now made her home on family land north of Kaitaia, but travels frequently in connection with her continuing involvement in current issues of major importance to Maoridom. She is a member of the Maori Fisheries Commission, the Ngati Kuri, Aupouri, Ngatakoto Runanga, the Taitokerau Forum and the Maori Congress. She is also involved in the Maori Women's Development Fund Trust, the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, the New Zealand Forum and various local Maori trusts.

The YWCA and the Treaty of Waitangi

Pauline McKay

This article is based on my speech in the forum series held in conjunction with the Mana Tiriti Exhibition at the Wellington City Art Gallery. The exhibition was organised by Haeata Maori Women's Arts Collective, Project Waitangi and the Wellington City Art Gallery. The topic for this session of the forum was 'Women and the Treaty".

I felt it was appropriate to talk about the progress of one women's organisation in coming to terms with the Treaty of Waitangi — the YWCA. It is only one women's organisation, and I know that there are many others that have gone through, are going through or are beginning a similar journey. The YWCA is the one I am familiar with, as a former National Co-Director and now as a volunteer.

The YWCA was formed in 1855 in Britain by two women. One was Mary Kinnard, who opened a hostel in London for Florence Nightingale's nurses going to and from the Crimean War. To encourage young women in the mid-Victoria era to be nurses was very progressive, and as one World-General Secretary of the YWCA put it, it 'wasn't what nice girls did'. The other founder of the YWCA was Emma Robarts who in 1855 formed prayer circles, described in YWCA history as 'very private in nature'. In 1877 the two joined together to found the YWCA. They left

the organisation two very strong threads, one of social action and the other of a concern of the spirit, often described as 'faith and works'.

In 1878 the YWCA of Dunedin was established. It was the first in the southern hemisphere, and was followed by the establishment of YWCAs throughout New Zealand. Their structures and practices reflected the social and organisational norms of Victorian England.

In 1983 the YWCA organised a Rape and Sexual Violence conference. A workshop for Maori and Pacific Island women was part of the conference, and a recommendation was put to it that the YWCA employ Maori and Pacific Island women to work in the area of sexual abuse and related violence. Carmel Peteru was employed to liaise with Pacific Island women, and this led to the formation of the Pacific Island Women's project. Kataraina Pipi worked with Te Kakano o Te Whanau, and formed the Maori Women's Committee of the YWCA.

This was the first time in its long history that the YWCA openly acknowledged that it had failed to meet the needs of Maori and Pacific Island women. The YWCA was not alone in recognising this; many other Pakeha dominated organisations were also being challenged to look at their own racism.

The conference, and the conscious decision to employ Maori and Pacific women, was part of the revitalisation of the YWCA. It was an example of how it was becoming more responsive to the needs of women in the 1980s. With Sue Lytollis, the YWCA had trained self defence teachers, and provided these courses to women throughout the country. It was actively trying to recruit young women (i.e. under 30) into its ranks, by holding young women's gatherings and by giving them some autonomy within the organisation. In 1985 the YWCA national convention adopted the slogan 'Empowering Women'.

However, the structures of the YWCA were still very much based on the Westminster model, which it had inherited from its colonial origins. The way it operated, and in essence still operates, is characterised by formality. It is the embodiment of the Westminster approach to government: its structures are individualistic and hierarchical; individual fee paying members have access to decision making at a national level only through their local association representatives at YWCA national meetings; and the style of proceedings of YWCA meetings is both rigidly structured and Pakeha in expression, even though in recent years they have become less rigid in practice. The structures do not take into account collective decision making process and are adversarial in nature.

These norms were alien and obstructive to Maori women's participation in the YWCA. In 1988 the Maori Women's committee went into recess until the YWCA changed its structures. What was needed was an examination by the organisation of how it was structured, who held power, whose needs it serviced, and how it came by its resources. For example, Sandra Coney's excellent book *Every Girl — a social history of women and the YWCA in Auckland 1885-1985*, notes that 'William Crush Daley, husband of a later generous benefactor of the YWCA, the admirable Amey Daldy, had been one of the most successful Auckland merchants at divesting Waikato Maori of their land...' (Coney 1986:13).

The world body of the YWCA holds World Council meetings every four years. For the 1987 meeting, Maori women strongly implored the New Zealand delegates to include on the agenda the status of minority indigenous women. The YWCA is the largest Christian women's organisation in the world and one of the oldest. Its World Councils have been held since the 1890s. Never once had this organisation addressed the issue of minority indigenous women. It had a very strong record of working on questions of racism, but from the black American and the South African experience. It had looked at the issue in terms of prejudice, but not in terms of collective cultural dominance.

It took some persuading to get the status of minority indigenous women included in the official council programme. The World YWCA wanted it sidelined to an optional part of the programme. We argued that they were making minority indigenous women even more invisible. The YWCA New Zealand structures were not flexible enough to allow Maori women to attend this meeting as of right, because Maori women had no standing in the YWCA. One Maori woman did attend — Rona Ensor of Te Arawa - Ngati Rangiwewehi — but she was elected to attend as a young woman, not a Maori woman. Because of this, Maori women said to the whole delegation, of which I was part: 'the responsibility is yours about the status of indigenous women, and you are not to have it just sidelined into one area of that programme, but you are to take it throughout the programme of the World Council'. Out of 500 delegates at that meeting, there were only three who identified as minority indigenous women — Rona, Anne Charter, a Cree Indian from Canada, and Jacqueline Kare from Kanaky, who was there as an observer, not a full delegate. By the end of the conference the whole World Council meeting adopted a recommendation and resolutions on the Status of Indigenous Women. The recommendation was that: 'The World YWCA as an organisation with a Christian purpose has a responsibility to work with indigenous women in redressing the unjust situation in which they find themselves'.

Having stirred up our world body on the international scene, we had to come home and face a few things that needed changing here. The YWCA, along with many other organisations, had been running cultural awareness programmes. A major issue that kept emerging was Maori separate development.

Often Pakeha feel very threatened by the concept of separate development, and the question often asked was: 'Why don't Maori and Pacific Island women just want to come and join us? Why do they want their separate organisations?' In fact the YWCA is itself an example of positive separate development; it is an affirmation of a group of people, in this case women, who have decided that they want their own organisation, and they want to run it their way. That is structured into the YWCA. Men cannot be full members, they can only be associate members. They cannot make policy and they have no power. (The new draft YWCA constitution does away with associate membership for men and boys.)

An example of this in practice was one of the highlights of my six years in YWCA. I walked into a YWCA meeting in Gore, and a man was chairing it. I did a doubletake. I had to tell those present that the meeting was null and void, because a YWCA member must chair a YWCA meeting, and a man cannot be a full member of the YWCA. I then realised why our foremothers had actually structured that into the basis of the YWCA. I was in a very powerful position. I didn't have to argue 'Don't you think it would be appropriate for a woman to chair the meeting because it is a women's organisation?' All I had to say was, 'This is not a properly constituted YWCA meeting because only a member of the YWCA can chair a YWCA meeting'. The YWCA has structurally protected its own autonomy and its own power. That doesn't mean we are anti-men, it means we are pro-women.

By 1988, we realised that cultural awareness education programmes needed to lead somewhere, where we had done enough education and consciousness-raising. At this point the YWCA commissioned the Waitangi Consultancy Group (a Wellington based consultancy that works with Pakeha dominated organisations on how to apply the Treaty of Waitangi in their work) to do a Treaty of Waitangi audit. The audit examined the constitution, decision-making, service delivery and resources of the YWCA in the light of the Treaty. As a result, in 1991 the YWCA is to hold a special constitutional conference, which we hope will accept the constitution that acknowledges consensus decision making and allows for the automatic right of Maori women to attend World Council meetings. Three Maori women have been elected to represent the YWCA of New Zealand at the 1991 YWCA World Council meeting

in Norway.

Having left the employ of the YWCA, I have now become a volunteer with the Wellington association. It is going through the process of trying to 'de-Westminsterise' itself, and becoming an organisation that enables more women to participate. One feature of the Westminster model is that it is disempowering not only to women from other racial groups, but to most women. The really exciting result of looking at our structures with regard to the Treaty is that it has made us examine the models that we have inherited through our traditions. We have had to ask whether they do actually serve us, and if not whom they do serve.

To allow more women to participate in the Wellington YWCA we need to change its structures. Part of this change is allowing for communal or group participation. Too often Pakeha organisations try to co-opt individual Maori into their structures. This can be part of the process of change, but it does not reflect an equal and true partnership. Another objective of the Wellington YWCA is to target its resources to those women who have least access to them, i.e. Maori, Pacific Island and working class women. Without changing the present ways the YWCA of Wellington operates, we would be perpetuating a 'charity' operating model. To empower women (the stated aim of the YWCA), we need to create an environment that allows them not only access to the resources, but the power to decide how and when these resources will be used.

It is very important to note that the aim of changing the environment and the structure of the YWCA is to enable Maori women to participate *if they so wish.* The YWCA needs to make changes regardless of the involvement of Maori women in the YWCA, because they are a practical expression of our affirmation of Maori as tangata whenua. A friend has said to me: 'You keep affirming us as tangata whenua. In reality, what does that mean? It's a bit like saying "We discovered you".' There must be some practical, tangible outcomes of that affirmation. The responsibility for making those changes belongs to the dominant culture.

When Marion Wood and Moana Jackson spoke in the Mana Tiriti forum series, they used the model of the two houses. There is a Maori house, and a Crown house. The Crown house is larger because it has stolen the foundations of the Maori house. One of those foundations is people, and we cannot expect Maori people to be responsible for making the Crown house reflect a Treaty-based society. That responsibility is ours, because the prime concern of Maori is the restoration of their own house. What we need to do is to move some of the resources from the Crown house to the Maori house.

An essential part of the process is for Pakeha to state what is

important to them. What are the things that we want to bring to the partnership? What are the non-negotiables? And those non-negotiables are protected for us in the Treaty under Clause 1— under Kawanatanga — and under Clause 3. In the case of the YWCA, the bottom line is that it be a women's organisation run by women for women.

Pakeha women's cultural heritage is based on a Judaic-Christian-Western tradition, which tells us that we are inferior and renders our life experiences, herstory and reality invisible. Again, at the 1987 World Council meeting the YWCA of New Zealand also took up the issue of changing the movement's credal base — the statement of belief, which talked about 'Faith in God the Father Almighty'. We objected to that on the grounds that God is seen solely as male, and the concept of a God removed, not of the people, runs contrary to the social action concerns of the YWCA. I think it is crucial for women from that Judaic-Christian tradition to hold on to their sanctuary. The YWCA has given me a place where I didn't have to justify my existence, and I will always be involved in the organisation because of that. We need these sanctuaries to empower us, and to enable us to explore and discover our rightful place in the scheme of things, because our society has primarily been shaped by ruling-class males.

When we reflected back after that World Council meeting, we looked at the two issues we had taken as a delegation: the status of minority indigenous women, and the credal base. And we found they weren't incompatible, in fact they were complementary, because both of them spoke about a fundamental human right to be. They incorporated the two threads that Mary Kinnard and Emma Robarts left us: social action, and spiritual concerns, which are as relevant today as they were in 1877.

Pauline McKay is a former National Co-Director of the YWCA of New Zealand. She was a delegate to the 1987 YWCA World Council Meeting, where she led the debate on changing the YWCA credal base. Presently employed by the Waitangi Consultancy Group as its marketing manager, Pauline is also a member of Project Waitangi's National Core Group.

Recommended for further reading

Coney, Sandra. 1986. *Every Girl: a social history of women and the YWCA in Auckland, 1885-1985.* Auckland YWCA, Auckland.

Robins, Wendy S. (ed.) 1986. *Through the Eyes of a Woman: Bible studies on the experience of women.* World YWCA.

The Hidden Costs of Caring:

The Experiences of Women Caregivers

Robyn Munford

This paper outlines some of the major themes emerging from research carried out with thirty women who care for people with intellectual disabilities in an urban area in New Zealand. Its focus was on discovering and documenting the women's perceptions of their daily lived experiences, by examining the ways in which certain power relations have operated to structure and control the lives of these women.

My previous work and research with women caregivers (Munford, 1983, 1986, 1987), and some of the writings of Luce Irigaray and Michel Foucault, were used to develop a theoretical framework for examining the women's stories. This framework was discussed with the women before analysing the data. Other women who have had extensive experience in this field also made comments about the theoretical concepts to be used in the analysis of the women's stories. The theoretical framework sought to provide an explanation for how gender relations operate to structure women's lives. In this paper I will discuss some of the major findings; while I acknowledge that others were also important, it is not possible to present all of them within the parameters of this paper.

Of the thirty women interviewed, fifteen were mothers of people

with intellectual disabilities, and fifteen were paid workers in a large voluntary Organisation providing services for people with intellectual disabilities. The mothers' stories explored their feelings about their roles in the household and their relationships with the Organisation. The paid workers described their experiences with the Organisation. The jobs these workers carried out included social work, support roles, and staff training; a small number were in management.

In my description of the women's experiences I use the term 'story/stories' deliberately, as it captures the ways in which the women talked about their lives. The 'telling of their story' was the first opportunity for many of these women to talk at length about their perceptions of what was happening in the Organisation and in the household. The research aimed to identify and understand the effects of the Organisation's policies and current government policies through exploring the daily lives of women.

Feminist theory informed the way the research was carried out. The essence of feminist theory embodies a process which demands not only that existing theoretical perspectives and methods for carrying out research are critiqued, but also that alternative ways for understanding the world are developed. In so doing women can develop strategies for bringing about change, both in their lived experiences and in the ways in which these are interpreted (Grosz, 1986).

Feminism has a commitment to making sense of current conflicts in the daily lived experiences of women and this is, I argue, the first stage in the change process. By examining women's perceptions of the caregiving role I wished to show how these experiences are socially constructed and given meaning. My previous experience (Munford, 1983, 1986, 1987) and the work of writers such as Dalley (1988), Finch and Groves (1983) and Bright and Wright (1986) has shown that the caregiving work women have carried out in the household and for voluntary organisations has been hidden and devalued. Hence, in this research, by documenting one particular aspect of women's existence, I aimed to reveal the extent of this work and the way in which patriarchal structures function to control the lives of women. The key questions put forward in the research were concerned with women's definitions of caregiving; their views about why they were the primary caregivers (the mothers were the primary caregivers in the household, and, in the Organisation the paid workers had difficulty moving from caregiving occupations to positions of management); their suggestions about why women's paid and unpaid work is devalued; and their views about how women are maintained in their current positions. Although these questions have been researched by overseas writers such as Ungerson (1985), Finch and

Groves (1983), Rimmer (1983), Graham (1983), Bright and Wright (1986), there has been very little systematic work carried out in New Zealand with this particular group of caregivers and this type of caregiving work. Bright and Wright (1986) emphasise that if we are to obtain a realistic picture of the implications of current community care policies and their relationship with women's work, we must have more information about what caregiving is actually like.

In this paper four areas of the research will be discussed. These include a discussion of some of the key methodological concerns impacting on the research; a discussion of theoretical considerations, and the analysis and definition of "technologies of power"; and finally a summary of two key themes from the findings, with a discussion of how these may be able to contribute to further feminist research and theorising.

Methodological concerns

A number of important elements of feminist research informed the research process. I wanted to reveal what had been 'hidden' and 'devalued'. In doing this I wished not only to discover what the women viewed as negative aspects of caregiving, but also to celebrate women's work. It was important not to perceive the women as 'victims' who had not struggled against or had any influence on the ways in which their lives were structured. For these women the question was not whether they had tried to take control of their lives, but why their activities and contributions had been hidden from the 'public' realm.

It was important that in the process of carrying out the research, these women were not further alienated. A key principle of feminist research is to provide a validation of women's experience. The very process of doing the research can be used to reveal and expose some of the relations of power women experience on a daily level. As Grimshaw (1986) writes, feminist theory and research seek to take such experiences and bring them into the mainstream of social scientific investigation and writing. Women writers and researchers show that women's experiences have been on the periphery and that feminism must function to bring these experiences into the 'public' realm (see Stanley and Wise (1983), Rowbotham (1983), Lather (1989)).

The women interviewed had been on the 'fringes of the Organisation's activities', and had difficulty having a part in the major decision-making processes. Moreover, the service and involvement of the mothers and paid workers had been under-estimated and was not correctly and adequately represented in the historical documents of the Organisation. A key component of the research was to make the

women's experiences visible; however, feminist research is also about challenging existing social science frameworks. In the process of seeking to find better ways of validating and writing about women's experiences, it attempts to find mechanisms for changing women's reality. These points are important in that they alert us to how the methodological aspects of a research project should proceed. Our methodological orientation must of necessity match the value stance we adopt. If we are to make women's unpaid and paid work visible, we must work with women to empower them. Hence deciding how to carry out the research is an integral part of the research process.

The research process should be based on reciprocity wherein the 'researched' and 'researcher' form a relationship where certain components are exchanged; the researcher must give something back in exchange for carrying out the research and entering the 'researched' life. Oakley (1981) was one of the first feminist writers to examine the methodological concepts to be included in sound feminist research. One of her major observations was to show how the researcher's experiences are an integral part of carrying out the research. Lather (1987) has more recently developed some of Oakley's ideas. Like Oakley, she underlines the importance of the research relationship, and outlines what she sees as the practical implications of a relationship based on reciprocity. She believes that this deserves particular attention, as it is an essential part of an empowering process. In so doing she challenges traditional research methods that insist on the 'value free' stance of the researcher.

> Research programs that disclose their value base typically have been discounted, however, as overly subjective and, hence, 'non-scientific'. Such views do not recognise the fact that scientific neutrality is always problematic, they arise from a hyper-subjectivity premised on the belief that scientific knowledge is free from social construction (Lather, 1987:259).

Lather suggests that feminist researchers must acknowledge the impossibility of 'value-free' research and seek instead to use the research process to discover emancipatory knowledge and empower the participants.

> The researcher's role as a privileged possessor of expert knowledge must be reconceptualised as that of a catalyst who works with local participants to understand and solve local problems. The researched becomes as important as the researcher in formulating the problem, discussing solutions and interpreting findings (Lather, 1986:73).

If one is to uphold the quest for empowerment, reciprocity with 'give and take' between the 'researched' and 'researcher' must occur. In my research I did a number of things to help facilitate this. The goals of the

research were clearly outlined and discussed with the women. We talked about the outcomes of the research and the possibilities for change as a result of the research. The women's commitment to change was acknowledged and it was made clear that the research was just one of the many things that could lead to change for these women. In relation to this, any possible negative aspects of the research were also discussed. When the women were phoned, and in a subsequent feedback session, we talked about how 'hope could be raised but not realised'. In the feedback session we discussed this and the potential uses of the research, such as celebrating and making women's work visible, bringing women together to identify their struggles, and strengthening these struggles.

The ways in which I would use the research were also made explicit. I shared the details of this with the women. I also shared any information I had about services and current policy developments. In order to allow the women the space to tell their stories, I discussed this information at the conclusion of the interview. This ensured that my views would not influence the way the women formulated theirs. However, it was still important to set time aside at the end of the interview to have an open dialogue with each other. I emphasised that I wished to uncover 'the meaning of social events and processes' based upon their lived experiences; it was their point of view that was significant and its validity for understanding current issues was underlined.

My feelings, beliefs and attitudes obviously influenced the interview process. I taped the interview sessions (with the women's permission) so that when analysing the women's 'stories' I could also document my role in the research. I was able to summarise the tapes by extracting a number of key themes; these were discussed with the women in the feedback session. This session was an essential part of the research; for too long women had been 'interrogated' about their children and families without receiving the results of this 'interrogation'.

We talked at length about the meaning of confidentiality. I received the women's names from a social worker who randomly selected women who had been involved with the Organisation for five or more years. I did not contact these women until the social worker obtained their permission for me to make this contact. All the women contacted agreed to be interviewed. The women were aware of my previous involvement and experience in this field. This, I believe, was a factor contributing to their willingness to be interviewed. A group of women who had been involved in this field helped me formulate the questions. We devised a semi-structured interview format which enabled the women to talk freely, but at the same time assisted me in the analysis of the data. The dominant themes were extracted from the taped inter-

views and these were checked with the women.

It is clear that the methodological process can of itself contribute to the empowering of women. This process is intimately linked to theory-building and the choice of a theoretical framework. I agree with Weedon (1987) and Lather (1987) that although, as researchers, we wish to reveal the patterns and meanings of the data, rather than seeking prediction and control and theoretical imposition, we must begin with a knowledge of some theory in order to make sense of the 'stories' we are told. Weedon (1987) believes that to make sense of the information we receive about women's daily lives we must have a 'theory' about the 'relationship between experience, social power and resistance' (Weedon, 1987:8). She argues that any theory

> ....must be able to address women's experience by showing where it comes from and how it relates to material social practices and the power relations which structure them. This involves understanding how particular social structures and processes create the conditions of existence which are at one and the same time both material and discursive (Weedon, 1987:8).

The theory used in this research was derived from an understanding of how patriarchal systems structure and control the lives of women.

Theoretical perspectives

The theoretical framework developed sought to provide a means for examining power relations and an explanation for how gender relations operate to structure women's lives. The theoretical writings of Luce Irigaray and Michel Foucault influenced the ways in which I examined the power relations present in the daily lives of these women. These writers provide some alternative ways for looking at the way power operates.

For the purposes of this paper I will outline only the major concepts used in the analysis of the daily lived experiences of this group of women caregivers. Both Irigaray and Foucault emphasise the need for a more encompassing analysis of power — one that does not rely solely on an economic view of power. They argue that power does not have as its only function that of supporting economic relations. Foucault asserts that what is needed is a non-economic analysis of power, in order to explain the experiences of groups who are outside the direct 'circuits of production' (Foucault 1980). He suggests that with certain groups (such as women in the household) the productive function of labour (in a strictly economic sense) is less important than the symbolic and disciplinary functions of labour. This view has relevance for this study, in that women's caregiving work has been devalued while at the same

time certain strategies can function to maintain women in their current position as the primary caregiver.

Irigaray (1985) also challenges the explanatory usefulness of economic frameworks and argues that power relations do not always have their origins in the economic system. She critiques what she defines as a 'masculine view' of power, arguing that it forces an alternative between class struggle and gender and in many instances assumes that class struggle takes precedence. This view can erroneously, she believes, force an assumption that women's struggle will always come after a struggle between classes. She speaks about the ways in which both economic and patriarchal structures control the experiences of women and contribute to the operation of the relations of power.

Both Foucault and Irigaray are interested in developing an understanding of the daily experiences of power and what power looks and feels like for individuals. Irigaray's concern is with how women are subjected and controlled. She questions the ways in which 'women's everyday lives are made meaningful...'; she believes that

> Without a critical feminist awareness of the ways patriarchal knowledge informs everyday language and life, and without an alternative framework of knowledge and representation, women will remain tied to a series of concepts and values which oppress them (Grosz, 1989:234).

In her effort to understand what power feels like for women, Irigaray is concerned with showing how women's bodies are 'masked, inscribed, made meaningful both in social and familiar idiosyncratic terms...' (Grosz, 1985:136). For her, the body is the starting point for revealing the intricacies of power.

She posits that the use of women by men implies that their participation in society requires that their bodies submit themselves 'to a specularization, a speculation, that transforms it into a value-bearing object, a standardised sign, an exchangeable signifier, a "likeness" with reference to an authoritative model' (Irigaray, 1985:179-180). Men, according to Irigaray, not only control the means of production, but as 'head of the household' they control the lives of women in the domestic sphere. It is in these roles that they transform 'women's bodies' into commodities and determine the value of these commodities. Irigaray believes that women must break out of their 'silent' spaces and come together to find ways of challenging both their material conditions and the 'symbolic discourses' that give meaning to these conditions. An essential project for women is to reveal the ways in which 'phallocentric discourses' represent the male as 'normal' and women as the 'other' (Irigaray, 1985).

Irigaray has been criticised for being essentialist in her views and for her focus on the 'body' as a point of departure for understanding women's conditions of existence. Segal (1987), for example, is concerned that Irigaray's feminism may return us to a form of biological determinism. I believe that Irigaray is concerned about change for women and uses the concept of the 'body' to show how women have been labelled as the 'other'. Irigaray believes that the definitions of men and women require transforming so that the presence of one does not mean the devaluing of the other. For Irigaray, the project is not about discovering what is 'feminine', but about showing how roles are socially inscribed, and in so doing identifying alternative roles and activities women may wish to take on.

Foucault's writings were also of use in that he too is interested in discovering what the daily experiences of power are like. This analysis can then move on to theorising about how women are subjected and maintained in their current positions and how this is related to global forms of domination and exploitation. Foucault's writings were important for this research in that they help in understanding the precise effects of power and allow for the articulation of women's perception of power relations. His interest is in examining the particular ways in which individuals can be subjected in order to derive the maximum utility from their capabilities.

Foucault is concerned with building an 'analytics of power'; he aims to direct his analysis toward a focus upon local power relations which are to be discovered in the daily experiences of individuals in schools, families, prisons and hospitals. He emphasises the productive and positive aspects of power. Power relations are not necessarily repressive; the exact operations of power may be difficult to detect, as they infiltrate all types of relationships. The ways the productive function of power is exercised are not fixed; their form is always changing, and the groups that control the relations of power must continually seek new ways to ensure that these relations are maintained.

The concept of the productive aspect of power is useful for understanding the experiences of the women in this research. It is often difficult for women to expose the relations of power, for these may appear in many instances to be based upon relationships of reciprocity. The productive aspects of power function to hide its negative effects. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault describes how power operates. He calls the mechanisms for maintaining power relations the 'technologies of power'. He emphasises the importance of understanding the 'infinitesimal mechanisms' of power; this refers to the very minute effects and operations of power. He argues that a diversity of 'technologies' is

used to make these power relations operational. These technologies change with respect to the groups and sites they are located at. In my research I used Foucault's ideas concerning the 'technologies of power' and developed these with respect to the power relations experienced by women caregivers.

The women's perceptions of the 'technologies of power'

There were a number of 'technologies' operating to structure the women's lives and relationships and to maintain them in their current positions. To discover the precise effects of these 'technologies' and to make sense of the diverse experiences portrayed in the women's stories, I analysed those at two key sites: the household and the Organisation. The mothers were the primary caregivers in the household. The Organisation is one of the few providing services for people with disabilities (and their families) in New Zealand. These services included preschool, residential, social work and vocational programmes. The paid workers were involved as caregivers in these programmes, but only a small number were involved in management and staff training.

I identified three main 'technologies of power'. These included the observation, examination and comparison of women; the use of knowledge to determine and maintain women's current position; and the use of language to give meaning to women's experiences. These technologies manifest themselves in varying ways with respect to the site; they function to reinforce one another at each of these sites. In this paper the experiences of the mothers and the paid workers will be discussed together.

The *observation, examination and comparison* of women operated in subtle ways. One of the mechanisms was continually to emphasise the importance of women as primary caregivers. Women were also kept apart in a private space.

The household was such a place. The mothers described the difficulties they had leaving the household either on a daily basis or on a more permanent basis, such as returning to the paid workforce. Not only did they have to organise activities for the child with a disability, but they were also expected to be home in time to organise activities for other family members. Staying at home to care for family members was encouraged by the women's partners and others in the Organisation. This was seen to be the most acceptable behaviour for women.

Women were often criticised if they did not make sacrifices for the family. 'Model women were held up as examples of good carers'. Women were compared to those women who supposedly enjoyed caregiving and criticised if they could not keep up with this 'norm'. This

took place in both the household and the Organisation. Women's unpaid labour in the household was harnessed by the Organisation in order to get its 'voluntary work done', while the paid workers were expected to work long hours and to carry out additional work, often for little reward.

Women were praised for 'hanging in'. Although the mothers were often exhausted they 'kept going' and felt guilty if they did not. They were scared that their 'child will [would] suffer' if they did not 'keep going'. Very few of the mothers received substantial help from their partners; if they did, it was still the woman who organised the household routines and activities. The paid workers had similar stories to tell about the Organisation. As one woman said:

> We are the 'backroom boys' but we don't get recognised for all that we do. It's been difficult for me to get a management job and I know it's hard for other women too. One mother I spoke to the other day said she had a hard time getting on any of the important committees.

Women's role was to be the caregiver in the household and a support for others. If they did move into important positions they got a 'rough time' from the men and were usually expected to perform roles such as 'making the tea'.

The important aspect of this 'technology' (that of observing, examining, and then defining women's roles) was that women's roles were not only prescribed for them, but also devalued. In the household the mothers carried out servicing functions not only for the person with a disability, but also for other family members. The paid workers carried out servicing functions for the men in the Organisation, such as 'preparing agendas and finding files' before meetings. These women were criticised if they 'complained' and tried to become part of the decision making processes.

Other subtle mechanisms operated to keep women in these roles. These were difficult to detect, and it was not until a detailed examination of the women's stories was carried out that they began to emerge. However, they were a dominant strand throughout the stories. One of the most important of these was the notion of 'time and waiting'. The women talked about how in order to get 'My [their] work done' they had to timetable their day in such a way that left little time for other than caregiving activities.

The mothers spent many hours implementing special programmes for their child/adult. These programmes were usually set up by 'specialists', hence the women spent many hours waiting for these 'specialists' to make their decisions and design their programmes. 'Waiting' took many forms from waiting at the 'doctor's surgery' to

waiting 'for an assessment' to waiting for other family members to 'help out' and give 'me (mum) a break'. The paid workers also spent much time 'waiting'. They were generally reliant on others to make decisions about the 'care' of their clients. They were then expected to implement the programmes. At times it was quite difficult for these workers to take an active part in the 'important meetings' that took place in the Organisation. 'Waiting' then can mean 'waiting for' but also 'waiting on' others.

The Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) referred to the current policies to move people from long-stay institutions into the community. This could place additional pressure on informal services such as voluntary agencies and families. Both the mothers and paid workers talked about 'waiting for' adequate support services and financial resources to be provided.

The mothers related their feelings about the move towards independence for their daughters/sons. Although they had experienced a tremendous amount of guilt if they had a daughter/son who had to go to a long-stay institution, when their child returned home they still felt a different but no less stressful kind of guilt. This was related to the pressure on them to be the 'perfect parent' and to provide or lobby for services for the child/adult. This often took many hours of lobbying. As the Royal Commission submissions showed, while it is important to have individuals involved in helping to care for people who are dependent this can be done only if adequate resources are put in place. These women's stories were a graphic illustration of how so often resources are inadequate and how the success of community programmes often relies heavily on the unpaid/underpaid work of women.

The irony for both the mothers and paid workers was that household members and the Organisation could not function without the labour of women. Women have spent years supporting the activities of the Organisation, with little recognition and without acknowledgement that women's caregiving work has been the mainstay of the Organisation. People with intellectual disabilities would not have progressed as they have had it not been for the labour of women.

The *'knowledge'* used by the Organisation was also used to perpetuate the myths about women. In the research I used the term 'knowledge' to refer to how the history of the organisation was written, how the literature portrayed women, and how this knowledge could be used to encourage and maintain certain practices.

The women talked about the ways in which the history of the Organisation did not adequately portray their contributions or celebrate their achievements. The historical documents recording the develop-

ments of the Organisation focused on certain aspects and ignored others. In this way, certain myths could be perpetuated. An example given by the women was the presumed 'inevitability' that women should be the primary caregivers. This was intertwined with the Organisation's belief in 'family life'. In the women's stories I explored the use of the concept 'happy family' which functioned to hide what, in reality, 'family life' was like. The unquestioned acceptance of the 'family's' role in the provision of services tended to imply that there were equal benefits for all members. The concept of 'family' implied that care should take place in 'families' and that women had to continue to provide most of the care for the child / adult. The literature (books, films, magazines) provided by the Organisation seldom provided any analysis of whether families could cope or were in fact still intact. There was little or no allowance made for the diversity of family structures and the change in roles for household members. Many of the historical documents gave the impression that all families were 'happy families' with a 'man at the head' and women happily carrying out their caregiving work.

Although the women interviewed had a commitment to their families, they emphasised the inequalities present in the household. They had ambivalent feelings in that although they could derive satisfaction from their role (by watching the child/adult develop new skills and gain independence), the ways the tasks were divided up in the household functioned to restrict women's choices. Both the paid workers and the mothers pointed out that the historical literature did not often mention the difficulty of caring for a child with a disability. It generally portrayed women as 'wonderful, selfless, caring human beings' who wanted to perform, and were totally content with, their roles and responsibilities. The women now had to seek out literature that did provide an analysis of caring work and how gender functions to structure women's experiences.

The paid workers also talked about how new technical developments in the field could be adopted by the Organisation without any analysis of their impact upon women's lives. They cited the example of assessments and programme planning for the child / adult. The new information about assessment of skills and programme planning was essentially useful; however, the meetings and expectations associated with this could place additional pressure on the mothers. The daily routines of the paid workers were also affected, in that these women had to perform increasingly complex tasks without gaining additional financial compensation or job status. If the programmes designed to enhance a person's skills failed, it was the mother or caregiver who had to 'pick up

the pieces'.

Both the mothers and paid workers discussed how it could be difficult to obtain adequate information about how to carry out the increasing number of complex tasks for the child/adult (such as programmes to manage and change difficult behaviour patterns). It was at times difficult to receive training which was relevant for the daily demands of their work and which incorporated the skills and knowledge they already had. It is interesting to note that many of the paid workers interviewed were concerned that the specific information mothers had about caregiving was not valued. They had begun to acknowledge this by using this information and building on it in their work with clients. These paid workers described how there were few formal channels set up for the mothers to share information, and they told of how certain groups could in fact control and define the kinds of knowledge that was valued. Groups of professionals, such as the medical fraternity, were viewed as 'experts' and had the authority to define what was 'valid'. Research and related activities could also function to reinforce the dominant beliefs of this professional group, rather than providing a method for critiquing and advancing existing knowledge.

It is important to emphasise that, as Foucault (1978) argues, it was at times difficult to detect the ways in which 'knowledge' was used to control women. For example, helping women to carry out programmes for their child/adult can be viewed as a 'productive' use of power. This only becomes oppressive when women no longer have a choice about becoming involved in implementing such programmes. It is oppressive when women's knowledge is not valued and if women cannot contribute to the ways in which these programmes are formulated.

Language was also used to maintain women in the current positions, by reinforcing certain practices. It was used to mask contradictions and perpetuate myths. Language was used to 'put women down' by labelling them 'emotional', 'neurotic', 'hysterical' and 'over-protective'. Not only were women described negatively or portrayed in ways that did not adequately depict their activities, but certain characteristics were assigned a negative value. For example, the use of words such as 'selfless' misrepresented women, in that this could be used to imply that women enjoyed making sacrifices. They could be criticised for being 'over-protective', but were at the same time encouraged to be like this, for it ensured that people with intellectual disability were cared for. Hence much of the language used embodied contradictions, as some words and phrases had ambiguous meanings.

The women were encouraged to use certain key words to describe

their activities. While at the outset those words appeared to have no function other than factually to describe an event, they would take on connotations that could indeed have negative outcomes. The term 'care for' was a case in point, because the men in the Organisation who made the policy would often refer to the need to 'care for' people with intellectual disabilities. The fact that it was women who 'care for' not only those people, but also the men in the Organisation, was cleverly disguised by the implication that 'care for' must of necessity have positive connotations and outcomes. As with the other technologies, 'language' had positive and negative elements. It may be viewed as a compliment to be called 'selfless', but it ceases to be so if such terms are used to define what all women should be doing, and functions to minimise women's choices.

The technologies described are inextricably linked to one another as part of a process that defines and interprets women's activities. Because individual men in the Organisation did not always consciously set out to oppress women it was difficult to expose these. The subjection of women was part of a complex process, the purpose of which was to ensure that people with disabilities were cared for and the goals of the Organisation were met. The research attempted to expose some of these technologies by documenting the women's stories. From the analysis of the stories and the articulation of these 'technologies of power', a number of major themes can be brought together in order to show how these women's experiences may be common to other women. It is by doing this that their struggles may be linked to those of others in the process of bringing about change. Given the limitations of a paper of this kind, only two of these themes will be discussed here.

Private and public worlds

The mothers did at times feel 'trapped' in the household and had difficulty moving from this 'private realm'. Their attempts to influence the decisions of the Organisation were often blocked. To discover how this took place, it is essential to analyse the ways in which the 'private' and 'public' realms interacted with one another. The Organisation's activities had a major impact upon the women's lives. The household was not a 'haven' where women were free to make their own choices. It was shown that in general men controlled the Organisation, and in so doing tried to determine the way household roles and routines were structured and allocated. For years women had taken on the caregiving roles, and as my research showed they were unwilling to continue to take the major responsibility for these. These women were now trying to change this by redefining their roles; however, for many women their

only 'piece of power' had, for many years, been derived from their role as the primary caregiver.

Power relations pervaded the most intimate spheres of women's lives. The men they loved and lived with were part of the relations of oppression. When women did attempt to enter a 'public world' and make some changes, they could be criticised and ostracised for upsetting the status quo. The myths about caregiving which controlled and gave meaning to their lives were so entrenched that at times it was almost impossible to imagine another reality.

The research showed that the relationships between the 'private' and 'public' realm were extremely complex. These findings may be able to contribute to the ongoing re-examination of the relationships between the two. One significant finding relates to the functioning of the Organisation. It was erroneously assumed that if the mothers did 'make it on to committees' (these committees helped to formulate the Organisation's policies), and if paid workers entered management, they would have left the 'private realm' and be able to have a significant influence on what happened in the Organisation. However, women could still be excluded from major activities; they in fact remained in a 'private' space. The Organisation could not be viewed as a 'public realm' wherein women's influence and contributions were valued. It was for many women still a 'private' world. The power relations may have been more subtle and difficult to detect than those in the household, but they continued to hide and devalue the experiences of women. The ways in which the so-called 'private' world of the household and the 'public' world of the Organisation interrelate and influence women's lives must be further researched and analysed.

Mutuality and conflict

The women found themselves in ambivalent situations and often felt uncomfortable challenging the men in their households and in the Organisation. The women's partners and men in the Organisation occasionally supported and assisted them in their work. It was difficult for women to challenge those people with whom they had shared many happy times; 'things weren't always bad' for these women. I defined this contradiction as 'mutuality versus conflict'.

The ambivalent situations the women experienced could be used by the Organisation to ensure that women 'kept on caring'. Women were simultaneously subjected and supported. The relations of power were not always obvious and did not always appear intentional and punishing. They were in turn intertwined with relationships that were congenial.

The women's stories showed the contradictions of 'mutuality and conflict' to be always present. Many of the women talked about the difficulty of labelling themselves as an 'oppressed' group. Although they could describe their experiences of oppression, it was often too painful to admit that their experiences were a result of patriarchal domination. It is essential for feminists to help such women articulate these experiences, as the diffuse and subtle ways of the operation of power impact on how women will ultimately be able to organise for change.

The very intensity of power relations is represented by the ways in which these are masked by the men in households and in the Organisation. These must be revealed if the nature of patriarchal domination is to be understood.

Where to now

It is hoped that these findings may have relevance for understanding the struggles of other groups of women and for examining and making sense of power relations. Any worthwhile feminist research must of necessity move from this understanding to an articulation of what alternatives can be developed. The women had many suggestions as to what alternatives could be encouraged and developed. Many of their comments can be related to the current policies of community care. They supported the findings of the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) which showed that there was a need for a comprehensive social policy for dependent groups. The Commission received a large number of submissions detailing the ways in which services for people with disabilities and their families should be extended. They outlined how the burden of care fell on women. As my research has shown, women are faced with a dilemma: they often have to put their own needs in opposition with those of their children/adults. The women felt that what had been a situation of convenience for many years in the household and in the Organisation had become extended even further in order to put into place the policies of community care.

If we are to change this situation, the ways in which 'care' and 'caregiving' are defined must be re-examined. As the research showed, to do this we must first reveal what power relations are like for women and how and why their roles are structured in certain ways. As women we must reject the notion that women should naturally assume the role of primary caregiver simply because they give birth to the child.

The research functioned to make women visible — not only to detail the negative aspects of women's existence, but to celebrate their achievements. We must not always portray women as victims, but also show

how these women have begun to take control of their own lives, and if they cannot, what it is that prevents them from doing so.

I wished to contribute to the process of discovering new ways of describing and understanding these women's reality, as this is an important part of the struggle to transform the current reality for these and other women. The issues of who will do the caregiving and what value will be attributed to this are common to all women, as women continue to be the primary caregivers in households and take on the support roles in social service organisations.

Further research must continue to show how caregiving is organised and how this can be re-articulated. We need to understand what the concept of 'care' currently means in our society and how we care for our dependent members. If the women in this research are to continue their struggles and change how this 'care' is organised for people with intellectual disabilities, relationships and solidarity with other women must be strengthened. It is in this way that women will be able to define what their future and the future of their children will be.

Robyn Munford has just completed her PhD in the Department of Sociology, Massey University. This paper summarises the research she carried out for her Doctoral Dissertation. She continues to work with these women and others in order to discover more about the unpaid/underpaid work women do. She is currently working in paid employment as the Director of the Secretariat of the Council for Education and Training in the Social Services.

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Caring for the Confused Elderly at Home:

Report on Work in Progress[1]

Anne Opie

Introduction

This article is a work-in-progress report on a qualitative study, *Research with Elders and Carers at Home (REACH)*, addressing some of the issues relating to the informal care of the elderly, in the context of a partial analysis of four transcripts of interviews with caregivers of the severely confused elderly.[2] The complexity of the issues relating to the research methodology and to the concept of caregiving has required an outline of the positions, rather than a very detailed review. The factors that I shall focus on are: the rationale behind the orientation of the study and the problems within the concepts of caring and community care; the significance of the choice of methodology; the caregivers' experience of the everyday; and their contact with the formal services.

One of the major contributions of feminist scholarship to the discussion of dependency has been to address the complexity of the notion of caregiving, thus placing the positioning of women within social policy as central to an understanding of the workings of welfare (Pascall, 1986); and highlighting the extent of women's previously obscured contribution as caregivers (Crofts, 1986; Dalley, 1987; Finch and Groves, 1980,

1983; Pascall, 1986; Ungerson, 1987; Williams, 1989). This scholarship has also involved an unpacking of the traditional notion of caring though a challenge to its essentialist notions, in which women's role as caregivers was represented as intuitive and natural. Not only was a crucial connection made between ideology (caring as 'natural') and subordination, but the tensions inherent in a caregiving role were emphasised. Feminists noted the extent to which the essentialist notion of caring focused only on a positive affect between the carer and cared for, suppressing both the work involved and the range of negative emotions generated. Implicit in the feminist use and definition of 'caregiving' is an acknowledgement of an interweaving of 'taking charge' and 'feeling concern' (Graham, 1983:13; Waerness, 1987) and of the complex and contradictory emotions which such a role generates.

The current predominance of right wing ideologies and the perceived financial crisis of the welfare state have contributed to the positive weighting in New Zealand, as well as elsewhere, of the concept of community care, a concept of which feminists and others (Henwood and Wicks, 1984; Walker, 1986) have been critical, because of its negative implications for women. Feminists analysing the development of social policy have traced the transformation in Britain of the meaning of community care from the 1960s, when it referred to the development of small residential units within the community as replacements for large isolated hospitals, to its current meaning, where community care implies / assumes the involvement of the wider community in the process of caring — an assumption described as a 'sociological pastoral' (Pearson quoted in Finch and Groves, 1980:495). Concern at the implications of this transformation has been focused by the manner in which policy makers have assumed the continuing availability of women as caregivers, and its social and financial implications; the extent to which such a responsibility diminishes women's opportunities for equality within the wider society; the questionable assumptions about and ideological positioning of the nature of the 'family' and its continuing ability financially, emotionally and demographically to sustain the demands of caring, in the light of lack of formal and informal support by neighbours and extended family members, diminishing family size, and increasing numbers of elderly in the population (thus drawing attention to a disjunction between rhetoric and reality); the increasing marginality of the formal social services; the continued privatisation of caring, and the denial of a collective social responsibility (Croft, 1986; Dalley, 1988; Finch and Groves, 1980; Henderson, 1986).

The purpose of the *REACH* study is to analyse, in the light of the increasing emphasis on community care, the everyday lives of caregivers

within a New Zealand setting. Knowledge of local tensions and difficulties as perceived by the caregiver is vital to a re-evaluation of the orientation of the social services and to an increased awareness of the implications of the positioning of women and men as carers within the society. As Stacey has remarked, 'Caring is not something on the periphery of our social order; it marks the point at which the relations of capital and gender intersect' (Pascall, 1986:70, quoting Graham, quoting Stacey).

Methodology

The choice of methodology and a deconstructive reading of the texts of the interviews is significant. It is intimately connected with the focus of the research on the caregiver's everyday experiences. I decided on this focus for several reasons. Not only is a detailed qualitative analysis of the mundane lives of caregivers lacking (Gileard, 1984; Stephens and Christianson, 1986), but feminists have been concerned to problematise the everyday, so that what has been typically taken for granted and persistently designated as 'private' and therefore obscured is opened for questioning (Smith, 1987). Focusing on the everyday lives of caregivers enables the analysis to challenge the distinction between the public and private spheres, noting the manner of their interaction (Cox and James, 1987), and to direct attention to the manner in which the individual is constituted by and constitutes herself within the wider social discourse. In other words the 'presence and experience of particular subjectivities' (Smith, 1986:2) must not be read in isolation from the manner in which society is constructed. The problematising of the everyday also enables a fuller analysis of this complexity, structure and implications, in this instance, for caregivers.

The issue of the visibility of caregivers is particularly important in this regard, because of the multiple invisibility of carers (especially elderly carers) and their confused relatives. Socially, elderly carers have to contend with invisibility because of the presence of ageism in our society. Physically, many carers of the severely confused become almost literally invisible, since their task is such that their lives become extremely constricted and their social contacts significantly diminished. They lack the time and energy to keep up former interests, and friends have an alarming tendency to disappear. Organisationally, they are rendered substantially invisible, many existing on the fringes of the health system because of the inadequacy or irrelevancy of services. Moreover, in the formal caring system those with whom they have most day to day contact and who are therefore most cognisant with their needs are, organisationally speaking, the least powerful and have the

least access to resources.

The orientation of the research, its design and the deconstructive reading of the texts are also significant in relation to the location and the empowerment of the participants in the research (Opie, 1989). The primary focus on their experiences places them as central and defines their knowledge as significant. Indeed, the major reason most gave for taking part in the research was to make their experience public and therefore accessible to others, so that the research becomes a vehicle by which the carers' invisibility and marginality is (momentarily) lifted, thus opening what have been socially obscured and private experiences to a more public gaze.

A deconstructive reading moves beyond a focus on content to address explicitly issues of textual production. This permits the identification of the ideological and the positioning of the speaker within ideology(ies). The reading is also concerned with significant textual features, such as those that indicate the participants' positions within and across gender boundaries (de Lauretis, 1987; Flax 1987; Jacobus, 1986) and omissions, margins, contradictions and oscillations are seen as vital to interpretation (Flax, 1987; Moi, 1985). In this respect a deconstructive reading is concerned with contingency, diversity and difference. Moreover, deconstructive writing does not seek to produce a smooth text (Clifford and Marcus, 1986), but to affirm the multiple and different voices contributing to its formation and to represent these as part of its own writing.

Research design

The research is based on (mostly) two long interviews with each of twenty-eight informal carers of the confused elderly living in the Greater Wellington region. These carers were looking after family members who were confused as a consequence of multi-infarcts, Alzheimer's Disease or Parkinson's; or were unable to communicate and were very dependent as a result of a stroke. They were contacted through seven community and voluntary organisations providing services for families with a confused member. Participants were sought to illuminate the range of carers. Eleven of the adult children who were primary carers were daughters (three were unmarried; two were daughters-in-law); and four were sons (one of whom was helped by his wife). Six male and seven female spouses also participated. Neighbours who kept an eye on one confused person were also interviewed. Three of the elders had been admitted to continuing care just prior to my interviewing the carer; one during the two interviews with the caregivers; and another two years ago. In addition to the two taped and subsequently fully tran-

scribed interviews, I spent time observing behaviour and interactions between the confused and the caregiver in ten homes in order to ground and contextualise the data. While I had an interview guide, I structured the interviewing to respond to and develop the caregiver's concerns. One participant kept a diary over what turned out to be an extremely stressful week. I followed up the participants in April-May 1990, having previously returned copies of her/his transcripts to each. In order to involve participants in the research process beyond the interviewing, I am intending to circulate copies of chapters, and a meeting to discuss the findings and recommendations is planned so that caregivers' comments can be incorporated in the final draft.

The participants

Most of the participants fell into two distinct age groups, the middle-aged adult children, and the spouses (all but one of whom were over 60 years of age). The majority of those cared for were aged between 71 and 85 years. Two were under 60, and five were aged 86+ years. The majority of the carers were middle-aged, married daughters, six of whom had a double dependency of elder and dependent children. The children ranged in age from fifteen years to, in one family, three under twenty-eight months. All but one of these daughters were full-time home-makers. Only one spousal carer had a dependent child. Although all but two of the partnered women spoke of their partners as playing a significant role, they saw themselves as the primary carers to whom the men typically offered valued emotional support; as Watson and Mears (1989) comment, the significance of this support should not be under-rated. Some of the husbands were actively involved in supervision of the elder and provided practical help with transportation, visits to the doctor, etc., but none undertook personal care such as bathing or toiletting. Two of the women (including an unmarried daughter) gave up work because of the demands of the caring role (and were very anxious about their ability to subsequently move back into the paid workforce) as did one son who looked after two demented parents and helped his mother with bathing and toiletting. Three of the daughters were in full-time paid employment.

Only two male spouses were still in the paid workforce part-time. One female spouse planned to return to paid employment after her husband went into continuing care. Most of the elderly caregivers had some physical ailment(s). Unsurprisingly, all caregivers suffered from chronic fatigue related to their physically and emotionally demanding work.

A number of the confused elderly were extremely disabled. Seven

required help with 3+ Activities of Daily Living and thirteen had either little or no speech. The degree of resultant stress for the carer, especially those caring for Alzheimer's sufferers, is obscured by the frequent use of the paralleling of the elder's behaviour with that of a child. However, looking after a demented adult bears only the most superficial resemblance to looking after a normal child. In particular, the analogy disguises the length of time activities of daily living take to perform, the amount of work and stress involved, and the constant level of supervision required. Many carers had to ensure that the confused person did not become dehydrated or malnourished through forgetting to eat or drink. Furthermore, children's wetting or soiling does not generate the level of washing and cleaning up that the demented adult's does. One woman whose father could in the strict sense 'toilet himself' still had to clean the toilet up to twelve times a day, a task that she found increasingly depressing. One man got up four times a night to take his wife to the toilet, a responsibility that was physically and emotionally demanding.

> 'You want to go to the lav' 'Yes' 'Well all right then, I'll put the heater on' We've got a gas heater. 'OK dear, ready to get up?' 'Yeah' 'right-o. Put your feet out and I'll put your slippers on. There we are. Into the lav. Lavatory straight ahead. No not up there. That's my office dear. Straight ahead. OK Up with your nighty. Let's put the seat down' (the covered seat) Let her go, then for a while .... she'd take my towel to dry herself. So I took my towel and flannel out, put them in my office and shut the door. (*Anger in voice)* 'That's my towel, I don't want you drying yourself there after you've had a piddle' Er.. 'Alright back to bed again. *(voice becomes more irritated)* No, no not up there, bedroom's straight ahead. Ok round there. No, don't put the light on. No don't put your slippers on. You've just taken your slippers off dear. Get back into bed. OK, right, OK.'

Most significantly, most children grow up and learn to do these things for themselves. The struggle is not going to go on indefinitely, whereas with the Alzheimer's patient or stroke victim, there is no clear end in sight. Nor are most parents confronted with having to adjust to increasing mental and physical incapacity.

Textual analysis

This section of the article reflects some of the issues highlighted in four texts, those of Mr Foster, Mr Homer, Mrs Gibson and Ms Jones.[3] The first three were looking after spouses aged 70+ years with Alzheimer's, none of whom could dress, toilet, feed, or wash themselves unaided, and all had almost entirely lost the ability to speak. All had required a major degree of care and supervision for over three years. Ms Jones was

unmarried and in her late forties. Disregarding friends' warnings that she would end up caring for her father in his old age, she had bought a house jointly with him fifteen years ago. He had a severe stroke in 1986, and had become increasingly confused.

The ability or desire of spouses to assume responsibility for their demented partner is infrequently questioned, although it appears that the male desire to finally terminate care may be more readily attended to by some health professionals. Certainly these spouses had little alternative but to assume responsibility with the onset of dementia. The tone and content of the comments about their spouses and their unquestioned acceptance of the role in two of these texts (Mrs Gibson's and Mr Foster's) was similar. Despite the dementia, the spouse was still the central reference point, and their description of their obligation towards her/him was located primarily in a framework of love and reciprocity, a framework which was sustained by reference to a very long and significant marital relationship, but which at a number of points during the interviews was momentarily undermined by sudden slippages into irritation, doubt and resentment.

The gendered differences between these texts was slight. Both emphasised more the positive emotional experience contained within the traditional notion of caring, but the slippages suggested, as Dalley (1988) has remarked, the ways in which such a role can be corrosive of a relationship. Both speakers used, at moments of distress, sudden distancing techniques. Spouses who in the previous utterance had been 'him' or 'she' become 'they' or 'it', enabling the condition or behaviour to be discussed, while avoiding locating the condition within the body of the loved person. The differences between the two spouses lay primarily in the expressed degree of frustration at the inability to carry on any personal interests; Mrs Gibson's suppression of her desire was more easily sustained within an identity where subordination of self and interest was accustomed and acceptable, an identity which located her within a traditional (female) ideology of caring.

Mr Homer's text stood in direct contrast to theirs. Having to assume care of his wife dramatically challenged his identity as primarily sited beyond the home, and highlighted his inexperience in caring. His attempts to manage his inexperience through an extensive reading of the literature on dementia resulted in an intellectual knowledge but not emotional integration of his situation. His text is unique within the study in respect to the extent of external reference, in contrast to the very domestic, circumscribed locations of the others. Not only does his text make frequent references to past events, but there is a distinct public dimension. Committees, games of bowls, wills, financial and business

transactions (his own and others), events of moment in the institutions with which he was engaged, entered. What became evident was a much higher level of tension and abrupt disjunctions between his past life experiences and his current ones. Having lived his life until three years ago beyond the home, defining himself as a highly precise person, occupationally as well as in his interests, as self-centred and engrossed only in his concerns, he was then thrust into a highly diffuse, disorganised, increasingly non-communicative domestic world, where his valuing of precision was destructive — a situation for which his previous life experiences had utterly failed to prepare him and which resulted in him certainly psychologically, and probably physically, abusing his wife, abuse which was unnoticed by formal caregivers.

Unlike any other text in the study, his contains sudden and extreme oscillations of emotion in his descriptions of how he should and how he does behave. These oscillations of behaviour, affect and understanding are mirrored and accentuated by the physical structuring of the text itself. Much of his account is in the form of a 'dialogue' between himself and his wife in which four voices, one distinguished by absence, reign. The loudest and most insistent voice is his — often pained, angry, and losing control, while desperately trying to control his situation through a combination of vigorous assertion, abusiveness, ridicule and threat. This voice belongs, increasingly but not entirely, in the past. The second voice is his wife's — for which he moves into a higher register, and often adopts a whining tone. The third voice exists more in the present, where a more reasoned, at times a more loving and more carefully controlled tone is dominant, which is broken by expressions of grief and anguish and loss; and his wife's voice has become silent.

The complexity of Mr Homer's situation lies not just in his inscription in a particular ideology in which role and gender are rigidly defined, but that at a critical moment he was inserted into an alternative ideology whose moral suasion was difficult to resist, equating ability to care competently with a structural relationship, i.e. marriage. He described his role primarily in terms of a duty which reflected a contractual ('for better, for worse') rather than affectional relationship. His reaction to the diagnosis of Alzheimer's was, 'Is this happening to me? Is this Mary that's, that's .. that's going like this, like her mother? Oh dear, oh dear', a statement in considerable contrast to the sadness expressed by the other two carers first and foremost for their spouse.

Ms Jones occupied a third site of gender and ideology. In the first instance, she appeared to be traditionally inscribed in a rigidly gendered position, as the older, unmarried daughter assuming, inevitably, the care of her father. She regarded her assumption of responsibility as

'natural'. She already lived with her father. At the time of his second stroke, she had just been declared redundant, and she regarded her sister's claims of both family and full-time paid employment as superior to any she could mount against her assumption of the role as carer. Yet the availability of an alternative and opposing ideology embedded in feminism allowed her to a certain extent to challenge the efficacy of her self-sacrifice and the manner in which she was 'losing my life'. Furthermore, her ability to finally question, and therefore to resist, at least to some extent, the continuing immersion in her role was affected by a range of extremely complex factors, including the nature of the relationship with her father, her age, and her recognition, in contrast to the spousal caregivers, that she would still have a significant amount of her life to live after her father's death. She was thus placed in a slightly stronger position to question her continuing total responsibility for a deteriorating parent.

The everyday

Caregivers' comments on their mundane experiences indicated the fragmentary, episodic and dispersed nature of their domestic lives (Aptheker, 1989). Individual schedules varied considerably but the common patterns that emerged were focused on the contradictory, ambivalent and paradoxical nature of the experience, the stress of the predictable and the unpredictable event and, because of the nature of the task, the difficulty of resisting immersion into the caring role, with the carers' consequent loss of their interests and pursuits. Dominant themes in the texts were those of isolation, absence and loss.

Overall, there was an absence of interaction with the outside world. Few people entered the carers' daily lives apart from immediate family and the staff of Day Care centres. Because of the nature of the service that they provided, the latter came to have a privileged and valued but sometimes problematic relationship with the carers. As with family, on whom carers were also reliant, there was the danger of offending or being seen as ungrateful — a position which placed carers in a very powerless position, should they want to query an action or event.

The absence of 'community' support was also frequently remarked. Neighbours were generally available only in an emergency. Many were out at work, or had their own burdens to cope with, while those with whom there had been a closer relationship had ceased contact as the elder became more demented, or had died or moved away. Past friendships could not be relied upon. My impression was that the two men had in fact not had many friends, but rather church or work associates. Mr Foster, however, spoke warmly of the help given by a

friend of his wife's who had maintained her association. Both the women experienced a very substantial and extremely disconcerting dropping off of friends, leaving them with a sense of contagion, of being as Ms Jones said a 'leper', found guilty by dint of association with diseases others found frightening. Mrs Gibson defined friends as being those people who remained, or who in her case became, actively involved and were ready to reach out rather than waiting to be asked. Such people were few and far between.[4]

Maintaining relations with friends and more remote family members was complicated. As the spouse or parent deteriorated, so people shied away, partly because of the difficulties of communicating with the confused person. Carers also found it more and more difficult to visit. Mrs Gibson could no longer stay with in-laws because Mr Gibson became too disorientated in the different environment, and they criticised her.

> And *they*, they thought that I waited on him too much but then, it is all very well, but when you are in someone else's home and they don't even know the way to the toilet in your own home, well you are not going to let them go down on their own... so ah, you've got to wait on them hand and foot, People don't *understand* that....

Carers found their lives focused around practicalities. Mr Foster said in a patient, albeit slightly bewildered, voice,

> She's got a blue toothbrush. I said, 'Leave it on the basin'.
>
> *AO* What, rather than hang it up in a cupboard?
>
> *Mr F.* Yeah. Oh, she'll never find it. And then she'll come out and say, 'Where's my toothbrush? Is this it?' Now, then she'll come out with the toothpaste, and say, 'Is this what I use?' Without the toothbrush. So muddled up.
>
> *AO* How's that for you? Is that the point where you begin to feel irritated and frustrated?
>
> *Mr F:* Frustrated! Christ, the other night she comes out with my toothbrush. I said, 'You know that's not yours. Mine's red and yours is blue.' Five minutes later she's off saying, 'Where's my toothbrush? Is this it?' I said, 'If you ask me again I'll scream.' You know. That sort of thing. And you think after all you're being a bit tough really. But, um ... it's those little things that rattle you.

Caring involved constant supervision and consequently frequent interruption of the carer's activities.

> Like in the summer time I thought, 'Oh, get some weeding done'. Take a chair outside and sit him down in the chair and he would be there for five minutes and the next thing he is off round the house. So you've got to get up and go and see where he is around the garden.

AO So you are not — so you are constantly having to go and see where he is, what has happened to h him? (Yes) Keep a check on him all the time.

Mrs G Yes. And if I go out to the clothes line to get the clothes in... he might be sitting on the couch quite happy and I might be writing some cheques or something before that and just left them as you normally do when you go out, but then I will come back and I will find some in the rubbish bin, and he has tidied up, he thought, and there was one receipt that I never ever found again...

The degree of interruption because of the frequent need to attend to a situation left caregivers exhausted, and the difficulties of attempting to sustain anything of their own lives were attested to by the way in which accounts became frenetic or repetitive. Ms Jones said:

Well, I just stopped doing (knitting). Um, I like knitting, I love knitting. I haven't knitted I suppose since he had his stroke, three years ago. I haven't really done any knitting. I used to sit here and knit all his jerseys, my jerseys. I haven't been able to do that. I like to garden, but I haven't had a show of doing any gardening. Right out of the question. I mean, you know, when he was here, it was just sort of, do the basics. Your vacuuming. I mean the extras like the windows and the cleaning cupboards and things. I mean you just — I just never had time to do those things.

AO Right, so anything you were interested in effectively got very much put to one side.

Ms J I couldn't even watch a tele programme that I liked because he probably wouldn't like that. I have got a little tele in my room. But I couldn't go in there and watch because I'm up, down, up, down. But even just watching a tele programme had become very difficult. He'd want to go to the toilet. You'd just sit down to watch something and he'd decide to go to the toilet. And at night — by night time he was sort of getting very tired and you'd have to go with him and make sure that he didn't fall getting up the passage and...and then you'd sit down, and you'd have to get his supper, so you'd go and get that, and then you'd sit down and he'd decide he was going to bed. So I'd have to go along and get him all into bed again.

The most frequently remarked absence was the increasing and sometimes almost total psychological absence of the person with Alzheimer's. Coming to terms with this absence demands a major emotional re-adjustment by the caregiver, the processes of which were extremely complex. For Mr Foster and more especially for Mrs Gibson, moments where the absolute certainly of the loss or psychological absence of the spouse was suddenly thrown into question upset her precarious accept-

ance of her husband's absence. These complicated considerably her attempts to place limits on her sense of obligation (and desire) to continue as a carer.

> *Sometimes* I think to myself, 'Well, you know, if you were in hospital, I don't think that it would make much difference. I don't think you'd ... *really care* as long as you... were being fed... and looked after', and then I think, '*Well*, I don't know. Why would you put your arm around me at night, if you didn't know that it was me?' And I always said, 'Well, as soon as he forgets who I am', but I don't really think that he has ever... because — now the other night he tried to wake me up... I was awake, but I thought, 'I won't say too much' ... and then he said, 'Dear'... Then he said it again... and I thought, 'Oh, I had better say something', so I answered. Oh, but before I did, he said... 'It's your husband, Steve, talking', so I thought, 'Oh, I had better come to' and... So I thought, 'Well, you know, he can't have forgotten who I am'.

Since her rationale for continuing to care in face of exhaustion and ill health was partly based on the belief in her husband's cognitive presence, such moments became significant in strengthening her resolve to continue, in the hope that good care would postpone the inevitable moment of final non-recognition.

The carers commented on other dimensions of absence. Some of Mr Homer's grief about his wife's illness and guilt about his behaviour was located in his recognising that he could not change the history of their relationship; and each abusive outburst further undermined his morale and sense of competence. In contrast, Mrs Gibson and Mr Foster spoke often of the loss of a valued companionship, all the more significant for Mrs Gibson who had no other close, immediate family. Yet their accounts are not devoid of ambivalence towards their spouses, highlighted by the manner in which the participants found it difficult to define positive aspects of caring without a slide into an expression of annoyance or frustration.

Feelings of stress heightened the experience of absence and loss. The recent literature on caring for the confused elderly notes that although the task of caring is very stressful, carers' experience of stress in relation to particular events is highly individualised (Gileard, 1984), a comment which these texts confirm. Unsurprisingly, the unpredictable was stressful. They felt, as Mrs Gibson said, they were 'living on the top of a volcano'.

However, the predictable was also stressful. Tomorrow would bring the same routine with the same problems of establishing some sort of flow and the same problems of attempting to find a stimulating activity

for the confused person. Alternatively, repetitive behavour would occur that carers found particularly irritating and over which they knew that they should restrain their expressions of annoyance. Mr Foster said,

> You know these cards? She hoards them. And she's got some under her table out there... and *every night, every night* they come out... I say to her, 'Look, you've *had* them out. Put them—' 'Well, nobody's going to have them'. I say, 'Well, nobody's gonna have them. *I* don't want them'... Then she packs them up and that's what — *every night.* And I said to her, 'I get *sick* of seeing them'. 'You can have one'. I said, 'I don't want one'... That sort of thinking, you see. Because she's got nothing else to occupy her mind.

Because they knew that the elderly person was no longer in control of their actions, carers defined an expression of anger as indicative of a personal failure. Nonetheless, the emotional drain on carers of continually attempting to act consistently and patiently and without rancour and anger towards the confused person, especially when there were moments when they suspected (even some time after the dementia had been diagnosed) that the demented person could control her/his behaviour, should not be underestimated. The consistency with which carers proferred the need to behave with patience and avoid anger (which made the intolerable situation worse) suggests the extreme difficulty in maintaining one's temper, the importance of so doing and the level of associated stress.

Managing a caring role can be described in terms of the strategies carers utilised such as weeping, reminding themselves that the spouse was not behaving intentionally, talking with another family member, recalling strong mothers who had continued against all odds, struggling to keep going because of a perceived lack of alternatives, and admitting their defeat, only to find that they could continue. Mrs Gibson commented:

> I mean, it has all come on top of you for quarter of an hour, half an hour but then you think, 'Oh well, never mind. That's my life. My life wouldn't be much at this stage without him', so you just kind of forget about it... just go on again. Not the easiest sometimes. And then I think, 'No. This is it. No. I *can't*' But you do... I dunno — I'm getting too old now to have a life after he's gone... I'm very lucky in that I've still got him and... after all, it's.... just one of those things.

And paradoxically, although the psychological absence of the spouse was constantly referred to, their physical presence was nonetheless valued. Mr Homer said,

> she, she is there, even if — I can look and she is — 'Hullo, are you come to light, have you? With us again? Of course you've been

snoring your head off'. 'Have I?' 'Would you like a cup of tea?' 'Yes'. 'Right. I'll get you a cup of tea.'

Because such moments are quantifiably insignificant, it is easy to overlook the easily suppressed but qualitatively significant comments about the importance to the caregiver of physical affection, a smile or a moment of responsiveness from the confused person which assisted the carer to continue. Such comments, indicating some of the means by which the burden was made manageable, were absent from Ms Jones' text (as they tended to be from the texts of the other adult children who were caregivers). She did not (nor did the other adult children) describe her caring relationship as grounded in a particularly positive previous relationship with the confused person, a fact which contributed to a heightened ambivalence about caring in her (and their) texts.

The more powerful analytical concepts to account for caregivers' management of their role are those of 'resistance' (Aptheker, 1989) or 'tactic' (de Certeau, 1984:xix) both of which describe strategies developed in response to the demands and contingencies of everyday life. There is not sufficient space to explore these concepts in detail. However, their value lies in the way in which they open a range of gendered positionings in caring for examination in the context of the ways in which individual carers attempted (or stopped attempting) to contain their caregiving role and maintain an identity beyond that of carer.

Caring involved major loss and changes across many aspects of carers' lives. It also meant that the carers had to give up or modify personal standards — precision, cleanliness, order — very considerably and that they became completely responsible for the household and for decision-making in a way that none had been before. A preliminary impression of the texts in this study suggests that those with the least means of resistance, and therefore the greatest difficulty in placing a limit on their caring work, tended to be the unmarried daughters and the spouses, both women and men. In contrast, the sons tended to be most able to limit their role, with the married daughters generally able to do so more than the first group, and less than the second.

Service provision

It is in the accounts of dailiness that the interrelation between the public and private or domestic sphere becomes most marked. The location of the capacity to manage solely within the individual ignores the role of political and social institutions and the nature of their response to carers (Otto, 1989). Although there is now a clearer trend overseas to explicitly recognise and attempt to respond to the needs of the caregivers, a trend about which Croft (1986) has voiced some concerns, such a policy has by

no means been fully accepted and integrated into professional practice in New Zealand. Overall, carers had very few services and had found it difficult to get adequate information about what was available.[5] Table 1 indicates the services received by twenty-two caregivers (excluding those whose parent or spouse had been admitted to continuing care prior to my contact).

Table 1: Access to Formal Services

Service	Unmarried daughters	Daughters	Sons	Wives	Husbands	Total
Social Work	1	0	2	3	2	8
District Nurse	2	2	3	1	1**	9
Speech Therapist	0	1	0	0	1#	2
Day Care ***	2	4	2	5	3	16
Respite Care	1	1	0	2	1	5
Intermittent Care	0	3	1	1	2	7
Home Help	1#	0	1	1	1#	5
Meals on Wheels##	0	1	2	0	0	3

\# Organised and paid for by caregiver.

** In this instance, the District Nurse was going in 5 days. In most other situations, she came 1-2 times a week.

*** Only 3 caregivers used day care 5 days a week. Most used day care 1-2 days a week.

The parents in all three cases were living separately from their adult children.

There are a number of issues which complicate a straightforward reading of this table. Given the size of the study, it would be misleading to make assertions about the gendered distribution of services. Some participants had had services in the past, but these had either been withdrawn because it was believed by the professionals that the service was no longer necessary, at times leaving the caregiver feeling extremely unsupported, or terminated by the caregiver because of a concern about the quality of care. There is also a qualitative difference between those who refused a service and those who had not known of its availability. Nor does the table indicate the length of time carers had had services. It is relevant to note that those caring for Alzheimer's patients generally require less help in the early stages of the disease, but the position is generally reversed for those caring for stroke victims. Nonetheless, all of the Alzheimer's patients were past the early stage and had been so for some time. Overall, caregivers felt unsupported by

the formal services, and their experience of isolation raises disturbing questions about the provision of 'community care' and a lack of flexible service provisions.

Day care, which was used by just over half of the carers, is acknowledged as critical in relieving the carer as well as providing activities for the confused person. The Alternative Care Allowance pays for twenty-eight days' care per year. Under this scheme a 'day' is defined as a period of time of more than eight hours. Most day care centres operate for less than eight hours a day. Caregivers using this allowance to fund day care are able to claim fifty-six 'half days' per year (or just over five days a month), thus doubling the amount of care funded by the Department of Social Welfare. However, to date Government funding for this scheme has not been secured. The majority of caregivers used day care one to two days a week, partly because some carers found that using the service created its own strains; but also because the cost of using day care more frequently, especially for elderly spouses with few financial resources, is considerable, since fees are approximately $30.00 per day.

The day care organisations run support groups to provide moral support for the carers. These groups tended to be more valued by the younger women carers. Older participants tended to find the idea of sharing problems foreign, and indicated that they found others' airing of difficulties depressing, unhelpful and too time-consuming. Croft (1986) has raised questions about the extent to which such groups may meet a major need of carers — time to themselves.

Home helps and meals on wheels, although traditionally associated with community care, were often not wanted or felt to be relevant by most participants. Only one used the laundry service, and despite the fact that a number of the confused elderly suffered from incontinence, some carers did not know of the existence, let along availability, of incontinence pads. A number of carers were uncertain about exactly how the financial benefits operated and were confused by the different means-testing systems for benefits operated by different departments.

Intermittent care was used by only seven out of the twenty-eight families. Although it is described as offering families, i.e. carers, a major form of relief, the frequency with which carers are offered the time out is based on a medical assessment of the confused person, and only infrequently takes the psychological and physical state of the caregiver into account. Intermittent care users and non-users commented on the recent crisis in the hospital system and expressed considerable disquiet about the quality of care available. The paradoxical situation had developed where a service expressly intended to relieve the carers was available to some, yet the perception of the adequacy of that service by

the carers it is intended to relieve is such that they either postponed using it until well after they have reached crisis point, or did use it, but with considerable anxiety and deep concern about the welfare of the elder. Until recently, carers were told not to visit the elder while s/he was in hospital, the rationale being that this would give them a complete break. The cutbacks in the services in at least one hospital have resulted in some carers having to collect dirty, wet or soiled clothing daily. The 'penalty' for not doing so appears to be the loss of the elder's clothing.

There has been a tendency to describe those unwilling to relinquish a confused person to such services as overly involved in their caring role, thus describing and locating the problem solely within individual pathology. The notion of over-involvement is informed by particular ideological and generational notions of relationships. I shall take Mrs Gibson's situation as exemplary. For over fifty years her life was centred on her home. Her rejection of intermittent care has to be viewed as a logical continuation of that role, rather than an expression of 'false consciousness' (Croft, 1986:24). Yet some of the service providers, who occupied a different generational niche, tended to view her behaviour from an ideological position which stressed exploitation. Their emphasis on the social and political implications of her decision made it difficult to acknowledge its personal dimension, with the result that she was aware that they regarded her behaviour as incomprehensible and reprehensible, leaving her feeling undermined and criticised. Furthermore, the carers' description of their role indicated that it was almost impossible to cope with the task without a substantial immersion of self in the role, because of the conflict between trying to maintain an 'ordinary' life and look after a severely confused person. Elderly caregivers in particular are likely to find it difficult to avoid developing a lifestyle over the years centred on caring, which then complicates their ability to involve the formal services and to relinquish care before they reach crisis point. Another consequence of this perspective is that attention is shifted from the quality of service and the carer's perception of that quality.

Conclusion

This paper has indicated support of significant feminist principles in social policy analysis. It highlights the need for the development of health services which are more responsive to the individual caring 'system', and for ensuring that the medical assessment of the confused patient involves adequate consultation and information sharing between formal and informal caregivers.

Finally, the choice of methodology has permitted a more compli-

cated understanding of the role of gender in the everyday life of the caregivers.

Dr Anne Opie lectures in Social Work at Victoria University of Wellington.

Notes

1 An earlier version of this paper was presented as a seminar at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington, September 1989.

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3 Although this section discusses only these four transcripts, many of the issues which emerge here were reflected in other accounts.

4 At the seminar 'Celebrating the Carers' (Wellington, October 1989), Nancy Mace noted that those who care for physically disabled children can expect to have about 30 active supporters. None of the carers in my study had anything remotely approaching that number. In their cases, 3 or 4 active helpers would be a large number .

5 Overseas literature (e.g. Arber et al., 1988; O'Connor *et al.*, 1989) has consistently reported that carers lack relevant services, or services which are specifically structured to their needs.

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Women with Disabilities

Wendi Wicks

In a world which is only just beginning to have some understanding of disability, the position of women with disabilities is little known. It is assumed (if indeed it is thought about at all) that it is a part of disability issues in general. Sometimes it is seen as a women's issue. Certainly an examination will reveal issues common to both areas, and also parallels with racism. But women with disabilities show distinctive characteristics, and are not a sub-set of any group.

The argument which underpins this paper is that women with disabilities constitute a distinct oppressed group. They face a double oppression that comes from both their sex and their disability. They encounter discrimination — the judging of a person disadvantageously on the basis of one, usually biological, characteristic, and generalising that all people with that disability are the same, and warrant the same judgement. That discrimination is both sexist and ableist in nature, and neither alone is sufficient to explain the situation.

This paper provides some illustration of the way in which that double discrimination operates. Education, incomes and employment are looked at. The paper also considers some of the ways in which legislative and policy provision impact on the lives of women with disabilities.

Throughout the paper, the term 'women with disabilities' is used. This results in some cumbersome sentences at times, but such a construction avoids labelling a group on the basis of one characteristic in

their totality. If feminism has taught us one thing, it has taught us the power of words to oppress. The author had far rather tread on syntax than on principle.

This is an issue which has implications for society, as conceived of from some very different stances. Those people who see society from a basis of right wing economic theory would tend to see discriminations as costly, inefficient and irrational. They involve a loss of potential productivity. Others look to the idea of a just society — just for all of its members, and not discriminating against certain groups. When disadvantage is recognised, it is addressed in both societal and personal ways.

These ways of looking at society are different, and certainly not the only ways of doing so. But they both highlight the point that where a group experiences anger, frustration and poverty because of the way the society is structured, that society is creating unnecessary problems for itself.

There are also demographic implications. There are three points to consider here. First, growing numbers, and a growing proportion, of our population are steadily 'greying'. Secondly, disability becomes more common as people age. Thirdly, disability is more common among women overall, and especially among older women. 'They' are increasingly likely to be you. It would be wise to consider the implications of this information.

Education

Discrimination in education is a precursor to discrimination in both incomes and employment. It can have considerable effects later on. Neale's (1984) study of the subject options and levels of education of secondary school students, with and without disabilities, showed that students with disabilities were more likely to leave school earlier and were less likely to take up further education. In both cases, there was a lower level of belief that further education would benefit such students.

This belief was even more pronounced for female students with disabilities than for male students with disabilities. Female students were seen by their parents to be most suited to 'soft option' areas of study; subsequent suitable employment was seen as a clerical or sales job. Male students with disabilities were seen as suited to a much wider range of jobs. A combination of low expectations and minimal belief in their further educability meant that female students were seriously disadvantaged by educational options, more than male students with disabilities and students of both sexes without disabilities.

Incomes

Most women with disabilities are found in the very low income area, as a survey for the Wellington Hospital Board revealed: Jack *et al* (1982) found that 54 percent of the women with disabilities in their sample, aged between 15 and 65, had an income under half the average female wage. At the time, the average female wage was three quarters of the average male wage. However, only 26 percent of the surveyed men with disabilities had an income under half the average male wage. The writer's personal experience is that for many women with disabilities, poverty is still the most common expectation.

This does not imply that men with disabilities have an opulent lifestyle: they still constitute a group prone to poverty. But in addition to the discrimination of ableism that the men's position shows, the women with disabilities face discrimination on account of their sex.

In part, this difference in income between men and women with disabilities is explicable by two factors. The first is the way benefits and eligibility criteria are structured. A person with a disability will, in most instances, receive a sickness benefit, an invalid's benefit, or accident compensation. The latter two have the largest numbers. Of these, the invalid's benefit will be received by a greater proportion of women than men. This is because among women, disability is far more likely to be due to a congenital condition, illness, or some chronic and deteriorating condition. In all of these instances, eligibility is for the invalid's benefit. Accident compensation is far more likely to go to men with disabilities than to women with disabilities. The invalid's benefit is usually lower than accident compensation. It is lowered from the standard level if there is a partner who is in employment. It covers a narrower range of associated expenditure, and access to such expenditure is tortuous. A new benefit structure which will standardise these different levels has just come into being, but the impact of this change is not yet known.

The other factor is the high unemployment rate of women with disabilities. When they cannot find work, many find that an invalid's benefit presents the only viable alternative. So a larger number of women have no choice but to exist on a restrictive benefit — hence their lower income.

Employment

There has been little attempt to either collect or collate data with regard to the employment of women with disabilities. This in itself speaks volumes about the perceived importance of the issues. There is, however, some sparse coverage, and various reports show a fair amount of internal consistency.

The overall rate of employment for people with disabilities is high. A 1981 survey, done in conjunction with the International Year for Disabled Persons in Auckland, put the rate at 48 percent. Jack's estimate for the same year was 30 percent. At the time, the general population unemployment rate was around 10 percent.

For women with disabilities the rate is even higher. Jack's 1981 estimated rate of 38 percent is considered to be an understatement, even for that time. Shipley's 1982 study of women, employment and unemployment noted that the situation was worse for women with disabilities. They were significantly more likely to be unemployed than men with disabilities, and the contrast was even greater in relation to both women and men without disabilities.

The overall unemployment rate has increased considerably since 1982. Within this higher rate, unemployment for women with disabilities has remained around the top of the scale. Horsfield (1989) puts it, along with the rate for young and Maori women, as among the highest in the country. Unemployment is a major likelihood in the lives of most women with disabilities. One in three of the unemployed female job seekers in Shipley's study had a disability. Again, figures are unlikely to have improved since 1982.

One trend which suggests a partial explanation is restructuring in the economy, which has had a marked effect over recent years. In the public service, it has hit disproportionately hard at basic grade level. And since it is here that women with disabilities (those who are in public sector employment) are clustered, they are also likely to feel the effects most strongly.

Women with disabilities are most likely to find employment in the public sector. It has been, and arguably still is, the largest employing area for people with disabilities. These women's employment is likely to have been obtained at considerable personal cost. They will probably have horror stories to tell about getting there — stories about interview panels, inflexible job performance standards, personnel practices, a lack of access or equipment, pay and promotion, workmates' attitudes, and job evaluations. In short, the works.

In equal employment opportunities plans women with disabilities are part of a target group on at least two grounds. Target groups are those towards whom EEO policies are particularly aimed. This should, in theory, mean some advantage. But in reality, women with disabilities fall between two stools. Actions for women as a target group offer little for their particular needs; EEO actions for people with disabilities (which are still largely in the future indicative mode) offer little more.

Some of the difficulties for women with disabilities are reflected in a

State Services Commission report (Stone, 1986). Women with disabilities were, Stone found, very likely to be placed into a limited range of repetitive jobs, mainly clerical. They were to be found in only three job categories, while men with disabilities were in 23. Further, the jobs were concentrated at a basic grade level, none being above the third step. Men with disabilities attained senior gradings.

By 1989, there had been little appreciable change. In that year there was a public service wide census of disability (Burns *et al*). It found women with disabilities were still in a worse position than either men with disabilities, or both sexes without.

Seniority and grading were reflected in salaries. Most of the women (71 percent) were on the second lowest step of the pay scale, earning under $30,000. Only 41 percent of the men with disabilities earned at this level. This situation improved with time: 18 percent of both sexes with disabilities had been 11 to 15 years on the job, but 65 percent of the women with disabilities were still earning under $30,000. At the top end of the scale, the situation was similarly skewed. Only 4.5 percent of the women with disabilities earned over $40,000, while men with disabilities made up 21 per cent of those surveyed on that rate.

It is clear that there are a number of employment issues common to women with and without disabilities. But there is an additional factor at work: ableist discrimination. This is clearly seen in the topic of access. Access is commonly seen in terms of access to buildings, and wheelchair ramps. While this is undoubtedly important, it is not the subject's limits. There must also be access to transport, ongoing training, aids and equipment, facilities and information. All of these impact on the employee's ability to do the job and perform at the optimum.

In the 1988 survey, 20 percent of the respondents needed access to most of the above items, but 13 percent had experienced discrimination that made access to what was needed difficult to impossible. No sex breakdown on discrimination was done in the survey. Personal experience does suggest, though, that this would be more noticeable at lower grades, where the concentration of women with disabilities is most pronounced. People on more senior grades are listened to more and/or are more able to bring about the changes required.

The situation in the private sector is presently unverifiable. Some private employers are undoubtedly doing well, using good employment practices that benefit women and, particularly, people with disabilities. Others are using employment practices that discriminate against all people with disabilities, and impact particularly badly upon women with disabilities. The new Employment Equity Act, with its EEO requirements for some of the private sector group, may mean that both

practices and effects are more quantifiable than at present. But given the history of dilatory response to EEO (in respect of disability), women with disabilities will not be holding their breath.

The overall picture in employment for women with disabilities is consistently gloomy. Unemployment is likely. Any employment is likely to be in a limited range, with limited rates of pay, and few prospects of a career structure. The group's situation shows a consistent picture of discrimination.

Legislative and policy provision

When the question of legislative and policy provision is considered, women with disabilities are again in a position of disadvantage. Two examples from different areas show this. In the 1977 Contraception Sterilisation and Abortion Act (S.4), women (but not men) with intellectual disabilities can have contraception compulsorily administered. This is an outstanding example of the negative impact of legislation on women with disabilities; in this case there is actual specific sanction.

The other example is in a 1982 amendment to the 1975 Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act. There, financial assistance to get a car that is necessary to enable that person to work is available. By some curious logic, work is equated only with paid employment. Since women with disabilities are predominantly not in paid employment, the bias of the legislation is apparent. Another aspect of this is that it particularly disadvantages the women with disabilities who have no children. It appears that household management is not considered to be 'real work'.

There is little consideration in other legislation and policy provision. The State Sector Act, the Human Rights Commission Act, the Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act and EEO policies all impact on the situation, but none has any provision that speaks particularly to the needs of this group. Neither benign neglect nor active hindrance is a particularly useful response to a problem. Continued discrimination can cause pain and/or dissent, and is dysfunctional to society.

There are discriminations faced by women with disabilities in other areas; health, housing and language have not been covered here. Many are not yet ready to put a shape to their experience. Some others are now beginning to analyse their own situations, and are not happy to see people without disabilities telling them what it is that they are experiencing, and what it is that they should do. As in responses between feminist and anti-racist concerns, there is much potential gain from this. Women with disabilities are hoping to find that women without disabilities will support their moves to gain proper recognition, in a similar

way to the support many women with disabilities gave to the renaissance of feminism here, some twenty years ago.

In a society where all are interdependent, women with disabilities want to participate as fully as other groups. It is the author's contention that this will be facilitated by recognition of the issues by other sectors in society. This paper represents one step in that process.

Wendi Wicks works in the Justice Department's Equal Employment Opportunities Unit as the Disabilities Co-ordinator. Her interest in disabilities issues in relation to women springs from an experiential basis. Feminist thought has also contributed, and the whole has been focussed in policy studies at university.,

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Feminists in the Bureaucracy

Robin McKinlay

What does it mean to be a feminist and work in the government bureaucracy? Do feminist women in government jobs use their positions and influence to work for women's issues? Or is their feminism compromised by the bureaucratical state?

These questions were raised for New Zealand women by Jesvier Singh in two articles published in *Broadsheet* in October and November 1987. For many New Zealand women, this was their first encounter with the debate on the interface between feminism and the state, and for those working in the bureaucracy, it was an uncomfortable introduction.

The heading to the first of Singh's articles describes women in the bureaucracy as: 'bribed and corrupted by power, status, influence and money, spurred on by management hype', and she makes it clear that she doubts that: 'Feminists (are) really able to infiltrate and *subvert* the structures they work within' (Singh 1987a:12).

The assumption is clear. For a feminist to retain her integrity while working in a bureaucratic job, she must be working for feminist change, even if this is against the interests of the employer: she must be subversive. The conflict between feminism and the bureaucracy is a given. Bureaucratic structures based on hierarchy are accepted as an institutional framework which supports existing social arrangements

and which must be challenged in the interests of feminist change. Singh made it clear that in her view, most women found it difficult if not impossible to retain their feminist integrity in face of the constraints imposed by the bureaucratic structures, and the temptations and reward.

Singh was perhaps the first to apply to the New Zealand context the analysis which was being developed elsewhere of the confrontation between feminism and the bureaucracy. While Singh chose to address the issue at the personal level, the more considered, academic debate places this personal dilemma within a wider analysis of conflicts between the feminist movement and bureaucratic structures in both the state and the private sectors.

Theories on feminism and bureaucracy

This paper is an attempt to examine the interface between feminism and the bureaucracy at a personal level through the experience of ten feminist public servants. It takes a closer look at the role of feminists in bureaucratic jobs, and asks whether they are working for feminist change, what their strategies are for doing this, and whether their integrity as feminists is in fact put at risk.

Australian analysts such as Suzanne Franzway, Anne Summers, Marian Sawyer and Sara Dowse are concerned with the efficacy of the various strategies that have been used in their country to bring a women's perspective to policy development and political decision making. However, in their discussion of the different approaches that have been used (the women's advisory units at both state and federal levels, women's advisors in departments, the Office of the Status of Women and the Women's Budget Programme), they cannot avoid addressing the ambivalence or even hostility expressed about the women who work in these units by women in the feminist movement outside the bureaucracy:

> There has been spirited debate about the benefits to women generally of a privileged few obtaining well paid and generally high profile positions, about the ability of these women to represent all women and their willingness to place their careers at risk by arguing radical positions (Summers 1986:60).

It was in Australia that the term 'femocrat' was first coined to describe women who worked in these bureaucratic women's units, a term that, as Summers says, is not entirely neutral. She points out that while women in the women's units are accused by the feminist movement of being out of touch with women, of making money out of the plight of women as a whole, and of 'selling out' as they adjust to political and

bureaucratic realities, they are also hampered by being marginalised within the bureaucratic system, criticised by other bureaucrats as being 'client driven', and consequently have less credibility among those they seek to influence (Summers 1986:60-62). Thus the women who work in the women's units find themselves marginal to the bureaucratic structure and policy formation while charged with the task of changing both policies and, through affirmative action, the structure as well (Franzway 1986:53).

Franzway sees a tension for these women between becoming more central to the policy making arena, with the corollary of being to some extent co-opted by it and thus losing the critical edge of feminist critique, or remaining at the margin and therefore being less effective in making change.

It is tempting to link the ambivalence expressed towards 'femocrats' at the personal level with a broader analysis of the contradiction between the feminist critique of the capitalist state and the women's movement. Most of these Australian writers allude to this dilemma. For example, Franzway, in her article on feminists and the welfare state, is concerned to expose the fundamental contradiction facing women working for feminist change in a welfare state which supports women's continuing dependence as wives and mothers (Franzway 1986), while Sara Dowse teases out the implications of this contradiction for the Refuge Movement in Australia, and notes the hostility felt by feminists running women's refuge projects towards feminists working for the government (Dowse 1984:155).

But is the danger of compromise and co-option of the feminist bureaucrat merely a product of the political margin on which she finds herself, or is it the result of deeper structural imperatives?

Kathy Ferguson teases out the profound conflict between the bureaucratic structure and feminism in her study of the position of feminist women in private sector enterprise and welfare administration in the United States (Ferguson 1984). Basing her analysis on the theories of Foucault, she approaches the issues of bureaucratic control through the examination of language.

Ferguson's point is that the limits of discourse dictated within the bureaucracy provide a framework which constrains and conditions the behaviour and interaction of those within it. A hierarchy of direction is imposed, information flows are controlled, people are reduced to their functions within the organisation. Even those at the top are constrained: 'There are certainly positions of privilege but they stand within a context of universal domination' (Ferguson 1984:83).

Within the discourse of the bureaucracy, feminist discourse is not

heard, feminist values have no place. The message is clear. Once within the bureaucracy, you are part of a machine in which everyone is caught, and in which you are inevitably a part of the subtle exercise of power.

> The radical feminist hostility to bureaucracy is based on well founded, if not well articulated, opposition to the consequences of hierarchical domination for both individuals and the collective (Ferguson 1984:83).

The underlying question posed by all these writers is: is it worth trying? Can feminists survive in the bureaucracy with their values intact, and can they succeed in bringing about feminist directed change, or will they, and the movement they come from, be co-opted by the bureaucracy itself?

This question is framed by some writers as an element of the tension between liberal and radical feminist strategy. Kathy Ferguson describes it in terms of two streams of feminism:

> The feminist movement is divided internally, as are most major movements for social change, between those who are primarily interested in gaining access to established institutions and those who aim at changing those institutions (Ferguson 1984:4).

These two streams are the 'liberal' and 'radical' feminists:

> The struggles for equal status, for equal pay, for equal work and for admission into the more prestigious and lucrative careers, carried on primarily by liberal feminists are frequently identified in the popular media as representing the entire women's movement....
>
> The more radical voices within the women's movement, however, reject the exclusive focus on integration because they see the existing institutional arrangements as fundamentally flawed. It is this latter group that has made the bureaucracy an issue on feminist agendas (Ferguson 1984:4).

The writers identify these two strands of thinking with two separate and even hostile groups of women: the liberal feminists working within the system, and subject to the temptations and pressures towards co-option, elitism and personal success; and the radical feminists working in the community for meagre reward, with little or no access to decision making.

This image is to an extent confused by Ferguson's associated analysis of the strategies for women's success in the bureaucratic arena as it is depicted in the media, and in those 'how to succeed in management' books which teach women to lay aside women's values and behaviours and to value money and success and ask 'what's in it for me?' (Ferguson

1983:65). Ferguson links these paths to success with liberal feminist careers.

Linda Gordon, however, refutes this association of the 'new image of the liberated woman, complete with brief case, career, sex partners and silk blouse' with feminism. She says: 'This liberated woman is primarily the creation of the capitalist economy, not feminism. Moreover, she is a creature of the media, for there are few such women in reality' (Gordon 1982:50).

The issue is one of motive. Are successful women working only for themselves, and their own enjoyment of the rewards of success, or are they using their influential positions to work for the good of all women? The true feminist position must be the latter.

But even setting aside the issue of success, we are still left with the concept of a dichotomy between two different groups of women rather than two streams of thought. Added to this is the suggestion, usually implicit, but there none the less, that the radical group are ideologically sound, while the liberal analysis is flawed and their strategy is in danger of co-option. This suggestion is reinforced by the persuasiveness of Ferguson's argument about the constraints that bureaucratic process and bureaucratic discourse place on those who work in the bureaucracy, and the inevitability of the continuity of bureaucratic process even if liberal reformers tinker with the details.

While all the writers acknowledge that liberal feminists have achieved some notable successes in terms of women's equality within present social arrangements, they conclude that the liberal strategy of working within the bureaucracy can never achieve the broader social goals of feminism. Ferguson says:

> Feminism is not compatible with bureaucracy and like all forms of opposition it is endangered by too close contact with bureaucratic linguistic and institutional processes. If opposition can be rendered bureaucratic by the powerful it can be absorbed, integrated, and eventually rendered harmless. Bureaucracy can be resisted, but not on its own terms since they are terms that render opposition untenable (Ferguson 1984:180).

And Suzanne Franzway puts the dilemma even more explicitly in her discussion of 'the femocrat strategy':

> The consequence is a heavily weighted choice: either engage with the state, becoming assimilated, with political goals corrupted; or reject the state entirely. Seen in these terms, who would choose corruption? (Franzway, Court and Connell 1989:148).

Who indeed? But, we must ask, what is to be gained by this political 'holier than thou' attitude? Franzway goes on to ask: can the state be

ignored? Ferguson, in the final chapters of her book, concludes that: 'Feminism cannot simply turn its back on the existing public world because that world does not oblige us by leaving us alone', and adds: 'My point is not that no-one should ever turn to such channels, but that those avenues are inherently and severely limited in what they can accomplish' (Ferguson 1984:180).

This analysis places the feminist bureaucrat in an invidious position. Although she may be working hard in difficult circumstances to further feminist goals, her achievements will be seen as partial, and her feminist integrity questioned.

But is this an accurate representation of what happens? To those of us who work in the bureaucracy, does this analysis accurately reflect the situation we experience? I decided to test these theoretical conclusions against the strategies employed by feminist women working in the New Zealand public service bureaucracy. While recognising the tensions and contradictions outlined, I felt there were certain assumptions made about the motives and strategies of women who work in bureaucracies which oversimplified and to some extent distorted the situation. Suzanne Franzway quotes Hester Eisenstein as calling for a closer study of femocrats, since 'she believes that too little is known about the ethnography of how femocrats respond to the pressures of masculine bureaucracy' (Franzway 1989:142).

The following is a minor contribution to such an ethnography. I have interviewed ten women who identify themselves as feminists and who work in the public service. My intention has been to explore the strategies they employ to survive in their jobs, and to work for feminist change.

The study does not address the wider issue of broader structural strategies for introducing a women's perspective into policy making, such as women's units in government departments, or the work of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Nor am I concerned with Equal Employment Opportunities strategies. It would have been interesting to explore the issue of introducing feminist management styles, but my discussions with women showed me that this is another large area, worthy of a paper of its own.

This paper, then, begins to explore the extent to which the claims made by the theorists are true for feminist women working in the New Zealand government bureaucracy. It asks whether feminists in the public service do feel obliged to work for feminist change, and what their strategies are for bringing about change. Do they, for example, find themselves marginalised by their colleagues because of their feminist loyalties, like the feminists in the Australian women's

units described by Franzway? It asks whether the bureaucratic environment is, as Ferguson suggests, incompatible with feminist ideology, and whether feminists in the public service feel they are in danger of having their feminist values weakened or replaced by bureaucratic goals. It examines the validity of the 'liberal'/'radical' dichotomy proposed by Jesvier Singh, and the relationship between feminist bureaucrats and feminists in the community; and it looks at the relationship between feminism and a successful public service career.

The research supports the assumption that feminist bureaucrats bring a feminist agenda to their jobs, in that they try to ensure that a women's perspective is reflected in their work. For some, this means encouraging policies designed to enhance women's opportunities; for others, it means making sure that whatever the policies they are working on, women's needs are taken into account. The theory of the conflict between bureaucratic process and feminism is also supported. The women interviewed were all acutely aware of the power of what they called 'the system' and of the sometimes unequivocal, sometimes insidious pressure to conform to bureaucratic value systems. The danger of co-option suggested by the theorists is a real one, and is felt more strongly as women progress to seniority. Likewise, there is in some cases a very real opposition between feminists working in the bureaucracy and those in the community, but this is not, as the theorists suggest, a division along 'liberal'/'radical' lines. What the research found is that women move in and out of the bureaucracy, they maintain personal networks both outside and inside, and they may belong to radical feminist groups in the community while working at the same time in their bureaucratic jobs. 'Liberal' and 'radical' are experienced not as a classification of different groups of feminists, but as the polarised ends of the continuum of feminist values and ideals. The dichotomy that is experienced is between 'inside' the system and 'outside' in the community.

The element that is not mentioned by the theorists, but which emerged from the research, is women's awareness of the pressures and dilemmas of their situation. Ferguson suggests women are taken over and co-opted in spite of themselves. The reality encountered in the interviews was of women fully aware of the risk of co-option, and in a number of ways linking themselves back into feminist environments to counter this risk. The picture is one of fluidity rather than dichotomy, of women joined by feminist networks rather than working in isolation, and infiltrating the bureaucratic system to challenge it from within.

Who were the women in the study?

I selected for the study ten women from among my personal networks. All the women say that they think of themselves as feminists. The group covers a broad range of positions, including relatively junior policy analysts, middle management, and more senior women. Two of the women are (or have been) in positions of undeniable influence. While two of the women identified as working class, most of the group are middle class, predominantly Pakeha[1] women. I felt that women who were working for Maori issues would bring a more complex set of values and strategies to their work which would be more than I wanted to deal with in this small scale study. These women work or have worked for ten different government departments or organisations.

I chose women working in social policy areas, that is, in departments such as Health, Education, Social Welfare and so on, which are concerned with the government's role in ensuring a level of social justice. These are areas in the bureaucracy where there is at least the illusion that one is working for social equity and therefore might legitimately promote feminist reforms. Because these women were for the most part involved in providing policy analysis or policy advice, they were in positions where they might be expected to exert some influence.

What does policy work involve? A policy, in the public service, is the government's plan of action on a given issue. A minister will usually have a clear idea about what he or she wants to achieve within a given area, consistent with the broader framework of the government's policies as a whole, and will ask advisors in the relevant government department or ministry to bring together information on how that goal might be achieved. Take health, for example. A broad policy is that of reducing preventable deaths from cancer. The Minister of Health received advice from policy analysts that a reduction in smoking could be expected to reduce deaths from lung cancer, and at her request they developed the policies for reducing smoking that resulted in the Smoke Free Environments legislation.

Working in a policy area involves providing advice to the government, and is therefore a potential channel of influencing government decisions. The pay equity legislation is an example of the kind of policy feminists would be likely to support. If they were working on this policy they would try to ensure that the legislation was drawn up to the best advantage of women workers. There might of course be people with other agendas also providing advice, and women's arguments would be set against those of other interests. Government

restructuring opened up other areas for policy input. Feminists would probably have supported the establishment of women's units within government departments, for example, and equal educational opportunities areas within the new Education Ministry. Whatever the policy, a feminist approach can ensure that the advice includes an analysis of how women might be affected by it, and that the language used is not sexist.

The names of the interviewees have of course been changed. The women will be referred to as Margaret, Barbara, Sandra, Janet, Megan, Jocelyn, Lesley, Jo, Jane and Lisa.

How the research was done

I included my own experience in the public service as part of the data. Renate Klein in her essay on 'Feminist Methodology' (Bowles and Klein 1983:95) makes a case for a feminist methodology which breaks down the usual dichotomy between researcher and researched by the use of a new methodology in which researcher and researched 'move forward together'. While I recognise that my prior engagement with the literature means that my input cannot be analysed in the same way as that of the other women I spoke to, it is the knowledge base which has defined the questions to be examined, and it provides a base line against which I can compare what the other women say. I therefore included in the analysis my own responses to the open ended questions I asked. In addition, towards the end of most of the interviews, I shared my thinking with some of the women, and we discussed the strategies together, so that they had an input into the analysis.

I describe the methodology as ethnographic. It is based on a transformation of the ethnographer's traditional participant observation method. The basis of participant observation is a movement between engagement and reflection, as the ethnographer participates in the activities of the people studied, then withdraws to observe and reflect on what she has experienced, and on her reactions to that experience. Working in a familiar section of my own culture, my problem is to create enough 'distance' between myself and the familiar world in which I participate in my day to day work to be able to stand back and look beyond the surface in order to analyse it. To create this distance I use the formality of the semi-structured interview, which included questions on feminism and feminist goals, the relationship of a public service career to feminist goals and values, an appropriate role for feminists within the bureaucracy, involvement with women's groups in the community and ideas about liberal and radical feminism.

Working for change

The first issue to be addressed in the study was, did these women accept the assertion of Jesvier Singh and the other theorists that feminists working in the bureaucracy should be using their positions to promote feminist oriented change? Were they trying to 'subvert the system'? Their responses on this issue were surprisingly consistent.

All but one of the women interviewed see their feminism as a basis for action for change, although it was suggested that working for change was not a necessary precondition of being a feminist. Jo, the exception, said that she felt women should not necessarily take on responsibility for making change, it was enough to be a feminist in what you do.

The kind of change this implies depends on the women's definitions of what it means to be feminist. They associate feminism with a belief in the inequality of and oppression of women. The women come at this belief at different levels. For Margaret and Barbara, feminism is a question of the values you hold, your beliefs about oppression and discrimination, while Sandra sees it as a direction for living: 'The bottom line is to change things to make the world a better place for women.'

Janet also sees it as operating to direct her life, but meaning different things at different levels: in her personal life, it means living a 'woman centred' life, and at a political level, it means working for change. Jo said: 'It depends on your definition. Feminism is to do with process, not the achievements of individual women.'

Most of the women link feminism to other issues of social justice, such as racism and heterosexism. Lesley is particularly clear in her analysis:

> I call myself a lesbian feminist, which means to me that I see the patriarchal, monocultural, racist, sexist, homophobic, ablist. All of these issues come into it for me. If you are not in the power group, you are oppressed. Feminism is about changing that, making men as a group relinquish some of their power.

Sandra said: 'If it is a better place for women it will be a better place for everyone.' Barbara, whose job has a high public profile, uses the position to push for women's issues: 'Yes, I am working for change in my job. If not, I don't know what I am doing there.'

For others, feminism is concerned not so much with policy change as with changing or at least challenging the bureaucratic process. It is a perspective they bring to the routine tasks of their jobs. Jocelyn, for example, tries to include a women's perspective in the ministerial correspondence she drafts. Lisa said she always puts women first, and

that once in the past she actually lost a job through becoming involved in a women's issue.

Choosing a job

There is an assumption in the literature that feminists move into the bureaucracy in order to achieve feminist goals, and that if this possibility is compromised they should not be there (Franzway 1986:53). Is it possible for women to be so single minded?

All ten women in the study said their feminism influences the choices they make in their lives. For most, this includes not only the kind of work they chose to do, but how they go about doing that work. They move into places where they feel they can be effective as feminists, and move out if the job demands too much compromise.

Several women were quite explicit about having applied for jobs in which they felt they could work for change, or could learn about the bureaucracy. Lesley and Janet have a background in community work and have moved into the public service to learn how the public sector works so as to be more effective in working for change. Lesley said she sees it as training ground.

For others, the public service simply offered a job at a time when they needed employment. Jo sees the public service as offering her a more comfortable work environment than some of the jobs she has experienced previously, and she is cynical about the possibility of using it to bring about change.

The motives for this job choice are therefore mixed, and involve the need to make a living as well as ideological motives of working for change for women, although for several that was a stated issue. This suggests that it is simplistic to attribute a single feminist motive to women's participation in the bureaucracy, or to assume women in the bureaucracy are there because they believe in the effectiveness of the bureaucratic process. It is probably safe to assume, however, that (given a choice) feminist women will not choose to work in jobs where the output is totally inconsistent with feminist goals.

Ways of working

How then do women in the bureaucracy go about working for change? Are they able to be effective, and what are the constraints?

The issue of activists in the public service is one of divided loyalties: is the activity loyal to the department (her employer), or to her cause? The women responded on the assumption that their first loyalty was to women. The words that recurred in their responses were *integrity* and *compromise.* Their responses revealed a consistency of purpose, a

number of strategies and some recurring themes.

The women in more senior[2] positions were quite clear about their strategies. Barbara, whose job allows her to be quite influential, said she sees her role as 'always pushing the boundaries, testing the boundaries of the legislation'. She gave examples of situations where she had personally gone further than her job really would allow to speak out or promote women's issues. To Margaret, the issue was to gain credibility and therefore influence:

> ...to do a job well and with integrity. Sometimes that actually means having to sit on your hands about the way you think and that includes your feminist values. You have to choose when to use the respect you have gained to fight for certain things. You can only win a few, so you do a good job, earn respect and zero in on a few issues. The fellows get turned off quickly if you keep harping on about women.

This approach could be described as a 'camouflage tactic'. You hide your activist agenda by working hard to gain respect from the organisation and then push for issues from within. To some extent, you are a 'double agent'. But Margaret also spoke of her awareness of co-option. There is a danger that if you disguise yourself with the values of the organisation, something of those values will rub off on you. This approach can be very effective for specific policy issues but has a high cost to the participant.

Margaret described another tactic that operates at this level: 'to caucus with other feminists so there is a combined set of arguments'. She said this occurs when there appears to be an opening for certain policy issues and feminist women from several departments come together to push it.

> It is not usually a deliberate strategy, but you use your chance, and get other women and together present a nice set of arguments for the case... it is done at a tacit level, almost unspoken, certainly not prearranged. It is mostly a very effective strategy.

Women with less direct influence on policies work in a less focused way to bring a feminist perspective to the often entrenched sexism of the workplace. Janet spoke of her experience in one very sexist work environment where her role was clear. She challenged the sexism in the institution. Her strategy was:

> ...to be very clear about where I was coming from and how far I was prepared to go in terms of my own values, and where I was prepared to challenge to keep my own integrity. It was easier as it was such a conservative organisation there was room to challenge, and they were not totally resistant to change.

Now in a less sexist social policy ministry, Janet recognises that the criticism of women outside the public service is part of the dynamic for change:

> I don't feel threatened by those women outside who say we aren't doing enough. They are a totally necessary part of us achieving change. They create the space in which we can move. We have to be clear the government won't always come up with what we want. It is part of the pincer movement between the pressure within and the pressure without.

To this model of change through dual pressure, she adds the dimension of women networking at all levels of government: 'Another part of the pincer movement is having women at all levels of the bureaucracy, in cabinet, advising, and right through'.

Janet uses this approach quite explicitly in her present work. Part of her strategy is to raise the awareness of women in the community on a particular issue she is working on through seminars and workshops, to stimulate a demand for change which will provide the climate for the introduction of new policy.

Sandra spoke of the constraints she experienced in trying to bring her ideals into her work: '...trying to keep your values, measuring things against those values, but sometimes having to tone them down to get things through.' Her practical strategy was to give support to other women, and to use women's networks and women's processes whenever she could:

> For me there was always the dilemma whether to work inside or outside the system. I chose to work inside because I feel you are in a position to change things. The idea is to be in a high enough position to work formally and informally with women outside.

She described her strategy of information-sharing to keep women outside the bureaucracy informed on important issues, a strategy that Barbara also used.

Sandra remarked wryly that she had not been successful in reaching a sufficiently senior level to be as effective as she would like. In the light of what the other women have said, it could be suggested that one reason for this was that she was too open about her motives, that she did not use the 'camouflage tactics' employed by Margaret, and therefore did not earn sufficient trust within the organisation to be promoted.

I asked all the women whether they were active in women's groups outside the bureaucracy. Sandra is one of several who are involved with lobby groups or activist groups in areas that relate to their work. Their strategy is to network with women through those groups, share information and help to bring pressure to bear on the bureaucracy from

outside as well as from within. I call this the 'foot in both camps' strategy. It is allied to the 'pincer movement' approach described above, and it is a strategy that must be pursued with discretion. The danger is similar at an individual level to the danger Franzway describes as facing women's units in government: if one is identified too closely with community activism, one's credibility within the bureaucracy and therefore one's chances of being effective for change in one's job, or everyone's access to information, is reduced.

For some of the women, working according to feminist principles is in itself an appropriate role in that it challenges the existing system. For Lesley it is a matter of 'keeping the issues visible, not letting women's issues be silenced'. For Jane and for Jocelyn, it is a day to day challenge. The policy work they produce or critique is screened in terms of their feminist values, and they offer an internal challenge to the system. This could be described as a strategy of infiltration.

Women operating at different levels use different strategies for working for change. Those in more senior positions have more chance of having an effective influence on actual policies, but they must take great care to preserve their credibility, and in doing so, may appear to be co-opted to those outside. They themselves may even feel they are compromised. Those in less high profile positions may choose to work with women outside, sharing information and strategies, but care must be taken not to compromise the possibility of effectiveness by losing credibility. At both levels, networking and solidarity with other feminist women, both inside and outside, is important. Sandra's policy of supporting women in the workplace is a way of strengthening those networks. The strategy of screening work in terms of feminist aspirations, challenging that which does not comply, and of keeping women's issues visible, is open to women at all levels.

A feature of all these strategies is what could perhaps be called marginality. Feminists are working at the edge, pushing the boundaries of the bureaucracy, pushing the margins of what is legal, what is acceptable or accepted, challenging the behaviour and language used within the system, and straddling the boundary between bureaucracy and community. They share a feeling of risk, sometimes of isolation, and may be exposed to criticism from both sides.

What is achieved?

Are these efforts successful in achieving any change? The answer must be that they are, but that the degree of change is usually less, or not as complete, as the women involved or women in the community may have wished. The legislation for abortion, for example, is criticised by

feminist women who resent the restraints it imposes on women's choice, yet without the work of feminists within the system it might never have been passed at all. Likewise, the legislation on pay equity might have been stronger, but without the work of feminist bureaucrats, it might have also have offered women much less. The work done by feminist bureaucrats, the arguments won or lost over each issue, are invisible to those outside. Feminists in the public service may work hard to achieve what appear to those outside to be small gains, even compromises.

The women in the study recognised that even the small gains they made were often at the cost of some compromise to their feminist beliefs, and that the goals they were seeking were diminished by a 'realistic' understanding of bureaucratic possibilities. The question must be asked, are these real gains, or are the compromises part of bureaucratic co-option of feminism?

The danger of co-option

The theorists see co-option as a major risk facing feminist bureaucrats. The central question in their arguments is whether feminists remain in the bureaucracy with their values intact. Kathy Ferguson suggests they will inevitably be taken over by the bureaucratic values and ways of thinking.

The women in the study were asked whether they felt working in the bureaucracy had had an effect on their feminist ideals and values. Their responses are revealing, and to some extent bear out Ferguson's theory. The words *co-operation, compromise* and *strategy* recur. They are all aware of the danger of co-option , and of the compromises their jobs require them to make, but they also have strategies for opposing the pressure to compromise. This awareness of the danger and the active approach to avoiding it is not reflected in the theoretical analysis. There is also an awareness of a need to understand how the bureaucracy works, and a bureaucratic job can be seen as an opportunity for learning.

Margaret put it most clearly: 'You can't be a theoretical feminist. You see things from the male view as well. To an extent you are co-opted. But you learn strategies to bring about feminist goals'. For Sandra, working in the bureaucracy meant 'learning to compromise and get things through the system'. She recognised she also learnt a lot about 'how power works', and talks of herself as naive before this learning. Jocelyn too said: 'Now I understand how power works'. Lesley said:

> I can't be as radical in my actual work as I was outside. There are lots of constraints in the public service... certain norms and values and

day to day things — you can't survive as a radical feminist if you don't compromise a bit.

Most of the women recognised working within these constraints as being to some extent co-opted. Jocelyn said: "I don't think it has touched my ideals, just my perspective. My aims are the same, even if I get knocked off course sometimes'. But there is a recognised difference between the perspective learned within the bureaucracy and that of feminists in the community, which can sometimes emerge as a conflict of interests. Barbara said the public service has taught her to be more aware of the restrictions, of what is and is not possible, and she talked of feminists outside the bureaucracy who 'push so hard the defences go up. In her experience too much activist pressure from women in the community can actually prevent women in the bureaucracy from achieving change at all.

The principal strategy that is used to oppose pressures to compromise was awareness: 'As long as you are aware, you know what is happening, then you can say "I've gone too far"' (Lisa). This awareness is fostered by keeping in touch with feminist ideals through other feminist women, and maintaining a feminist critique of what occurs in one's job. Networking with other feminists both in and outside the bureaucracy and belonging to feminist groups are ways of keeping a critical edge to one's analysis.

So for most of the women the public service is an experience of learning about constraints. It has made them 'more realistic'. Their understanding of the bureaucratic process has limited their expectations of possible change, so that they see the process of change as enormous and are content with small gains. To an extent, Ferguson's analysis of the constraints of bureaucratic discourse are borne out. Expectations do become more limited as the extent of what is possible is bureaucratically defined. But to the extent that they are aware of what is happening, and actively work to maintain their feminism, these women resist complete co-option. Megan's view is perhaps revealing. She said the public service had made her more cynical and realistic, that she had lost her idealism.

If the bureaucratic process does act to narrow the vision and reduce the perceived possibilities for change, this co-option occurs within a wider context of feminist criticism from outside the bureaucracy which, although frustrating, serves (as Janet says) to remind those in the bureaucracy of the real breadth of women's aspirations and to give them the space to push for yet more change.

If we go back to Ferguson's analysis of the constraints of bureaucratic discourse, we could suggest that as long as these women retain their

ability to use feminist discourse, and remain, so to speak, 'ideologically bilingual', they can use one discourse to critique their involvement in the other, and so retain sufficient of their integrity as feminists.

Liberals and radicals

The conclusion that the bureaucratic experience does lead to a certain compromise of feminist ideals might at first suggest a confirmation of the dichotomy suggested by Jesvier Singh, between 'liberal' feminists within the bureaucracy and 'radical' feminists in the community. To explore the extent to which this is true, the women were asked to describe what feminism and the definitions 'liberal' and 'radical' feminist mean to them. In discussing these issues, liberal was defined as seeking equity for women within the present social structures, and radical as seeking structural change to achieve feminist goals.

Some of the women spoke of their ideas of the goals of feminism. All went further than the 'liberal' feminist aim as stated in Ferguson, of 'gaining access to established institutions' (Ferguson 1984:4). Their ideas vary from an end to discrimination — 'A society where there are so many women in decision making positions that we no longer need a Ministry of Women's Affairs or anti discrimination legislation' (Barbara) — to a more equitable society for everyone — 'Social justice is what I'm interested in and feminism has a lot to do with social justice. Feminism gives you a good perspective for people who are not in the dominant culture' (Sandra) — and a recognition that to combat sexism required not only structural change but cultural change as well.

Words that recur in these responses are *choices, power* , and *decision making*. The aim is to achieve change that offers women more access to power and decision making and offers options. This vision is far broader than a desire for equality within present structures.

It is interesting to note that Barbara and Margaret, the women with most experience in positions of influence, express views indicating a more 'liberal' approach, in that they have faith that women in senior positions would bring about change for all women (while acknowledging the women concerned must be 'the right women' (i.e. feminist women). Janet and Sandra's visions are more radical, in that they look for a change in social and even cultural structures. Women whose jobs are lower down the hierarchy express more cynical views about the possibility of the present structures delivering feminist goals.

These responses suggest that women's feminist aspirations are far more subtle and complex than the liberal/radical dichotomy would allow, in that they encompass issues of discrimination against other groups than women. They reveal that the thinking of women who may

appear to be liberal feminists in terms of the theoretical analysis may in fact be far from liberal.

The women are familiar with concepts of liberal and radical feminism, and recognise them as describing a meaningful difference in approach to change. But the dichotomy many returned to in describing their experiences is not 'liberal and radical' but 'inside and outside'. The imagery of the bureaucracy that is reflected in their speech is of an objectified entity with boundaries that can be crossed, and with different sets of rules operating within and without. It is that dichotomy which is crucial to the understanding of their experience.

In discussing the liberal and radical approaches, I found that all these women have the ability to see both sides of the issue. Most have lived and worked in the community at some stage, and have come into the bureaucracy after the experience of working for feminist change in the community. They see the importance of retaining both perspectives, and the danger of losing the community perspective if they are isolated from it for too long.

When I asked if they identified with either liberal or radical feminism, their answers were ambivalent. Barbara is perhaps the most clearly liberal:

> I would be a liberal.... I've always worked within the structures. There are some structures I'd destroy, but not the basic structures of parliament. I believe in the democratic structure. I think we need a bureaucracy.

But she recognises the importance of both sides:

> The goals of radical and liberal feminists are not different. There is a creative tension between them over means but both share the goals of feminism. Each needs the other.

Sandra on the other hand said she would identify with the radical viewpoint as she is 'totally discontented with existing structures'. Janet sees herself as moving between the two:

> In terms of analysis about what the state is I tend to agree with radical feminism. In terms of how one changes the state my tactics are probably more of a liberal feminist nature.

This is because she looks for change by working slowly from within rather than a revolutionary sudden change. She talks of the 'dripping tap model', wearing down the opposition bit by bit, working for change through the generations. Lesley too saw it as flexible:

> I don't like dichotomies. I think of feminism as a continuum with the liberals on the right and the radicals on the left. It depends on who I am with. I wouldn't be working here if I wasn't flexible.

The 'liberal'/'radical' contrast was more usefully thought of as the

contrast between two strands of thinking rather than between two groups of people. Instead of choosing to identify with one or the other, the women tend to select elements from either, or to place themselves as if on a continuum ('more of a liberal'). This analysis suggests that, at the level of engagement with the bureaucracy, liberal and radical feminism should be seen as the ends of a continuum of ideas which help to describe the strategies and positions of feminists working for change, whether they are working within the bureaucracy or outside it, and that the more realistic opposition here is that of 'inside' and 'outside' the bureaucracy. The inside/outside dichotomy is felt to be more of an oppositional situation. While some of the women work with groups in the community, they are aware of a difference of approach in these groups and in their bureaucratic jobs:

> I'm learning a whole new way of thinking about the world, economics and party politics. I'm in great conflict with that view. I go back to my groups and that's where I'm really me (Lesley).

Janet's description of a pincer movement, in which pressure from outside creates a context for policy change from within, is a pattern which several of the women recognised. But most too could recall situations when women-oriented policies that were being carefully nurtured from within were placed at risk or even thwarted by inappropriate or ill timed pressure from groups outside.

The inside/outside dichotomy can also be experienced as a sometimes painful conflict between two feminist groups, and in these situations that liberal/radical opposition finds some reality. Jane encountered this conflict in her first public service position when, as secretary to an advisory committee on women, she encountered criticism and even hostility from feminists in the community. She said:

> It raised all those questions about whether you can work in the system as a feminist or only outside. I came on this head on. I came up against the cynicism and disillusionment of women towards the bureaucracy, their disbelief that any feminist women could work in the system.

Feminism and success

Finally, how do the experiences of the women in the study relate to the stereotype of the feminist woman who works her way up the hierarchy in a 'successful' bureaucratic career, which is suggested in the 'how to succeed' literature? While there are no doubt women who do fit this description, it does not appear typical of women who identify as feminists. None of the women in the study fitted the stereotype. Rather, their employment histories are characterised by

mobility, flexibility and lateral shifts.

Some of these shifts are motivated by the conflict between feminist values and bureaucratic pressures. One woman has chosen to change from an influential policy position to a job outside the government bureaucracy. She told me her decision had been influenced by what the policy position had been doing in her life, how she was losing touch with friends and family, even though she had been in a strong position to influence policies for the benefit of women. She summed up her dilemma:

> I didn't like what my past job was doing to me, but because I had a particular role to play in guiding an important policy for women I was keen to do all I could to influence it. I was prepared to put a hell of a lot in until I thought it was secure.

Another motive for a change of job is to move to a more congenial work place. Sandra had found herself in one very sexist environment where the organisation was so resistant to change both at the policy level and the organisational level that her only course of action was to leave.

While several of the women in the study are, or have been, in management positions, the business of managing other staff in the bureaucracy poses another set of dilemmas for the feminist. The bureaucracy is organised on hierarchical lines, in which decision making moves from the top to the bottom. Feminist process is based on democratic consensus. While some feminist managers try to bring a more open, egalitarian management style into the jobs, their ability to do this is limited, and they put themselves at some risk, because as managers they are held responsible for what their staff do. When pressure is placed on them from those they are responsible to, they may be forced to act in an uncongenially authoritarian way. At least one of the women in this study chose to move out of management because of the stress this kind of conflict caused her. The introduction of feminist management styles into bureaucratic workplaces is a topic worthy of a study of its own, and is an area of great interest for several of the women in the study.

Feminist managers are felt to be rare. Jane said she had yet to find a role model of a feminist manager. The women who moved into senior management positions in her work place did not appear to her to support the women who worked for them, yet management would appear to be an appropriate career route for a feminist who wants to influence the direction of an organisation. She had observed that some woman managers were in fact particularly hard on the women responsible to them, and she speculated that this might be because they felt themselves to be under pressure to conform from the rest of the or-

ganisation, because they were women in a male dominated environment. She speculated that this is perhaps a reflection of the way the bureaucracy exerts its own pressure to protect its own integrity.

Feminist strategies for success and survival

The issues I have discussed in this paper must be understood in the context of the public service. The government departments and institutions in which these women work are first and foremost their employers. As an employer, a department expects a high degree of loyalty in return for the salary paid. There are demands for accountability, and it is accountability to the employer, the Minister, rather than to the public. If they are to retain their jobs, feminists in the bureaucracy must act consistently within the constraints of those jobs. If they want to achieve change, their effectiveness is limited by those constraints.

This study has revealed a number of strategies for working within those constraints, strategies for personal survival as feminists within a value system that puts feminist values at risk, and strategies for introducing change. Survival strategies included mobility, having 'a foot in both camps', belonging to a women's support group or having strong women's networks for support. Change strategies are based in networking with other feminists both inside the bureaucracy and in the community, sharing information and working together. There is also what I have called the camouflage tactic, of earning credibility within the organisation and gaining enough seniority and respect to push through policy for women which can result in infrequent but major successes. And there is the tactic of screening and challenging the day to day work according to feminist principles, bringing about small shifts from within. Feminists in the bureaucracy are to some extent double agents, bringing hidden agendas to their work.

Different strategies apply in different situations. Women in more senior positions have to be more discreet and constrained abut their feminist agendas, as the higher up the organisation one goes, the more trust and responsibility the organisation places on one. But one has proportionately more chance to promote women-oriented policies. This is the level at which the tactic of caucusing across departments, seeing an opening for a policy issue and taking the chance to push it, may occur. Those in less senior positions can be more overt about their feminist values, but their influence on major policy issues is likely to be less. Women at this level work to influence their organisations from within, criticising sexist behaviour and sexist language in official documents, and trying to ensure the policy issues they are working on are free from discrimination against women.

This is a very different picture from that presented in Jesvier Singh's article, of women 'bribed and corrupted by power' and unable to infiltrate and subvert the structures they work within. Among the very small group included in this study there are women who have moved out of powerful and well paid jobs for the sake of integrity, women who have lost their jobs over women's issues, women who bend the rules to share information, and women who seek to bring a feminist analysis to everything they do, treading a fine line between loyalty to their employer and loyalty to the women's cause. The stereotype conjured up by Singh is not of feminist women at all, but of the 'liberated women' Linda Gordon refers to, whom she suggests are a product of the media and of the capitalist economy (Gordon 1982).

What is achieved by feminist bureaucrats?

So, to return to the theoretical problems posed in my introduction: if we relate the finding of these interviews to Ferguson's conclusion about the constraints of bureaucratic discourse and the limits of trying to bring about meaningful change from within, her findings are to an extent borne out. The bureaucratic experience does impose limits on the possible, and even major gains from within look like mere tinkering at the edges when compared with the changes that women's equality really demands.

But this does not imply that this field of endeavour is not useful. A theory for change expressed by several of these women was of a double front, Janet's 'pincer movement' in which change is the result of pressure both inside and outside the bureaucracy. This process can easily backfire, however, if pressure from 'outside' is ill timed or inappropriate, and the situation is often experienced by all involved as one of bitter conflict rather than co-operation. It is possible to avoid such conflict when information is shared between those within and those outside, and when strategies can be planned together, but there is always a danger that the idealism of feminists in the community will make it harder for them to accept the constraints imposed on those within the bureaucracy, and accept the compromises and small gains as true feminist achievements.

The danger of personal co-option is real and recognised by the women. Protection from complete co-option is found in the retention of feminist values, which enables women to analyse their own situation, to be aware of what is happening to them. How often we hear feminist women working in bureaucratic situations talk of coming to women's conferences or gatherings to 'recharge their feminist batteries', that is, to sharpen their feminist critique and find support for their feminist views.

The ability to be self reflexive is the result of keeping one's feminist analysis clear even when participating in the bureaucratic discourse, that is, being 'bilingual' in terms of each sub-culture. The danger of co-option lies in losing sight of the feminist critique.

Franzway suggests a dilemma in which proximity to the centre, that is to power and influence, is associated with losing the edge of feminist critique, while remaining marginal means having a clearer analysis but less power for change. This study suggests that this dilemma is as true for the individual as it is for the women's units with which she is concerned. Being nearer 'the top' means having to appear more credible within the organisation, and having less spare time for involvement in those activities which 'recharge the feminist batteries'.

The situation for feminists working in the bureaucracy is therefore one subject to pressures and tensions, but not, I believe, one that is untenable. Changes *can* be made — small changes when compared with overall feminist aspirations, but often large in their impact on women's lives. When feminism works across the boundaries of the bureaucracy, it can exert pressure for change on the whole structure. While this double pressure can appear and even be experienced as conflict between those within and those outside, it is a necessary if painful part of the overall process for change.

Notes

1 One of the women is part Maori and is also committed to furthering Maori goals, but having been brought up in the European New Zealand culture, she says her dominant thinking is feminist, and she responded to the study in terms of her feminism.

2 The terms 'senior', 'middle ranking', 'junior' etc are used here in a relative sense. The women I have described as being in senior positions were in management and/or advisory jobs near the top of departmental hierarchies where they had an influence on the advice that went out from their department, including advice prepared by others. Women in 'less senior' positions had more levels of hierarchy between themselves and departmental management through which their advice was channelled, but were also supervising the work of some other staff. The most junior women in the study were still offering policy advice, but under more supervision from senior officers, and were not managing the work of other staff.

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Women and Young Children Gain a Foot in the Door

Anne Meade

Introduction

Rhonda Sharp and Ray Broomhill say that 'the fact that women wield so little power in the economy means that women's issues have only a toehold on the political agenda' (1989:20). I want to examine the process whereby women got not a toe, but a foot in the door in 1988 and 1989 on some issues of vital concern for them. I will be examining the early childhood policies contained in *Before Five* (1988) and the associated increased funding as a case study. *Before Five* is the statement of Labour Government policy for early childhood services in New Zealand. (Another example which fits the pattern I shall describe is the pay equity legislation.)

Early childhood education is regarded by New Zealanders as very important for the well-being of families and children. That has been the case particularly since the second world war. The evidence is to be found in the countless hours of voluntary contribution to establish kindergartens, to fundraise and to run every aspect of playcentres, and to

support community childcare centres, especially since the second wave of the women's movement. More recently, Te Kohanga Reo has followed a similar pattern, with a huge amount of unpaid support being provided by whanau, hapu and iwi. Now it is the turn of Pacific Island communities. All of the above has mostly been women's work (Cook, 1985; Irwin, 1990).

As early childhood services have almost always been initiated by women, promoted by women, used by women and worked in by women (Cook, 1985) and, in political life, women tend to exist in different levels and places from men, early childhood concerns are seldom, if ever, high on the political agenda. The major topics of concern that women wanted considered by the policy-makers in the 1980s were:

— the restricted access to early childhood services
— the different treatment of care and education services
— inadequate and inequitable funding of services
— quality early childhood services

Women believed that solutions to these problems would go a long way towards liberating women, as well as improving the quality of education for our preschoolers. The reality was that it was the educational arguments which were persuasive. The benefits to women were of secondary consequence to decision-makers.

Access

The debates promoted mainly by women in the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s were to do with how to increase and resource the number of preschool places that the community wanted in order to improve accessibility. There was a growing awareness that there were class and race inequalities in access to early childhood services. Throughout that period, governments of the day were, in effect, restricting the expansion of higher cost, more affordable services because they controlled the quota of kindergarten teachers and new kindergarten buildings. Other services, such as playcentre and Te Kohanga Reo, made sure they were less fettered by state control, but had to rely on voluntary work on a large scale to offer affordable services to low income families.

The care and education dichotomy

Peggy Koopman-Boyden and Claudia Scott (1984) saw two roles for the state vis-a-vis children: economic support and nurturance. A close examination of the state's relationship with New Zealand early childhood services indicates that in the nurturance role, traditionally a distinction has been made between the care and education elements. Services classified as education, such as playcentre and kindergarten, were

accepted and funded more generously than services for the care of children, which were seen as a 'welfare' rather than a social service. As well, care has been seen as belonging in the private sphere. This separation of care and education and the shortage of state funding for childcare has enabled men to maintain women in the role of homemaker.

The Fourth Labour Government was one of the first governments in the Western world to recognise the falsity and harmful nature of the distinction between care and education. It moved childcare services under Education in 1986, merged the training of childcare workers and kindergarten teachers from 1988 and in 1990 set up a funding system which will progressively increase childcare funding to the same level as that given to kindergarten children. Thus, the care/education dichotomy is breaking down. It would seem to be an idea whose time had come.

In all there have been five committees of inquiry on early childhood care and education set up by Ministers of Education and Social Welfare or Cabinet: the Bailey and Hill committees, which reported in 1947 and 1971; the Social Advisory Council (1985); the Te Kohanga Reo review team and the Cabinet Social Equity Committee working party on early childhood care and education (the Meade Committee), both of which reported in 1988. In addition, the Hon. Russell Marshall used the mechanism of a forum on early childhood care and education in 1985 to consider problems and possibilities in the field.

The Bailey committee (1947) rejected support to day nurseries, thus indicating that the place of childcare was on the 'underside' of the early childhood education movement (Cook, 1985), in the post-war era. The government of the day accepted that advice. Instead, what was to have happened was an expansion of sessional preschool **education** places, and a gradual move to the state taking over as the direct provider of preschool education. A change of government, then the post-war 'baby boom' straining government resources, averted the implementation of the state-as-provider recommendation. It dropped out of sight thenceforth.

The Hill committee's recommendations (1971) were largely accepted by the Third Labour Government, 1972-75. The model was that the state would continue to support, and encourage improvement in, voluntary organisations which provide sessional preschool education. These services were given increases in financial and advisory support in a variety of ways. However, only encouragement was to be given to the development of day care centres for parents 'with special needs'. The committee directed this recommendation at the government and the 'independent sector'. Specific mention was made of encouraging employer-provided day care services.

The first government help to childcare did occur in that era. However, it came in the form of fees subsidies to parents. By so doing, 'childcare = welfare' was confirmed.

The transfer to responsibility for childcare administration from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education in 1986 and the decision to provide, from 1988, three year integrated training courses for early childhood teachers who would work in kindergartens and in childcare centres were important steps in ensuring that the care-education dichotomy was dismantled. These policy changes have been significant for children, because it is expected now that children in childcare will all receive an educational programme similar to a kindergarten programme. (I might add that many were doing so all along.)

Funding and quality

Once New Zealand became a world leader in removing the distinction between care and education, the focus for action intensified on funding issues. Childcare centres were closing because the Government contribution was too low and parent fees (often over $100 per week per child) were too high.

Since 1982, Maori people of all ages, particularly women, have given their all to establishing and running kohanga. Te Kohanga Reo gathered resources from many sources, but some were rather insecure. Government grants were insufficient to fund the expansions and maintain existing kohanga, so the Te Kohanga Reo National Trust devoted most state funding from various sources to training and support purposes. The majority of their staff did not get paid. They too needed more funding, and more secure funding, from government.

Funding issues became intertwined with **quality** issues after the visit of Dr David Weikart in 1987. Weikart heads the Ypsilanti Preschool Project in Michigan, where a longitudinal study has demonstrated lasting social and educational gains for the preschool 'graduates'. He stressed that funds spent on early childhood care and education have positive cost benefits, but only where quality programmes are run. That coupling of quality and funding was made explicit in 1989 by those in the early childhood sector when they campaigned for funds to support the *Before Five* policies.

The Picot and Meade committees' recommendations (1988) provided the Government with a mechanism for setting and checking the quality of programmes (the charter) in return for more funding for early childhood services.

It is remarkable that the Fourth Labour Government set up two committees (the Meade committee and the Te Kohanga Reo review

team) to examine the early childhood sector, and even more remarkable that funding was increased by 125 percent in times of great economic constraint. Capitalist interest groups of the libertarian-right persuasion were pressuring Ministers and government departments to cut government expenditure. Moreover, they favoured a deregulated environment which reduced capital and/or operating costs of early childhood managements. The ideological struggle between Roger Douglas (then Minister of Finance) on the side of libertarian-right monetarist economic policy, and David Lange (then Prime Minister and Minister of Education) on the side of social services where needed was building up. As those in favour of monetarist economic policies had no need of women's labour because unemployment rates were high, they had no interest in childcare places.

Revealing the biases

In addition, academic discourses have been largely silent about early childhood care and education in the 1980s. At times academics can be quite influential in having problems and/or solutions placed on the political agenda. But senior academics in this country have seldom been vocal advocates for early childhood education for some years, since the passing of Professors Clem Hill and David Barney. The very few university lecturers who teach early childhood education are also teaching and researching in other areas.

Scholars have concentrated on the public education system. But that begs a question— why concentrate only on the public education system? Non-public education in this country needs close examination as well. By non-public education, I mean early childhood care and education, non-formal and community education, as well as private education in the schools sector. Does it have something to do with how much money is spent on public and non-public education? If so, what is the hidden message in that?

The government allocates 0.01 percent of Vote Education to CLANZ —the group that allocates funds to non-formal education providers. The allocation of Vote Education spent on early childhood education in 1988/89 was $69,869 million, 2 percent of Vote Education.[1]

Feminist analysis leads me to believe that both the low expenditure on early childhood and the relative lack of academic support in the 1980s has been because early childhood care and education is within the women's world (May, 1985). Theodore Marmor, writing on social policy, says that policy areas that are 'outside the life of governmental politics... are often very important. They are important ... because the biases of a system are revealed in what is *not* done just as much as by

what *is* done' (1983:38). He goes on to comment that 'who does *not* get what and how' requires studying.

Helen May (Cook) is a New Zealand early childhood scholar who has not stayed silent about who does *not* get the 'goodies' (and she has tried to ensure that early childhood care and education is visible in books on education policy (1985, 1990)). Her explanation of the silence is that men control the public sphere, while women are traditionally seen to have a place only in the domestic sphere.

Given all of the above, the question is: Why did early childhood care and education become politically salient in the 1980s? The final part of this paper is devoted to an analysis of this question.

Early childhood care and education on the political agenda

John Kingdom (1984), in a major study of public policy in the United States, provides a useful framework for my analysis of policy making.[2] His key concepts are agendas, alternatives and decisions. The definition of agendas should be explained further:

> The agenda... is the list of subjects or problems to which government officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention at any given time. ... The *governmental* agenda [is] the list of subjects that are getting attention, and the *decision* agenda [is] the list of subjects within the governmental agenda that is up for active decision (Kingdom 1984:3-4).

Once on agendas, a set of alternatives are considered — some more seriously than others. The factors which affect agenda setting and specification are:

— the participants, and
— the processes (problems, policy influences and politics).

The theoretical basis for this paper is that of socialist feminism, but I intend to take a different slant from that commonly used in socialist feminist analyses of the role of the state. Most analyses have tended to focus on the state's activities that maintain women's subordination (Sharp and Broomhill, 1989, p.20), whereas what I will do is examine a policy shift which has benefited women. Socialist feminist analyses also often dwell on the effects of capitalism and patriarchy when considering the state's relationship to women. These are factors in my analyses, but I am going to concentrate more on the range of pressures that were brought to bear on the Fourth Labour Government so that early childhood was placed on the governmental decision agenda. The policies resulted in social and economic benefits to women, as well as educational gains for preschoolers in Aotearoa.

The first point to note is that early childhood care and education was on the Fourth Labour Government's political agenda from day one. The 1984 Labour Party manifesto contained promises about the early childhood sector in both the education and women's sections.

To demonstrate that the Government was keeping early childhood issues on its agenda, and to obtain guidance from the diverse and complex early childhood sector, the then Minister of Education, Russell Marshall, convened a forum in Parliament in December 1985. The participants who joined the Minister were some other members of parliament, academics, and representatives from all organisations in the early childhood sector. Knowledge and perspectives were shared, pressures were applied and some ideas gelled. A range of solutions to the issues of access, care/education, funding and quality were explored, and consensus viewpoints were formed and advocated.

After this forum came confirmation that childcare would be administered by the Department of Education, and the decision to train kindergarten teachers and childcare workers in the same course. Thus, in 1986 early childhood care and education made it onto the government's decision agenda.

An important factor was the participants, mainly women in positions of influence— in Parliament (more women elected than ever before), in the Labour Party, in trade unions and as Director of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Education. The analysis of childcare issues in the Social Advisory Council report (1985) contributed to politicians' understanding of the problems.

In 1987, however, it appeared that early childhood care and education had again moved off the decision agenda at a point where not all the expected steps were completed. Those in the sector were concerned. Without more equitable funding:

— the three-year trained early childhood graduates would all apply for kindergarten jobs where good government funding meant superior pay and conditions;
— playcentres would continue to decline in numbers;
— nga kohanga reo would experience a funding crisis;
— the establishment of Pacific Island language groups would be stalled.

Luckily, in 1987-88, some key participants and processes changed. I say luckily, because I believe there were a few instances of luck involved.

In 1987, the Prime Minister, David Lange, took the Education portfolio after Labour was returned to power. The Director of the Prime Minister's Office approached me to join the advisory group, in part because I had expertise in the field of early childhood care and education and it was a stated priority in the manifesto. Coincidentally, a staff

member from Geoffrey Palmer's office (then Deputy Prime Minister and chairperson of Cabinet Social Equity Committee) approached me to convene the working group on early childhood care and education that had been placed on the Cabinet Social Equity Committee programme for social policy reform in the second term of government. The moving of early childhood care and education back onto the government's agenda was thanks to Margaret Shields, the Minister of Women's Affairs, and an influential official (female) inside Parliament. Later, my carrying two roles turned out to be significant, I believe, in shifting early childhood issues from the governmental agenda to the decision agenda.

Because of the 1985 forum, there was already a diffusion of alternative solutions in the discourse within the early childhood sector. It was an accumulative discourse because of earlier working groups and conferences (Renwick, 1979; State Services Commission, 1980; Social Advisory Council, 1985: Royal Commission on Social Policy, 1988). However, the problems and solutions worked out by early childhood educators and interest groups had not necessarily reached or influenced the bureaucratic elites and decision-makers. I believe that the marginalisation of activities associated with women and children by academics and the media contributed to that state of affairs.

However, trade unions, contrary to what one might expect in a period of high unemployment, did provide support in promoting childcare. Again, it was important that women were rising in the ranks of the union hierarchies. They were able to influence or reinforce Labour Party interest in early childhood education.

When the Meade committee was set up and, particularly, when its report *Education to Be More* (1988) was released, the interest groups mobilised to put their problems in front of decision-makers and to affirm most of the alternatives in the Meade report. The interest groups saw that an opportunity was being presented to put young children and their parents back on the government's decision agenda. The reforms in the education system in *Tomorrow's Schools* announced in August 1988 opened a door for early childhood people to put their foot in to achieve decisions that had been sought for years.

During the final months of 1988 the three process streams — problems, policy proposals and politics (Kingdom, 1984) — came together:

— the early childhood sector re-presented their problems to the decision-makers, either directly or via submissions affirming *Education to Be More*;

— there was a widely shared set of ideas and policy alternatives brought to politicians and fairly united pressure placed on them to accept the policy solutions (proposals);

— there was a political commitment to change the education administrative system which now encompassed all early childhood services (apart from Te Kohanga Reo).

This may sound as though 'capture' by early childhood educators had occurred. However, it should be noted that the individual members of the Meade committee were chosen by Cabinet, the committee included representatives from Treasury and the State Services Commission, and most of us were strangers at the time of our first meeting.

After the release of *Education to Be More*, David Lange and I worked hard to keep early childhood on the government's decision agenda. Our role as key participants turned out to be easier at the stage of Cabinet agreeing to the policies announced in *Before Five*. Geoffrey Palmer continued to support early childhood care and education on the social policy reform agenda, and *Tomorrow's Schools* predicated some policy changes for early childhood services. For these reasons, the number of discussions by Cabinet to make those policy decisions were relatively few. The final step in the shift of the Government's role in the nurturance of its youngest citizens (Koopmen-Boyden, 1985) to fully legitimating childcare was a relatively painless step, after years of lobbying by parents, early childhood educators, women's organisations and unions. The male politicians and Treasury officials seemed to be indifferent to or perplexed about the shift: if the Prime Minister acknowledged the value of childcare, perhaps it was all right?

The foot in the door

The passive acceptance was temporary. It lasted only until the 'foot in the door' tried to nudge it open further to gain access to increased economic support.

Obtaining a government policy on funding early childhood services was hard. Economic considerations had entered the decisions. The interests of capital and male power-holders joined together and came to the fore. The Business Round Table and other key proponents of the New Right economic discourse were spelling out the political advantages of the Government decreasing its expenditure. The Treasury wrote a paper for Cabinet advising minimal funding increases for non-kindergarten services, and a funding **decrease** for kindergartens in the name of equity! They also said that any extra money needed could come from a decrease in university expenditure! Was this political naivety, or sophistication?

In early 1989, one of the difficulties in obtaining a Cabinet decision was that the politics had become loosened from the early childhood problems and the policies. The intervention of some new participants in

the form of the Campaign for Quality Early Childhood Education, mounted by the unions and women's and early childhood groups, was a key to Cabinet ministers being willing to consider the political advantages of increased funding. By arranging for activists to visit 42 different members of parliament with petitions, the Campaign managed to have literally dozens of petitions tabled in the House containing nearly 10,000 signatures. They also organised a rally in the Beehive to facilitate a meeting between politicians and early childhood workers, and held a Day of Action in Aotea Square in Auckland near Budget night. The politicians knew by this stage that women were disaffected with the Government's performance. They felt that if this number of women were lobbying for funds, there must be women's votes in it.

At the same time as the Campaign was active, the processes inside Parliament Buildings were important. The women's caucus, including of course Sonja Davies, was exerting pressure on Cabinet and Labour Caucus colleagues. In the Cabinet room, David Lange was presenting modified funding proposal after modified funding proposal, trying to find a formula that:

— would not increase Government expenditure so dramatically that it would incur severe political opposition from the Rogernomics 'camp';
— would not compromise the integrity of the *Before Five* policies; and/or
— would not have a detrimental effect on family incomes by increasing fees for some or by increasing dependency on Social Welfare fees subsidy.

The computer spreadsheets were worked over many, many times. The dogged determination not to give up the struggle was exhibited by a handful of women, with assistance from a couple of economists. (As an aside, I cannot help commenting that the economists were junior staff — another indication of the status of early childhood education?) Finally a staged approach to increasing funding was devised with all services reaching the same level by 1994/95. Cabinet agreed. In the five years between 1989 and 1994, there will be an increase of $113.52 million or 125 percent, providing future governments do not change their mind.

The door had been wedged open by the following statements in *Before Five*:

> Chartered early childhood services will receive their Vote Education funding directly, as a bulk grant (1985:1)
>
> and
>
> The bulk grant will be calculated on the basis of the number of children enrolled for each session, with a session lasting between 2.5 and 3 hours. No service will be funded for more than two such

> sessions a day. The maximum level will be 30 hours over 7 days (1985:20)

The large increase in funding has to be seen as an expanded welfare state, and at a time when the catch-cry was 'less state'. The plan of the libertarian-right economists was for a diminution of the welfare state, so increased funding of early childhood services or any other social service was not supported by those who thought economic considerations should be paramount. The funding proposals became a focus of the struggle between David Lange and the 'wets' arguing for benefits for small children, and the 'dry' supporters of Roger Douglas.

What occurred in 1988/89 was that a temporary wedge was driven through the hegemonic barriers constructed by the male power-holders and the so-called 'captains of industry'. Women, unions, Maori and people from other ethnic communities provided political pressure with optimum timing to support those in Parliament Buildings who were doing the detailed work (90 percent of whom were women) trying to achieve a policy solution. My argument is that women and children, Maori and ethnic minority groups do not possess power equal to men and Pakeha (which is a fact ignored by those espousing the current economic ideology). In 1989, a coalition of these groups was formed determined to make the best of the advantages gained in the *Before Five* policies.

I believe that the players inside Parliament Buildings would not have achieved worthwhile funding against the power of those supported by 'captains of industry' without the political activity of the Campaign for Quality Early Childhood Education. The Campaigners nearly missed their timing. They launched their effort on Working Women's Day, 8 March 1989, to be culminated in mid-July. The struggle in the Cabinet room was occurring in the early period of the Campaign. Thus, it was the early visits of Campaigners to members of parliament in their electorates which had the most effect, as they coincided with the Ministerial debates.

Women who watch the political scene may have noted a similar 'success' with the pay equity issue, associated with Margaret Wilson's time in the Prime Minister's Department. Both she and I had credibility inside and outside of Parliament Buildings because of our years of work on the issue to hand, and we were able to work closely with committed political decision-makers. Outside Parliament Buildings there were at least two strong lobby groups making it clear that pay equity meant votes (or loss of votes). Two other women's issues on the Government's social policy reform programme — pornography and matrimonial property — had neither a feminist facilitator close to key politicians nor

strong and widespread lobbying, and they did not make it onto the decision agenda.

A point that I would like to emphasise from what I have said thus far is that the state is not gender neutral. The next part of this story demonstrates a second point: that the state is not class neutral either. Reading the *Before Five* funding statements above, this is not visibly apparent — one would believe they are class neutral. The bias comes in a later statement:

> The Department of Social Welfare fees subsidy to assist low income families will be continued, but with some restructuring. Families passing an income test may be eligible for some assistance with fees, up to a certain set level (1985:22-3).

As stated, this policy is a continuation of existing policy. You will recall that this policy was the first-ever state funding for childcare. What most people do not realise, especially those in education, is that such subsidies can raise the effective marginal tax rates dramatically. The consequence is that low income families are further oppressed. The levels of bulk funding recommended by the Meade committee were sufficient to make all early childhood services (except long-day care) as affordable as kindergartens. What Treasury recommended was a level of funding which would make early childhood services *less* affordable for *more* families than in 1988. The solutions for low income families would have been:

— apply for fees subsidy (and enter a poverty trap)
— pay higher fees (and increase family hardship)
— stop attending.

Without a consciousness and a conscience about the social class effects of bulk funding levels being set too low, subordination of lower socio-economic status families could have been worse than before *Before Five*. The levels were finally set so that no more families would need to take up the fees subsidies unless childcare providers did not pass on any of the increased state funding for the benefit of families. This is, of course, another indication of the unequal amounts of power exerted by different interest groups on political decision making. The good thing is that as bulk funding levels increase in successive years, fewer families should need to apply for fees subsidies, because fees should decline as the Government grants to centres progressively increase.

Conclusion

I have concentrated on women in early childhood care and education in this paper, not because children are unimportant but because my personal experience gave me the chance to develop a theory of practice

(Carr & Kemmis, 1986) in policy making. In addition, the very positive outcomes for children from the type of early childhood curriculum approach dominant in New Zealand are widely accepted. It was that acceptance which was the significant factor in most recommendations in *Education to Be More* being agreed to as policy. Arguments based on benefits for women or on economic gains were of little interest to politicians.

Before Five contains policies for **quality assurance** (Penn, 1990) at the state level. Now the discourse on **quality curriculum** practice is beginning to gather momentum. Early childhood educators in New Zealand understand the value of engaging in dialogue about goals and action. There are signs that early childhood experts in the Early Childhood Development Unit, the Education Review Office and the Ministry of Education are beginning to work together on quality issues. I believe this is needed in order to facilitate a debate in the interests of a positive outcome. If they do collaborate to develop a discourse, another 'significant movement' is more likely to occur. This next movement would be at centre level.

In this analysis of government policy changes that have occurred in the early childhood sector in the last five years, I have taken a socialist feminist position which argues that state policies are dominated by powerful patriarchal and capitalist interests. I have demonstrated that there are times when the powerful cannot shut the door on subordinate groups. When political struggles by women (and other oppressed groups) coincide with a time where decision-makers recognise the problems and agree on acceptable policy solutions, worthwhile benefits for women and, in this case study, for children can be brought about. The end result of the political activity described here was a worthwhile funding package for early childhood services. The increased funding is, in effect, a substantial transfer of spending power to women (Shaver, 1983).

The benefits for women we have seen emerge in the first half of 1990 have been:

— significant salary increases for childcare workers in three of the four Awards
— a lowering of fees, especially for under two year olds
— improved access with the (slow) increases in places
— more jobs for women in the sector.

Women have not benefited so well in some centres where profit is the main objective of the operators.

John Kingdom argues with regard to any public policy that 'Significant movement... is much more likely if problems, policy proposals and

politics are all coupled into a package' (1984:21). Participants are the other important factor. To achieve policy of benefit to women, the participants take on added significance. There must be people, preferably women, committed to advancing the interests of women in a variety of critical places for 'significant movement' to happen. The momentum produced by their joint efforts can, at times, compensate for the unequal amount of power held by women when trying to advocate for women (and children). Furthermore, such a coalition can be most effective when policy proposals have been advocated for some considerable time. (Early childhood educators had been developing theirs for years.) Then, when a opportunity presents itself, as was the case with *Education to Be More*, the problem and a credible solution can be presented together on the government's decision agenda. This concerted pooling of effort is why women and Maori have been more successful opponents of the New Right than the male academics who have sat on the sidelines armed only with their critical theories.

Anne Meade has researched and written about early childhood care and education for over twelve years. While on secondment to the Prime Minister's advisory group, she convened the Working Group on Early Childhood Care and Education which produced *Education to Be More* (the Meade report). She is currently Senior Lecturer in Education at Victoria University of Wellington.

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Notes

1 Expenditure on early childhood education expressed in real terms against the March 1989 CPI has been:

1983-84	$41.152 million
1984-85	$37.809 million
1985-86	$37,701 million
1986-87	$54.234 million
1987-88	$60.852 million
1988-89	$69.869 million

The slump in the mid-1980s was a consequence of the wage freeze then the union holding out for a significant wage rise, evident in 1986. 1989-90 figures are difficult to obtain because of the Government financial year change and the two sets of estimates involved after 1 October 1989. Also some Te Kohanga Reo costs were transferred from Maori Affairs to Vote Education on 1 October 1990.

2 John Kingdom's study (1984) is a significant one in terms of the breadth and depth of the data. He followed the development of public policy in two portfolio areas — health and transport — over four years. Officials close to politicians (total = 247) were interviewed four times between 1976 and 1979. In addition, 23 case studies of policy initiation or non-initiation were developed; these spanned 30 years of American policy-making.

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The Case for Feminist Schools

Johanne McComish

One might expect that after twenty years of the current wave of feminism, following all the feminist activity of the past 200 years, the words 'feminist, feminism' would have lost their power to shock and excite. In fact, they still seem to provoke as much alarm as ever. This year a spokesman from the Ministry of Education said that, unlike state schools, feminist schools would be ones 'where a particular value system permeates the teaching'. Because of this, they would have to be separated from the state system, which does not 'espous(e) a philosophy or belief system' (*Evening Post*, Feb 15, 1990); and *Metro* magazine labelled feminist schools the 'Silliest Idea in Education' (April 1990). Even to many feminists, feminist schools seem a radical, unachievable, divisive, perhaps unnecessary idea.

Feminist schooling is obviously about the education of girls, but the first question most people ask is 'Will boys be allowed to attend?' This preoccupation with the needs of boys is precisely why feminist schools are needed. Contrary to the Ministry of Education's view that state education does not espouse a belief system, it does in fact espouse the dominant patriarchal belief system of our society, in which men's concerns, prejudices and desires predominate, and determine the overall patterns of what is done. In this article I argue the case for feminist

schools, and make tentative beginning towards envisaging what they might be like.

First, what is feminism? As I conceive of it, feminism must be based on positively valuing women and what they think and do. It cannot be based on a secret desire to have women overcome their unfortunate feminine limitations in order to be more like successful men. It must also be good for all women. It must encompass and value what is good for them and give something they can draw on and learn from. So it must be *positively* oriented towards the concerns of women of all races, classes, backgrounds, and sexual orientation. It must not involve privileging certain groups of women over others.

Why feminist schools?

Several perceptions led me to the conviction that we need feminist schools. Women's lives are still hard — harder than men's. We know that women all over the world have less education, less pay, and less status than men (Seager and Olson, 1986). If you compare a woman with a man of the same class and background, the woman has almost certainly had to work much harder, had more disappointments and disasters in her life, had to struggle to overcome numerous obstacles, been in positions of subjection and inferiority, and ended up with less money and less freedom to make choices in life. The phrase in the schools' Charter, 'redress existing inequities', gives a ray of hope of righting these wrongs. However, when you put aside emotion and look objectively at our society, the initial optimism of that phrase seems a hollow promise.

There has been a long history of lack of real progress on women's demands of society. What is conceded always comes after many women, even generations of women, have dedicated their lives to struggling for it. It is always conceded grudgingly, and usually in a reduced form. It rarely makes as much difference as we hoped for, because male society always finds some way to reduce the impact of the changes and to preserve its own privileged position. The history of the vote, equal pay, and equal access to education all show this same pattern. It seems that only when women are, in some limited way, really able to take matters into their own hands do they ever get something which is exactly what they want. So the promises of Tomorrow's Schools are unlikely to take women as far as they want to go.

Because our society and our schools fight against a feminist view of the world, it is very hard for a girl to grow up with a clear picture of what it is to be a woman. This insight is likely to come to her only much later in her life, after numerous experiences of serious or petty discrimina-

tion. She may grow up with a message from school that 'Girls can do anything', but nobody will help her to reconcile the personal cost that this will involve. Nobody will point out the almost insurmountable economic and social obstacles stacked up against choice in life for certain groups of girls (Gordon, 1989). Similarly, little will be done to help her to see the tremendous positive value of women's culture and women's achievements.

Feminist schools are needed to allow girls not just to learn, but to evaluate knowledge in terms of its meaning for them and their lives. It is suggested that they will be so cocooned in a feminist environment that they will be unprepared to face the rigours of the real world. In fact, a feminist schooling will make them **better** prepared for life in the real world. They will be prepared for the true realities of it — as it affects women. Feminist schooling will mean that women's knowledge and skills are preserved and passed on, not lost and painstakingly rediscovered by generation after generation of women.

I want to look next at what we have now in our education system for girls, at what is likely to be achieved by putting energy into working to make changes within the present system, and finally, what I think we would want in a feminist kind of education

What does the present education system offer?

What have we achieved for girls in education? The desire for education, and an equal education, is not a phenomenon of the last twenty years. Much of what women have said and wanted is lost to us, but we know that English-speaking women have been calling out for education for the last four hundred years. In 1694, Mary Astell proposed a college for women, and Princess Anne promised £10,000 for it — a sum that would be welcome to feminist undertakings even today. However, a man opposed it, and it never came to pass. For the last hundred years women in Aotearoa/New Zealand have been able to go to schools and universities. This would seem long enough to overcome any teething problems associated with introducing women and education to each other. So what has been achieved?

Girls all attend school now in Aotearoa. However, the higher you proceed in education, the fewer women are present. In the seventh form, at university, and at post-graduate level, the numbers of women decline. In particular areas, especially in science and maths, the under-representation of women starts quite early in the secondary schools. There is clear evidence that it is not lack of ability in general, or in particular areas, that leads to this under-representation. Rather it is things such as lack of money, lack of time, isolation in a world of often hostile men, and

alienating cultural values which keep women from participating fully in education (Gilbert, 1990; Harding, 1986:Introduction).

Any collection of articles about gender and education (for example, Arnot and Weiner, 1987; Weiner and Arnot, 1987; Middleton, 1988) contains depressing documentation of the inequities in girls' education. These cover such areas as girls' lack of access to computers and science equipment, to teacher time, to talking time in the class, to space in the playground, to sports facilities, to money for special activities; sexual harassment and abusive language from boys and sometimes from teachers; a devaluing of girls' interests and skills in favour of boys'; a devaluing of girls and women themselves; and a school environment which almost always demonstrates that men are the bosses and leaders, and women have subordinate and subservient positions.

The research which reveals these injustices comes after years of struggle by committed feminists to make major changes in education. Typically, feminist educators and researchers work for change for many years. When they report on their work they recognise that what has been achieved is a tiny fraction of what they hoped to achieve, and they envisage years of hard work ahead before any further progress is made.

For example, Chisholm and Holland (in Weiner and Arnot, 1987) report on the results of a major three year project in a London school to alter sexism in the school. One of the comments which they report as a fair and **positive** assessment of what was achieved follows:

> I'm not actually adding much to the girls' power. I don't think you can — they have their own. So it comes down to trying to deflate the worst of what the boys do and occasionally attempting to make spaces for the girls to speak in.

Similarly small gains were made after another seven year project of committed feminist teachers in a primary school.

In Aotearoa, Helen Watson, the Women's Officer of the Post Primary Teachers Association, says she is committed to working for change within existing schools and the existing system. So she has a positive approach to the value of working in this way. However, her article in *Women and Education in Aotearoa* (Watson, 1988:113) concludes with what is to me a discouraging and pessimistic assessment:

> The statements made by Learmonth Dalrymple to the people of Dunedin in the 1860s on the rights of girls to education equal to that enjoyed by boys are still necessary today, and still not fully accepted by the whole community. The struggle to make schools and the learning that takes place in them truly equal in outcome for girls and boys will be a long and difficult one.

Many researchers now consider that there is nothing accidental or

surprising about the difficulty of achieving change in education. The schools and other learning institutions are unable to make very radical changes for two reasons. One is that they have been established to support the ***existing*** society and its structure. They are expected to produce students who can accept and abide by society's values, and who have mastered knowledge and skills in a form that society considers useful. The second factor limiting schools is the direct effect of society on the students themselves. If the students are under economic or social pressure to conform to particular roles, then the schools will have only limited success in opposing this. Williams (1988:347), assessing progress in Britain, concludes:

> It is clear, therefore, that the goals of anti-racist and anti-sexist policies, though focused on educational change, cannot be easily achieved by strategies which are confined to education. Schools cannot be isolated from the wider structural inequalities through which colour and sexual divisions are continually being created and recreated.

I do not think we can continue to accept this situation. We have institutions and teachers that perhaps attempt to make changes, but all the while with ambivalent attitudes because they know they will make little headway. At the same time, they feel obliged to maintain the position of the school as an integral and supporting institution in a society that needs change. Meanwhile generations of girls grow up patiently and politely waiting for the little crumbs of change that will make their lives a little better. It makes no sense to condemn further generations of girls to this long slow battle, when they could be so easily removed from it, and given the kind of education that would really advantage them.

The girls and women who are educated within a system which is basically opposed to their best interests generally grow up ambivalent and confused themselves about their position in society. When they finally find out about the realities of sexual politics, they have missed a lot of chances, made many wrong decisions and wasted years of their lives. In addition, instead of learning things which are useful and valuable to them, they have spent years learning a great many things which they perceive as irrelevant and wrong.

They have also, often unconsciously, learned the low esteem that society has for them and the limits of their power and freedom. But they have not learned consciously to analyse and understand this as systematic discrimination and oppression, rather than individual failure or biological inadequacy. Nor have they learned what makes this knowledge of second class citizenship bearable: that women do have strength,

skills, understanding, and a fine culture of their own.

The present system has been given plenty of chances to make fundamental changes, and quite long enough to do it. It seems important to me to break the pattern; to have available an education which is particularly designed with the needs of girls and women in mind. Women of all ages need to step outside the present education system and into a woman-centred one. What would we want in such an education? And how would feminist schools overcome the limitations on change that existing schools face?

Feminist schools

The main aim of feminist schools would be to pass on knowledge and understanding that women have in order to make immediate improvements in the lives of the women educated there. This would include knowledge about our oppression, knowledge about the strength, qualities and special expertise that women have, and conventional knowledge that we share with men — but seen through the special focus of a feminist analysis. The purpose of this feminist education is not the impossible task of giving equality of opportunity, or equity in outcomes for women in an unequal society, but the more practical purpose of giving them the skills and strength they need to function well and fight for change in this society.

Virginia Woolf, who analysed very thoroughly the role that patriarchal institutions play for women, thought through the qualities that she would require in a college that would satisfy women:

> ...it must be an experimental college, and adventurous college.... Next, what should be taught in the new college, the poor college? Not the arts of dominating other people; not the arts of ruling, of killing, of acquiring land and capital. They require too many overhead expenses; salaries and uniforms and ceremonies. The poor college must teach only the arts that can be taught cheaply and practised by poor people; such as medicine, mathematics, music, painting and literature. It should teach the arts of human intercourse; the art of understanding other people's lives and minds, and the little arts of talk, of dress, of cookery that are allied with them. The aim of the new college, the cheap college, should be not to segregate and specialize, but to combine. It should explore the ways that mind and body can be made to co-operate; discover what new combinations make good wholes in human life. The teachers should be drawn from the good livers as well as from the good thinkers (Woolf, 1986:39).

This covers many issues that are of concern to feminists today, and no doubt many of these issues would be built into a feminist school.

However, it is essentially a Utopian programme, for, as Virginia Woolf goes on to admit, many of the things she recommends would not help women secure a well paying job — or even any job at all. This is likely to be the most difficult part of designing a feminist education — how to reconcile the opposing forces of the learning we would like to have with the practical necessities of staying alive, and happy, in our society.

Conventional knowledge

To reconcile these tensions, the feminist school must cover more ground than existing schools. It must cover most of the conventional curriculum, for this is interesting and valuable knowledge, and it is what provides access to opportunities in the (male) world within which we have to earn a living. It must, however, do this with a feminist analysis always operating. Giroux (1988) proposes the use of different sets of objectives to achieve this kind of learning. One set, the micro-objectives, lists the conventional knowledge and skills students need to have in an area such as science. The other set, the macro-objectives, which always accompany the first set, are aimed at understanding and assessing how the discipline and its knowledge function in society, for whose purposes, and with what results.

It is at the level of the macro-objectives that a feminist analysis would be integrated with learning the micro-objectives of conventional school knowledge. In this way, students would achieve a deeper understanding of the topics they covered, and they would avoid the alienating effects of studying topics or subjects which are felt to be wrong, or to belong to other groups of people. They would be able to look at how topics and disciplines are defined and spoken of in men's terms. They would find how easy it can be, in the right environment, to escape these mental stereotypes, to look at something in your own terms, and find in it what is interesting to you. In this vein, Evelyn Fox Keller (1986) suggests that abandoning either/or, win/lose, subject/object, male/female dichotomies in understanding science will lead to more interesting and productive ways of looking at science which neither alienate nor disadvantage women.

Women's knowledge

In addition, the feminist school must give an equal place to the huge body of knowledge about women, and knowledge held by women, which existing educational institutions either forget, or label 'irrelevant' or 'gossip' or 'not educational'. The amount of material that has been uncovered and generated by women in the last twenty years is more than enough to keep students busy for their whole educational career.

One source of our oppression is that all knowledge of ourselves is carefully regulated by men. Much of it is suppressed, at least from public discussion, and what is allowed is frequently distorted (Spender, 1985: Ch.14).

We need this knowledge, and we need to be allowed to study and examine it in an open and non-sexist way. This is hardly possible within existing schools, and I fear that the resource material currently being produced about women will be trivialised and marginalised in schools. The history of how women writers have fared in the study of English literature shows all too clearly how this is done (Russ, 1983; Spender, 1985:177).

Knowledge about oppression

The third essential area of knowledge in a feminist school is knowledge about our oppression. It is for this type of learning that feminist schools are absolutely essential, and it is when we start to think about oppression that the most difficult issues are raised. The central question here is not ***what*** to learn about oppression, but ***how*** to learn it. I would argue that knowledge about oppression can only ever be usefully learned within a power base of the oppressed group. Within a patriarchal institution we may very well have experiences which forcibly bring our oppression home to us. However, our reaction will be to fight or to despair. In either case, we do not have the conditions for analysis and understanding which give strength and purpose to a long campaign against oppression.

If we are to understand our oppression and turn this understanding into a tool for making individual women's lives better, it must be done in an environment which makes us feel supported and strong, not weak and inferior. The small and large groups of the women's movement, and the little enclaves of women's power in Women's Studies courses, have so far provided these environments for many women. But there need to be similar environments for girls to do ***all*** their learning in. Their lives are doubly oppressed if they spend all their childhood being fed a controlled diet of patriarchal knowledge and values, only to have to painfully unlearn it in their early adulthood.

The most obvious model for feminist learning is the current women's movement. Thousands of women across the world have educated each other by this means in the last twenty years. While it has excluded some women and privileged others, it has nevertheless encompassed an enormous range of women and issues. The main features seem to be that it is supportive and accepting. At least in principle, no women and no concerns of theirs are considered unacceptable. Everyone's experience is valued and considered, and everyone is encouraged to take part.

Difficult and outrageous women are prized. Everyone learns exactly what they want to and no-one passes or fails. Decision making and learning are co-operative and non-competitive. It is extremely flexible in organisation and participants. It integrates and combines issues rather than segments them. It is basically peaceful and life-affirming in orientation. These features, which emerge again and again in women's groups, are basically the same as those identified by Adrienne Rich (1984) in her article "Toward a Woman-Centred University', written in 1974.

Even with the successes of the women's movement, however, we have not solved questions of race and class. How are feminist environments to be provided which support the learning of all girls, and not only middle class Pakeha girls? Questions of race and class interact with gender in Aotearoa, as elsewhere. Alison Jones (1985) has shown how Maori and Pacific Island girls in schools here are more silenced and disadvantaged than their Pakeha counterparts. Liz Gordon (1989) has shown that working class Pakeha girls do not achieve the same education, or have the same choices available to them that middle class Pakeha girls do. These inequities pose major challenges for existing schools, and would pose just as serious ones for feminist schools.

One conclusion we seem to be painfully moving towards in Aotearoa, with the establishment of Kohanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Maori, and Samoan Language Nests, is that institutions cannot be all things to all people. This much-loved notion may only have been another patriarchal mechanism for centralisation and control of other groups, under the guise of a liberal ethic of egalitarianism. Feminists may also have to give up the notion that a single feminist orthodoxy can suit all women, in favour of a much looser network of connections between different groups of women all working in important issues in their own way. We are still trying to discover how different groups of women can best co-operate to address all their different needs, and how privileged groups can deal with the effects of this privilege. These issues remain central ones for feminist schools, just as for other feminist undertakings.

Conclusion

These, then, are the types of knowledge that the feminist school would be committed to: conventional educational knowledge that we share with men; women's knowledge about our past, our abilities and our strengths; and knowledge about our oppression. But knowledge is not everything, and thinking about oppression inevitably raises questions of structure and organisation. One of the main anti-woman devices of our society is the structure and operation of institutions. Just as men use

structure against women, so women can use it against each other. Feminist content in a patriarchal or oppressive structure would have little feminist effect, and feminist schools would have the ongoing task of grappling with this problem.

I have a vision of feminist schools in Aotearoa which are humming power-houses of feminist energy. They would not only help young women to learn in the best ways for them, but would be productive centres for feminist output. Feminist teachers would have the environment to put their talents to their fullest use, and mothers and women in general would find them stimulating and encouraging places to be.

Johanne McComish is a Lecturer at the English Language Institute, Victoria University. An earlier version of this paper was presented with Jane Gilbert at a workshop at the Feminist Education Conference, Christchurch, January 1990.

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No Turning Back

Two interviews with Penny Jamieson

Pat Booth and Liz Robinson

The Rev. Dr Penny Jamieson was announced as the new Bishop of Dunedin in the last week of November 1989. Pat Booth interviewed her about her perceptions of the influences that brought her to the end of November 1989, beginning with her upbringing in England; and Liz Robinson interviewed her about becoming a Bishop.

I went to a Church of England school founded by the sisters of Saint Mary the Virgin at Wantage. This was a very self-confidently, unambiguously and unreservedly Christian school.

PB: *This was a girls' school, not a co-ed school?*
Yes. They tended not to be particularly ambitious for the girls they were educating but they had a very high view of human nature and potential — human beings were God's people — and that environment has bred a lot of strong women.

It wouldn't have been called positive affirmation at the time?
No, but it was.

Nobody talked about feminism in those decades.
No. In fact I didn't link on to feminism until well after I had children.

Did feminism impinge on you personally then?
A whole lot of things happened in the mid seventies. One was the 1975 United Women's Convention. It was a terrible weekend. Dorothy was about two or three months old and Ian brought her for me to feed because he wouldn't let her go into the creche. We drove around the hills of Strathmore with the other kids in the back of the car while I fed this baby. It was a time when my Christian faith was coming together quite strongly. I felt that feminism came out of Christianity, rather than the other way round, in that Christianity sharpened my perception of what oppression was in the world and I could see it was happening around me in me and my friends and my kids. It was a way into the experience of oppression which has been very fundamental to my development of Christian ethics. I think I owe my understanding and awareness and support of the whole bicultural issue to my awareness of the shared marginality that women and Maori people have.

What did you study at university?
English. And after a year or so I decided to major in Linguistics rather than in English literature ....in 1960.

You got as far as your master's degree in Edinburgh? Was it at that time you met Ian? (Ian Jamieson was a New Zealand post-graduate student also studying in Edinburgh.)
I met Ian in my last year. Just after the exam a group of us from the Student Christian Movement went to an island in the Orkneys and that's where we got to know each other. We married quite quickly after that because he was coming back to New Zealand.

You came to New Zealand straight away?
Yes. In January 1965.

Did you have any concept of what sort of church you were coming to?
I don't think that was really on my mind.

Did you come thinking you might work in Wellington for a while?
Oh yes, I had to. We owed money when we got here. I went schoolteaching for a time, I taught in Wellington Girls' and Hutt Valley High School in the days when you didn't have to have a teaching qualification, just a degree.

Can you remember what you thought of Wellington society, as a new immigrant?
I think I was so busy trying to survive that I didn't think much about it.

I did find it quite liberating. I could find a job easily—jobs were easy to find in those days. I quite enjoyed being a part of a smaller society. I had moved out of the constraints that the English middle and upper middle class environment I had grown up in inevitably imposed. It's easy to see how feminism has had an easy going in this country compared to England—and in church situations—because there isn't the same class structuring and often feminist and class structuring go together. It's an easier country to move around class-wise, so why not move around gender-wise?

You were teaching for how long?
About a year. Then I worked in the University library and I did some tutoring in the English department. Then Eleanor was born and then Emily. I did some tutoring when they were little but not much. We went to England in 1970 and after we came back I got a job as a junior lecturer in the English department. That was hard work, juggling the work and childcare. The whole idea of childcare was new. One was really struggling with a sense that one shouldn't be doing it.

For how long were you a junior lecturer?
I think it was two years and then I was a year with the [NZ] Council for Educational Research. I did the field work for my thesis with Tokelau children, aged 5 to 7. The idea was to see how well they were learning English as a second language and whether they should be encouraged to keep or maintain their native language. It came out very clearly that maintaining their first language had no effect on their ability to learn English. I worked at NZCER for a few years after that, looking at more multicultural language issues.

All through the seventies you'd been a parishioner at St Peter's? (in Willis Street, Wellington)
I'd been involved there in a home tutor language scheme. There were a lot of migrant children and I was very active in that. I've always thought churches are in a good position to give shape to a vision about a new idea that needs to be taken on in society. I was beginning to get impatient with research which was beginning to seem to me—and it still does—to be a somewhat voyeuristic activity which tends only to ask the suggestions which are trendy at the moment and to come up with the answers which people want to hear. I wanted to be more hands-on.

I remember you gave a lecture in 1977 at Victoria University on Adam's rib ('Adam's Rib: Women in Society and the Church', Tertiary Christian Studies

Programme 1977, Victoria University of Wellington)
That was when a lot of things were coming together.

Can you see some trend in terms of your having some sense of vocation for the priesthood?
It took off from the feeling I had when I left school. I felt I wanted to be a nun then but I'd have been a hopeless nun.

Were you part of any movement in the New Zealand church to encourage the decision about the ordination of women?
No, there wasn't a movement. Certainly in Wellington there wasn't.

How did it happen then?
I wish I knew the answer but I wasn't part of church politics at the time. There's never been a movement for the ordination of women in New Zealand at all.

So when the decision was made in principle that women could be ordained, did you suddenly —?
The first women were ordained — but not in Wellington — at the end of 1977. I first talked about it openly before the decision, before it became possible. I started my extra-mural theological study in 1978.

And that was in order to become a priest?
Yes, that was why I was doing it. It was really like putting the cake under the icing. The icing was all the feminist theology I'd got involved in, which was very exciting.

How did you discover the feminist theology?
I was asking questions about what were the connections between feminism and theology and the first thing was that every one said, 'These are contradictory. You can't possibly be a feminist and a good Christian,' and then I found this amazing body of literature. A group of us were readying Mary Daly's *Beyond God the Father*, and it was just amazingly marvellous. We were all learning at top speed and making connections and doing theologies and looking for wholeness in body, mind and spirit and society, too.

That group who were discovering the literature, you were all intellectuals?
Oh yes, probably but we didn't see ourselves in that light. There was a lot of literature coming out on the ordination of women issue in the States and Britain and it was that we plugged into.

Was it important that you were reading these books with other women?
Yes, it was. It was great sharing them.

Did the fact that these books were coming out of other countries help?
It was fascinating finding that other people were asking the same questions. How did women's oppression fit into genuine Christian spirituality when in fact the history of the Christian church had been so oppressive of women? How could we remain in that scene with some authenticity? I have to say that an awful lot of people didn't. The more they looked at the church through feminist eyes, the more impossible they found it. But I've always been mad enough to think that maybe it can hold together. But their history is not one of compatibility.

Yet throughout the ages there have been women who have hung on desperately to both.
The women's tradition in the Christian church is the spirituality side. We have refound people like Julian of Norwich and Hildegard of Bingen and some exciting 19th century American women. But it has not been in the rule or governance or church order part. They've all been somewhat marginalised and what's happened in the last ten or fifteen years is that a lot of women have said, 'Stop marginalising this. This experience is central to Christian experience and as such has a place in church governance and structure.'

And reading with this group was going along with your own theological study?
Yes. Then in 1979 I first applied to Edward (Edward Norman, Bishop of Wellington) asking to be taken on as an ordination candidate and he was quite quick to dismiss the idea.

Were you the first woman who had applied to him?
No, he had already at the end of 1978 ordained Sidney Koreneff and Pam Mildenhall but they were single women — Sidney was a widow — and Edward clearly saw a big difference between ordaining a single woman and a married woman.

I remember you being very upset at that decision.
He wrote an incredibly brief and terse letter telling me my first duty was to my husband and children. I was mad for ages.

You kept on studying?
Yes, and the next year I talked to him again and he got me through the selection panel and I started work in Wellington South parish.

It seems to me that you were doing your studying almost without supervision?
Yes, it was marvellous, who'd want supervision!

That was OK with the powers that be?
I had spent enough time on the inside of academic institutions.

You studied for a BD?
A BD at Knox College, Otago.

This extra-mural theological training which you had almost mapped out for yourself was acceptable in terms of the ordination?
Yes, I did a Clinical Pastoral Education course through the Presbyterian Social Services and I was working in Wellington South. It was a multicultural area and a poor parish in the terms of its own resources. I've always veered towards the margins. They are the most interesting places. Two years later in 1982, Edward ordained me a deacon. I don't think he was very easy about ordaining me a deacon but by the time he came to ordain me priest a year later he was all right. I think he had become reassured that the world wasn't going to cave in if married women were ordained priests. Somebody said to me in the seventies that my ministry in the church would be always one of reassurance and those were prophetic words. People start off thinking, 'Goodness me, what have we got here?' and then eventually they start thinking, 'Oh well, maybe the hand of God's at work.' I suspect that the fact that women have been ordained has made a lot of difference to many people.

I remember that when you were at St James's (Lower Hutt) it was quite difficult.
Yes. St James's at that time was quite rigidly run and I found great tension in having to fit in with patriarchal modes and models but as a curate I didn't have much option. It was quite a bruising experience.

And you were ordained priest at the end of the first year at St James's?
In 1983. I was another two years there and then I came to St Philip's in Karori West in October 1985.

You have said that one of the things that worried you about becoming a bishop was that you couldn't be a parish priest?
Yes, I enjoyed being a parish priest.

It seems to me that Karori West is a place where you'd see people in real life.
Yes, their crises in life, their good times and bad. You can get very close to people.

And does this link back to what you were saying when you gave away research?
Yes. I wanted to be hands on. At the 1989 ordained women's conference they had some money to do research and they all wanted me to do it and I would not. There was no way in which I had any energy or commitment to collecting statistics.

You've mentioned church politics and governance. Is there anything you wanted to say in terms of the political scene?
I did a lot of marching at the time of the Springbok tour. But when they were having their battles in Athletic Park, I set up a first-aid post in St Cuthbert's (Berhampore). We had about a hundred injured people through.

In conclusion, in terms of the Women's Studies Journal *is there anything we can capture?*
I think all my pastoral ministry has been alert to the particular pressures that are on women. I know women will volunteer very readily because they find it hard to say no and then they find they are overcommitted.

Has anything changed since you had little children?
I think women feel free to work or not, more than they did. Just after I had small children I heard women saying, 'We feel pressured to work,' but I don't hear them saying that quite so strongly now. Maybe I don't hear so many young women talking but I think they do feel freer to work or not to work. There's much more childcare, much more support all round.

What about marriages? Have they changed, especially from your perspective of church marriages?
Churches have a lot of single people, men and women, and even a church like St Philip's can have some quite unorthodox relationships in amongst the congregation.

Would you like to say something about the 1989 ordained women's conference?
It was in Hamilton. I was involved in the planning of it, though not the last minute planning. There were about 70 or 80 women out of 110 ordained women in the New Zealand Anglican Church. We looked at the past, the present and the future. We had some Bible study each day which I had prepared, which was an introduction to feminist theology for women who hadn't found it. Women are coming into the church now without having to think through these issues, because my contemporaries and those ahead of us have established a place and so you

don't have to question whether there is a place. But it makes you realise how inherently strongly patriarchal the churches still are because women can absorb that and act within that very easily still. I met a lot of people from around the country at the conference. I feel now a strong sense of women around the country being with me in this new venture and that's so empowering. We didn't talk of having a woman as a bishop. There was some talk of trying to get Barbara Harris (the woman bishop from the United States) out here and implied in that was the thought that it would remind the church that it would inevitably happen here and four months later it had. There was no scheming, no planning. I think if anyone had asked us we would have said five or ten years. The conference affirmed the ministry of women and made us realise the diversity of ministries that women are engaged in. In this diocese they tend to be in conventional ministries. In other dioceses they tend to be in quite novel ministries.

What do you mean by a conventional ministry?
They tend to be in parish structures and chaplaincy structures. Elsewhere they are involved in community work, on the fringes of church life, particularly in areas of Auckland.

Does it worry you that women are being ordained without having had an exposure or commitment to feminist theology?
Not per se. I don't think that's a requirement the church can lay on women or men. You find that a few years after being ordained most women find there are issues and become attuned to feminist theology.

Election of a bishop
In the various dioceses of the Church of the Province of New Zealand elections follow a similar pattern. The electoral synod is made up of all stipendiary clergy of the diocese and two laity from each parish. A bishop from another diocese presides at the electoral synod. Nominations are called for. The synod votes by a series of ballots until a candidate has a clear majority in both the house of clergy and the house of laity.

The elected candidate must then be approved by around two thirds of the diocesan bishops and diocesan standing committees. Up till this stage the candidate is supposedly unaware that she/he is the chosen one. The electoral synod representatives have been asked to stay silent. Once the elected candidate has received sufficient approval then she/he will be asked by the archbishop to consider the job. If the elected candidate accepts then the announcement will be made.

Women priests in the diocese of Dunedin were very keen to put Penny Jamieson up for bishop of their diocese after seeing her in action at the first ever Anglican ordained women's conference earlier in the year. There is no doubt that they did a comprehensive job in getting Penny and her gifts and skills known and wanted by representatives at the electoral synod. Information was gathered extensively beforehand from a good number of Wellington people who know Penny, and a substantial number of supportive speakers at the synod were 'arranged' to speak about Penny and the desirability of electing her. Liz Robinson interviewed her for this section.

LR: *Before agreeing to accept the position you travelled to Dunedin to talk to people and to see if it felt right. You are quoted as saying, 'I wanted to see if it was of God.' Could you explain what this means for you, and what made you feel it was right?*
Well, I guess I was so really surprised when this first came up that I wanted to find out quite what was going on in Dunedin — whether it was some kind of act of the Holy Spirit, or some malicious sprite at work! I have been part of electoral synods which haven't come up with a good result, and you can usually tell when that happens. I was reassured by the general air of excitement and expectancy that was around; an eagerness, awareness for a change of direction— quite unfocused — they've no idea where they going. *Their* vision of me seemed to chime in with *my* vision of me. So that was a connecting thing, and that was one of the points of discernment.

Did they have any particular enthusiasm for a woman?
No. It was very clear that it wasn't a vote for a woman. In fact, at one stage in the synod someone began talking about 'that lady from Wellington'. Someone else got up and said, 'That's no lady, that's a priest!' And it's quite clear from one of the speeches of proposal that the speaker is arguing that I'm the right person for the job.

Was there any opposition to the fact that you are a woman?
I don't know. I wasn't part of the debate. I'm quite certain there are some people who'd be much more hesitant than others, and much more uncertain. People cope with change and novelty in different ways. Some people find it difficult; some people find it very exciting.

So you came back feeling that it felt right, satisfied that they had made the right choice?
I'm aware of course that it's always a debating process. At the Dunedin

electoral synod they started off with about nine people — nine were nominated — and they gradually whittled it down. So a lot of people who were voting for me at the end weren't voting for me at the beginning. Nobody had a clear majority on the first ballot.

So that process felt 'of God'?
Yes it did. It's when things actually start connecting and coming together than I feel God at work; not, as I said, some malicious sprite. It can happen! Those two weeks of decision-making was a really tortuous exercise in what was old-fashioned discernment in a modern context — just trying to find out whether it was something I could... should go with. Because I knew once I had there was no turning back.

What do you mean when you say that you do not want to be 'waving the flag' for women bishops throughout the world?
I'm not really waving the flag because I actually don't think it's necessary. Inevitably there will be more and more women elected. All I can do is to do the job. I suppose it may be seen as flag waving because it's the first [Diocesan bishopric undertaken by a woman], and you expect someone at the front to carry the flag. But I don't think that I need to campaign for it. I've got every confidence that the ministry of women in this country has reached sufficient maturity for that to happen in due course.

Now we have one woman bishop do we need to have more?
I would hope so. We had been thinking that maybe in three or four years we'd start getting impatient about women bishops. But when it really did happen the wind was taken out of our sails. We didn't campaign one scrap on this. But I think we'll find there will be campaigns in the future. You only have a campaign when you believe something is possible, and we didn't believe it was possible, so we didn't think much about it.

Some women in the church and on the margins of the church would suggest that women should not support the hierarchical structures of the institution by 'buying into them' (taking up positions which represent the patriarchal model and male power systems). Do you think it is important that women become bishops, and are you not worried that you will be caught in the male model of being the church?
Yes, I'm very concerned. The last thing I want to be is a patriarch. I think that it's going to be very difficult. The last thing I actually wanted to be was a bishop! It's not a case of 'want' at the moment. It's a case of jumping off into the deep end and doing it. When I was first ordained priest I did think, for some time, that I and others were in fact 'buying

into' the male model, and I think inevitably we did that, first off. But in recent years it hasn't been like that at all. We've become more confident in our ministry, more mature, more certain of our own style and what we're doing. I think style is probably one of the big differences — women's style tends to be much more consultative, much less dominating, much more involving, much more enabling.

I guess this is an issue I shall have to explore in relationship to the diocese. It will be even more difficult because the hierarchical expectations will be stronger. I've found them strong enough in this parish. But that has changed — I have changed that. So it may take longer in a diocese.

I sometimes wonder whether one's commitment to the church isn't totally at odds with any kind of commitment to women. And one lives with incredible tension because of that. But I think in the long run that tension is creative. But it may take time. When I became a priest I thought I could do it straight away. I've got no illusions this time — I shall probably be unlivable-with for some time! I hope my family and friends will tolerate that.

What is the importance of a woman being a bishop?
It really challenges men to operate in partnership. Since the ministry of ordained women is at present dependent on the graciousness of men, the whole notion of what partnership means is going to be very strongly challenged.

What do you want to offer Dunedin as their bishop, and do you feel there are new models for yourself and the diocese which you will want to adopt?
I think I'd go back to what I was saying about style. I would also want to say, 'Ask me in five years' time', because a lot of this is going to have to be worked out in the hard grind of real life. The thing I feel most sure about is style— *how* things are done; this is often more important that *what* is done.

Do you think there will be difficulties as you meet and work with other bishops in the province?
I think, unquestionably, they will find it difficult. It's going to be more important to make myself clear rather than to worry about getting my own way to start with, because I'm going to be so outnumbered. So if I can actually free myself from the obligation to get my own way and to achieve in the sense of my own quiet and clear integrity I think I'll probably operate with some effectiveness. I think it will be incredibly hard.

The other bishops will know a lot more of what's being talked about.

They will use the knowledge and superiority of it, and I shall have to spend hours reading papers just to find out, remotely, what the issues and concerns are. But I shall do a lot of talking too. There are people around who I can tap into and say, 'What's happening here?'

As a priest you have been aware that you were not recognised as such in some provinces of the Anglican world. Those who you confirm and ordain will not be considered 'legally done' by some. Does this denial of your authority bother you?

I think it's well worth remembering that as far as the ordained ministry is concerned, the Anglican Communion is only a communion of men at the moment. Women's ordination is not recognised in England or Australia and in a lot of other countries too. Certainly this will extend that lack of communion to men, and I think that that, probably, will highlight some of the issues. And I hope that this in fact does highlight the lack of communion that women experience. But I trust that communion, and it's strong among millions of lay people.

I read a bit in one of the English papers that this election is okay for New Zealand as long as no-one invites the woman bishop to visit Britain. But I actually don't need to be invited. I trust that communion does at least include courtesy. And that, I think, will be the testing point for communion.

What about the challenges as to whether people are properly confirmed and ordained by you?

I'd say that within the church of the Province of New Zealand they are. I think that's going to challenge the other [New Zealand] bishops to support this. This is going to bring some problems to them. The Eames Report, for example, has firmly come out against having double ordinations and confirmations — having a man alongside to validate it. But I think that the Church of the Province will have to make a very clear statement that my ordinations and confirmations are as legal as any or else none of the others are legal. That's really where I would like them to put their weight, and that really is going to challenge the Anglican Communion. But the bishops won't do that, I reckon. They won't admit that if my ordinations are illegal theirs are too. But I shall challenge them on it. If it became an impossible work situation I should resign — if it really became impossible — because that's not what ministry is about. But I will work at sorting it out.

Would you like the kind of support where, for example, a New Zealand bishop might turn down an invitation to Britain because his woman colleague is not accepted there?

Yes, but also I would appreciate the support that says, 'We insist you do' [accept our woman colleague]. I may not get that. I think the men are going to have to face the fact that the communion is very impaired. I've got no doubt about the way in which the overall pattern of changes is going. Several Australian radio stations have rung me up and have said, 'What's your message for Australian women?' I've said, 'Hang on in there. Believe in what you're doing. It's going to come.'

You have a strong commitment to biculturalism within the church. Is your appointment as a bishop — something the Maori church is unlikely to do with regard to its women clergy — putting a strain on relationships between the Maori and Pakeha churches?
Well certainly there are big cultural differences within a large part of Maoridom, particularly within the Pihopitanga which does not accept women in leadership roles. They have difficulty in accepting women as priests, and regard it as an impossibility to have women as bishops. And certainly this is going to be a major debating point in the forthcoming discussions on the changes to the constitution of the church.

Will it be divisive? Surely the new constitution means that with two strands to the church there'll be less worry about this?
In some ways there could be more worry. There is less worry if you see the new constitution as allowing a space for tikanga Pakeha to do its own thing, and for tikanga Maori to do its own thing without trying to make rules for each other. But it could be more difficult in that each part of the church will be able to veto things that the other is doing. [My appointment] undoubtedly went through more easily because it came before the new constitution was in place.

I think we have to avoid getting into a situation of competitiveness between Maori and women on this issue, because if we do, it simply leaves white males with the power they've already got. I really think that there is a place in the sun for everybody. Our task as Pakeha women is building the Pakeha partnership of women and men within the Pakeha church. It's not that within the Maori church. Pakeha women have been highly supportive of the bicultural movement because they really understand what it is to be marginalised.

What do you consider will be the positive repercussions of your appointment both in this country and on other parts of the world?
A further step in the maturing process of the New Zealand Christian community.

What will be the spin-offs for the Catholic Church?

New Zealand is a long way from Rome, and I anticipate the cordiality that exists in New Zealand between Catholic bishops and Anglican bishops will continue. As far as any structural union is concerned — that's light years away, and it's stupid and foolish to blame women for that division.

Do you imagine you'll stay a bishop for life, and what one thing do you hope you could bring to the job (if nothing else)?
One of the things that nearly made me turn it down was the fact that it's not really possible to resign from actually being a bishop. You can resign from the job and I'm determined to give it a thorough review from time to time. If it's the right thing to get out, I'll get out...

I'd like to play a part in making not just the Church but the churches alert and alive and vibrant — really good, strong Christian communities.

Pat Booth is a Christian laywoman who works for the Anglican Church in both a voluntary and paid capacity. She has known Penny Jamieson since 1967.

Liz Robinson is a programme officer for the Voluntary Welfare Federation and a part-time university student.

'For the Better Discharge of Our Duties'

Women's Rights in Wanganui, 1893-1903[1]

Bronwyn Labrum

In June 1893 Margaret Bullock exhorted the women of Wanganui to join together and learn more about public life and politics. '...[W]hen that purpose is to fit ourselves for increased usefulness, for the better discharge of our duties to the state, and to each other, there should be no holding back.'[2] Research on the history of women in New Zealand initially focused on the development of organised feminism in the later nineteenth century. This was perhaps natural, given the fact that women in New Zealand won the struggle for the right to vote so early. Patricia Grimshaw's pioneering work, *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand*, first published in 1972, detailed the long feminist campaign which preceded enfranchisement. She showed us the pivotal leadership and organisational role played by the Women's Christian Temperance Union in the context of the wider international agitation for women's rights.[3]

However, there has been little to supersede Grimshaw's research. Some differences of interpretation and emphasis have been put forward. In a revisionary article, Raewyn Dalziel disagreed with Grimshaw's view that enfranchisement was a progressive measure and a conse-

quence of women's entry into new spheres of activity.[4] She contended that the vote was won because it did not imply a change in women's accepted role. Supporters stressed women's special nature and civilising mission. The vote was an extension of their roles as homemakers and guardians of morality, not the herald of a new role. Phillida Bunkle's study of the WCTU supported Dalziel's thesis. However, she, like Grimshaw, saw in the WCTU the origins of the women's movement in New Zealand and enlarged upon the ambivalent nature of its feminism.[5] In such studies, gaining the vote has been seen as the logical culmination of activity and a national perspective has dominated, based on articles from the WCTU's paper *White Ribbon* and national conventions.

Little attempt has been made to complement the picture of activity at a national level with detailed studies of how these ideas and activities operated in the local context. In this article I want to look at the women's movement in Wanganui, concentrating on two of the principal contemporary organisations, the local WCTU and the Women's Franchise League. The analysis follows a similar time-frame to activity at a national level: from suffrage agitation in 1893 until the demise in 1903 of public meetings of the movement's umbrella organisation, the National Council of Women. By this time many affiliated societies had also gone into recess. Such a study forms part of one of the larger issues of nineteenth century feminism: the extent to which the movement aimed at social change or social accommodation.

The WCTU was established in New Zealand in 1885 in response to a perceived social problem of the time, the 'demon drink', but encompassed wider areas of social concern. The movement was not just attempting to eradicate harmful alcohol, although that was its symbol; it was also defining a complete social and moral environment. It sought to promote wider social reform by influencing legislative activity, and its major campaign therefore centred on gaining the vote for women.

Its Wanganui branch demonstrated vigorous temperance activity, but a lesser degree of political agitation for other social reform, and minimal concern with women's issues. This contrasts with our recent perception of the WCTU's primary role in the women's movement in nineteenth-century New Zealand, which stemmed from our desire to find out how the campaign for the vote came into being. Throughout the period under discussion, the local Union seemed to react to directives from the national executive, rather than initiate activity from a groundswell movement. This pattern reinforces A.K. Burtt's conclusion that the Wanganui temperance movement was weak because of a lack of locally sponsored action, especially in public education. It was

struggling despite the stimulus of a conviction rate for drunkenness which remained higher than the national average throughout the period.[6]

The Wanganui branch of the WCTU was formed in 1885 by Mrs A. Dudley Ward, President of the new national Union. Thirty-three working and fifteen honorary members were enrolled on 5 October. Nevertheless, it proved to be a false start. The Union disbanded one year later and formed itself instead into a 'sisterhood' through which members thought they could better meet the requirements of the district. Such needs were perceived in terms of normal temperance activity, and were not directed at women specifically. Members gathered names for the world petition; and '[d]uring the last winter, coffee suppers were given to young lads, ninety-six of whom signed the pledge. Gentlemen gave them addresses after the supper.'[7]

The early Union was believed to have supported women's franchise,[8] but after disbanding did not reform until ten years later, in 1896, three years after enfranchisement. Again, formation was prompted by a national initiative. Twelve women attended a meeting organised by Mrs Collis, secretary of the New Plymouth Union, which was addressed by Lily Kirk, WCTU Dominion recording secretary and organiser for the New Zealand Alliance.[9] Membership increased to twenty-eight the following year, and reached a high of forty-nine in 1901. However, numbers then started to decline and in 1903, the president, Mrs G.H. Smith, urged members 'to try by personal influence to add at least one more member to our number...'[10]

The main focus was, naturally, temperance activity. Local option licensing polls and the elections for the Licensing Committee were the principal stimulus to activity. Strenuous efforts were made for each campaign, including open meetings and close liaison with the Prohibition League. Members went house to house visiting, distributed leaflets and displayed no-licence posters in factories. The local WCTU supported the temperance candidate in the mayoral elections that year, as it had in 1897.

Individualism was a feature of the movement, particularly in terms of the moral choice a vote provided when selecting a candidate to support. This decision took the form of scrutinising the moral standards of candidates, rather than their political views and allegiances. Women of the WCTU believed social change did not involve a transfer of power from one group to another, but came from the changed consciousness of a morally transformed individual. Such a viewpoint put less emphasis on the formal structure of the law, which may have influenced the tendency away from political agitation for other social reform.

The constitutional obligation of christian work can be seen in the expansion of departments of work, initiation of relief work, and the establishment of an auxiliary at Turakina. Juvenile work began in 1898. It consisted of a class which taught girls knitting, sewing, darning and temperance and religious instruction. Skills to stand young women in good stead were emphasised equally with a more wholesome life. Relief and Evangelistic departments were organised in 1899. Relief work was primarily among families, often taking the form of parcels of clothes to the needy and hospital visiting, and sometimes working with the Salvation Army.

The equal obligation to promote social reform is less evident. Instead, practical social work seems to have been the preferred solution. Agitation for legislation was absent except for the general directive that members conscientiously use their vote to support the candidate with the 'highest principles and who would advance the best interests of the community'.[11]

The preference for practical social work corresponds with the local Union's low-key feminist role until the turn of the century. Lack of suffrage campaign experience in terms of ideas, unity and organisational possibilities was obviously a factor. The individualistic emphasis of the local branch on a morally transformed individual was also important, and contrasts with the national leadership's emphasis on legislative change by voting for men of high principle who would enact equal laws for women and men. National leaders deemed their vote moral and disinterested; its influence would 'sweeten and purify the political atmosphere'. Indeed, the 'evangelical or true purpose of government was the realisation of a perfect moral order'.[12]

In the local context and in a reversal of the usual New Zealand pattern, the only mention of issues specifically affecting women was found in 1899, when a women's meeting was held in November. This meeting was the first recorded interaction with local feminists. It was a first in a number of ways: it was designated for women only, assisted by women who were not members of the WCTU, and the focus of 'special effort'. This seems to reinforce the indication that such views were uncommon for the Wanganui WCTU.

The meeting reveals a celebration of the domestic feminine stereotype, attributing superior values to women and their attendant obligations to society and the state. A new member, Mrs Armitage, gave the keynote address on 'The Mother, the Maker of the Nation'. Salvation Army officer Ensign Parsons spoke on 'the need for the co-operation of women in all efforts for the uplifting of the race'. Even girls were included: Mrs Snow from Bunnythorpe gave an 'attractive' address

entitled 'The King's daughter is glorious within'. And Jessie Williamson, a member of Wanganui's feminist organisation, the Women's Political League, spoke on 'illegitimacy'.

Born and married in Ireland, Williamson arrived in Wanganui in 1877. She became politically active in 1893 at the age of 36, when her youngest daughter was four. She joined the WPL's precursor, the Wanganui Franchise League, and later the NCW, serving on its national executive as secretary in 1897 and treasurer from 1898 to 1905. Williamson was associated with opposition politics, and became an active member of the Conservative organisation in Wanganui. She was particularly interested in social welfare and was an outspoken champion of institutional reform, involving herself in the ongoing debate over the Jubilee Home for the elderly. In 1896 she became an official visitor to the Female Department of the Wanganui Prison and in 1900 she was appointed to the Patea and Wanganui United Charitable Aid Board.

Local WCTU sympathy with her ideas is evident: 'we knew the subject would be in competent hands'.[13] Williamson argued that failures in attempts to reduce the problem of illegitimate births were due solely to the fact that man had been the law-maker and had formulated a code of morality for women to endeavour to live up to. She reflects the difference nineteenth-century feminists felt women would make if they assisted in the formulation of law, and the importance of the state in assisting social reform. Williamson denounced the resulting sexual double standard: 'And whilst man the lawgiver smiled benignly on and voted respectable the woman who adhered to this code, he was busily employed all the time devising snares, by which aided by her own weak nature, she could be forced to transgress'. Although the existing stereotype of women as the weaker sex was still accepted, this was a significant attack on the sexual double standard.

Despite the meeting's obvious success, there is no evidence of any follow-up. Recognition of Williamson's competency on such issues perhaps reflects an attitude that the Women's Political League already dealt with such issues in its own meetings. In 1901, however, the question of women's disabilities 'was taken up heartily' and WCTU members decided to co-operate formally with the League in canvassing signatures for a petition to Parliament the following year.[14]

Members also discussed the issue of women barmaids, and passed a resolution protesting against the employment of women as barmaids, urging government legislation for their abolition. Although this was one of the few occupations open to many women, the members' agitation was not against female exploitation; rather it revealed a concern to preserve women's symbolic role of purity. Women thus had to be

segregated from alcohol; the barmaid was a 'violation of categories and a contradiction in terms'.[15] Members apparently drew the same conclusion with regard to politics.

Prior to winning the vote, the Wanganui Women's Franchise League, in comparison with the local WCTU, had focused strongly on political activity and education and spearheaded the suffrage campaign in Wanganui. It seems the Union and the League acted quite independently of each other, except for the 1899 women's meeting. This impression is reinforced by the fact that no overlap of membership between the two groups was found.

The first franchise leagues were formed in the main centres by the WCTU when it appeared that the 1892 Franchise Bill was in danger of being lost. In these organisations, WCTU leaders joined with non-temperance feminists in a WCTU initiated group.[16] As towns were systematically canvassed, the Leagues spread to Waimate, Takaka, Ashburton, Timaru, Blenheim and Levin, among other places. The WCTU and the Leagues aimed to educate women to a sense of their responsibilities and obtain signatures for the petition to Parliament.

By 1893 the momentum was well under way and new leagues were still being formed. The Wanganui Franchise League was inaugurated in this later stage and, while other non-temperance feminists joined these subsequent leagues with alacrity because they were at last able to aid the suffrage movement without reservations, in Wanganui the League was not WCTU-initiated. Wanganui's experience stands mid-way between the situation at Auckland and at Christchurch. The Auckland League, although secular, was run by the same Christian feminists who ran the WCTU and later the YWCA.[17] Christchurch proved to be an exception: no Franchise League was established, and the leadership of the franchise campaign was retained by the WCTU. The greater number of non-temperance feminists there led instead to the formation of the Canterbury Women's Institute in 1892, an organisation whose aims extended beyond the immediate goal of gaining the vote.[18]

Women present at the inaugural meeting of the Wanganui Franchise League in June 1893 confirmed 'women's right to electoral privileges and the capacity to judiciously use them'.[19] However, members had no intention of confining themselves to immediate objectives. '[The vote] is of little use unless [women are] prepared by intercourse, thought and discussion to use it wisely. Therefore we propose at our monthly meetings to read or deliver short speeches, interspersed with brief readings both being of a character to stimulate thought.'

These ideas were elaborated in a *Yeoman* article by the WFL vice-

president and founder, Margaret Bullock. A New Zealander, Bullock arrived in Wanganui in 1877, from Auckland. Widowed with five sons, she came to work as a reporter and assistant editor on the *Wanganui Chronicle*, owned by her brother Gilbert Carson. She also worked as a special parliamentary correspondent for several colonial papers. Bullock later supported herself by writing a novel, short stories and government tourist guides. Like Williamson she was prominent in the NCW executive; she was appointed to the Standing Orders Committee in 1897, and elected vice-president in 1900. Bullock was also appointed an official prison visitor in 1896 and shared Williamson's concern with the welfare of Jubilee Home residents. A strong advocate of economic independence, no doubt based on her own experience, she was also a firm defender of 'the system' in the form of parliament and Empire. She was centrally situated in Wanganui's network of prominent citizens because of her family contacts.

Margaret Bullock believed women had the same mental ability as men, but lacked men's knowledge of methods, public affairs, political questions and the world's needs. No mistakes must be made in the early days of enfranchisement, and knowledge could be obtained collectively. As the quotation at the beginning of this article shows, these duties confirmed women's role as guardians of moral health and welfare: 'a world's regeneration will attest the fact'.[20]

Activity focused on Parliament, urging the government to push the enfranchisement measure. As a parliamentary reporter, Bullock helped scrutinise the Houses' activities. Members exposed parliamentarians' condescending and unjust objections to votes for women. These included the claim that petitions for the electoral bill were from a very small proportion of the women of New Zealand, and most signatures were forgeries. Wanganui's own MHR, A.D. Willis, declared that '[t]heir very sympathy and good qualities however were the strongest reason why women shouldn't have franchise, as they would be too apt to look at the man whom they would be called on to vote [for] and not at his party principles.'[21]

After the franchise victory on 19 September 1893, feminist organisation continued. The Wanganui Franchise League was one of a number which continued under a different name. Others split up to form new associations, for example, the Women's Social and Political League of Wellington. By 1897 the *New Zealand Liberal and Labour Associations' Directory* listed at least fourteen such organisations.[22] Most worked for similar ends and corresponded with each other. The allocation of pages in the *White Ribbon* and the *Prohibitionist* for reports and information from women's groups facilitated interaction, as did the formation of the

National Council of Women in 1896.

The Wanganui Women's Political League, as it became known in October 1893, immediately set about the task of placing women on the electoral roll. In under two months, 1460 women were enrolled locally.[23] The new league also aimed 'to promote the political education of women generally, to improve the economic position of women and take up women's questions as they arise'. It was to be a non-party organisation; measures, not men, were the subject of debates. The first annual report concluded:

> There is little to tell of actual political results achieved during the year... our aims at present are rather educative than aggressive. While conscious that reforms are needed in many directions, we are still more conscious that even important political and social questions should be exhaustively studied before changes are called for.[24]

Papers in the first year concentrated on this theme, among them 'Why women want the franchise', 'Politics, what are they', 'Constitution of Parliament and modes of procedure therein', and one on Mary Wollstonecraft's views. To further their educational aims, a library fund was established with the money received from registering women on the electoral roll. On her departure to England, the inaugural President, Ellen Ballance, donated a handsome sum of money and the political library of her late husband John Ballance, who was Liberal premier 1890-1893.

The first annual meeting touched on what would be a recurring problem: apathy. Strategies to forestall this included setting a low membership rate of half a crown, with encouragement for daughters to join. The report elaborated a non-aggressive stance which tempered the original aims:

> Join us in the study of what reform means, and how to bring it about without violently disturbing existing conditions... we do not wish to pose as agitators for further political privilege for women... in fact among our members are to be found some who were opposed at first to the franchise bill.[25]

The suffrage campaign had reflected a 'specious unity'.[26] The implications of votes for women were many and varied.

Attendances at meetings were often described optimistically as 'steadily increasing', but the 1898 annual report regretted that 'our excellent President still had to do the lion's share of the work'.[27] Signs that all was not well include an unexplained long recess taken in 1896, and the transfer of the League's library to the Public Library, where it was felt it would be of more use, in 1898.

Furthermore, despite references in 1900 to the League's age, vitality

and harmony of discourse, the suggestion was put that meetings should be thrown open to men as well as women, 'a step that would doubtless do much to popularise our work'.[28] Infrequent reports after 1900 confirm waning interest. The last recorded meeting found was in July 1902. It was reported because of its unusual subject matter: co-operative farming for women. This idea was advocated because of the 'free and healthy' nature of the occupation compared to the already overcrowded towns. 'Experienced male settlers' were invited to air their views, and, it seems, legitimate interest in the topic. The League seemed to be making last-ditch attempts to revive itself and in the process changing its tactics.

In its lifetime the League canvassed a number of issues of relevance to women in the nineteenth century. As might be expected, the liquor traffic was one of the first issues discussed. Over two meetings in December 1893 and March 1894, a debate was held on the subject 'The Liquor Traffic: should it be prohibited or regulated?', before a large and enthusiastic audience. Speakers for prohibition included women who had belonged to the original WCTU. The weakness of the temperance cause locally was not helped, however, by the failure of one of the prohibition speakers to speak for the required length of time and the unavoidable absence of another. Jessie Williamson and Margaret Bullock spoke for regulation and their side won. Later in the period Williamson declared that she believed in temperance in all things, but especially language: 'the rabid statements made by some temperance reformers really got her back up'. Bullock contended that temperance reform was an infringement of the liberty of the subject. The evil was not growing and the example of Maine demonstrated that 'prohibition did not prohibit'.[29] Regulation remained League policy throughout the period.

The principal focus, however, was the removal of 'women's disabilities', their term for the civic and political face of discrimination against women. In 1901, when progress remained slow, the League resolved to make the issue a test question at every election until reform was achieved, and compiled a comprehensive questionnaire for candidates.[30]

As part of this campaign, members supported mandatory appointment, and later election, of women to charitable aid boards and the appointment of women inspectors to jails, hospitals and asylums. The League sought provision for women to sit on other local bodies as well. In 1898 members sponsored a meeting about the Municipal Reform and invited the mayor and borough councillors to take part. However, they lost a motion extending local government franchise to those holding parliamentary franchise.

It was argued by many women's organisations that a tradition of involvement with benevolent societies meant women were particularly suitable to appoint to hospital and charitable aid boards. Making a bid for access to such boards was one of the few ways women could hope to influence social policy. Compared with Britain and the United States, where women had used philanthropy and voluntary associations to wield collective power and influence policy, there was less potential here because of limited reserves of private wealth and early state involvement in welfare services.[31]

In arguing their case, members shared contemporary assumptions that women's unique and superior qualities fitted them for public work and that women brought a special discernment to welfare concerns, including a 'housewifely eye to bad management'.[32] In 1896 the League urged women inspectors, 'in order that inspection may in future be carried out in a manner conducive to the best interests of ratepayers and inmates'.[33] At the NCW conference in the same year, Williamson argued that the present system of charitable aid encouraged pauperism and that women should take their seats on all local bodies dealing with relief distribution. In a report of the 1898 conference, she reasoned that most work on local bodies was domestic, which women could perform easily.[34] The *Wanganui Herald* agreed:

> If there is one thing more than any other in consonance with feminine instinct and capabilities, it is the care of the sick and the aged, for whom men in robust health seem to have little practical sympathy.... The male representatives of Borough and County Councils are, as so often the case, flinty-natured, cross-grained misanthropists, in whom the milk of kindness is entirely absent or has curdled, and who seem to think that poverty and ill-health are almost indictable offences, and their victims deserving of punishment.[35]

Given these attitudes and the interests of key members, the League's other strong platform was, predictably, welfare issues. Two papers were delivered in 1896 on 'Prison Reform and Treatment of Prisoners' and 'Prisons of One Hundred Years ago and those in Germany today'. Williamson was struck forcibly by the state of the cells in the Wanganui Prison — 'inhuman places' — and the fact that women had little say in its management. She believed that sentences for serious offences should be decided by evidence of reform and the 'militarism' should be suppressed within the prison system.[36] A new concept of the treatment of crime characterised members' thinking. They wanted 'reform not merely punishment'.[37] Crime had come to be seen as a moral sickness, indicating a more general social malady, which could also be treated like a physical illness.[38] These women distinguished between male and

female prisoners and wanted gender-appropriate rehabilitation. Thus the NCW proposed to change prison routine to include domestic tasks and sewing of the industrial garment production kind.

Illegitimate children, larrikinism and the protection of young people were constant concerns. This interest reflected a strong belief in the receptivity of young minds and the need to protect them from corruption. Because women with their new responsibilities were 'social servants', they emphasised their role in the socialisation and regulation of children.[39] Members prepared a thorough statement in 1899. All children, 'so long... the scapegoats for adult transgressors of the social code', should be born possessing an equal status. A Public Prosecutor should be appointed to discover the parentage wherever possible, to enforce maintenance from parents within their means and to take away their parenting rights. Further, because of high infant mortality among children and their perceived predisposition to poverty and criminality, local government should make suitable provision for their welfare and education.[40] The year 1902 saw practical application of their resolutions, when the Wanganui Charitable Aid Board voted in favour of them and authorised 1000 copies to be printed for colony-wide circulation. In 1896 the League congratulated the Legislative Council for passing the Criminal Code Amendment Act, which raised the age of consent to sixteen.

The limitations of state power were also raised. In 1895 members considered a draft bill from the Auckland Rescue Society entitled the 'Suppression of Immorality Act'. They protested that it was beyond the power of parliament to enforce individual morality, and resisted police being endowed with 'extraordinary powers'. The benefits of compulsory residence in reformatories were doubted and in the case of neglected and criminal children, members preferred boarding out. In a similar fashion, the 1900 annual report mentions discussion of the proper inspection and management of all 'so-called "homes"' and the reform and classification of industrial schools. Yet most often intervention was called for. Sectarian concerns are apparent at times, for example in a resolution regarding Mother Aubert's work at Jerusalem. While members commended her and called on the government to grant her the money she was seeking, they stipulated that 'in order to guard against future contingencies', her work should be brought under state supervision.[41]

Other main issues raised concerned equal pay, marriage and divorce laws, and repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act. The case for equal pay was most frequently brought with regard to salaries in the Education Department. In 1895 members discussed cadet rates which stood at £50 per annum for males and £40 per annum for females. Divergent views

were reported. Williamson seconded a motion urging more female cadets who were capable and had the educational pre-requisites. C. Steadman supported equal pay but not an influx of women into the service. Mrs Newcombe warmly supported equal pay, fearing a return to 'sweating' otherwise. Mrs O'Hara altogether disapproved of female employment in the civil service.[42] Later in the year, a committee met and passed a resolution on the salary scale proposals by the New Zealand Educational Institute (the teachers' union):

> ...[W]hile recognising the desirableness of a colonial scale of salaries for public school salaries... it perpetuates for our female teachers an injustice which it aims at removing in the case of male teachers viz. inequality of pay for similar work. It is the duty of the state to set the example of equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex.[43]

Bullock, Williamson and Steadman were appointed as a deputation to discuss these issues with Premier Seddon in 1903. Despite Bullock's insistence, Seddon maintained that women were not on the same footing as men, lacking training and experience. Moreover, he did not want to place a woman on the same footing as a man who had a wife and family to support. Again the question of women's 'proper role' confronted the League.

The League also facilitated establishment of a Women Teachers' Association in Wanganui. A meeting for women teachers was held on 28 September 1901, three months after the first organisation was formed in Christchurch with the objective of securing 'a proper recognition of women's work'.[44] Participants discussed the report of the Teacher's Salary Commission and passed resolutions urging equal pay. Mary Fraser, Principal of Wanganui Girls' College, proposed 'that the high positions in public schools should be open to women who are capable of them'. Copies were sent to the Minister of Education and the Member for Wanganui. Miss Laird, elected secretary and treasurer, undertook organisation of a petition to be presented to both Houses of Parliament.[45]

According to a show of hands at a meeting in January 1894, League members were generally happy with the education system. Later on in the period free kindergartens and art instruction, the provision of gymnasiums and compulsory truancy inspection were debated. Women were however unable to vote for or sit on education committees. As early as November 1893 a motion was passed advocating alteration to the Education Act in order to enable women to vote. By 1898 members wanted the right of election to school committees and education boards.

Marriage and divorce laws were sharply criticised: a man could do things that, if done by his wife, would be grounds for divorce. 'He can be lazy and drunk and starve his wife and children without her being

able to insist on maintenance'. A resolution to put husband and wife on the same footing with regard to divorce was carried unanimously. In 1896 the League sent a protest to the Legislative Council when it rejected the Divorce Bill. That rejection was a recognition of a 'separate code of morality for each sex' which members abhorred.[46]

As Roderick Phillips has shown, the emphasis of women's organisations was on equal access to divorce, rather than on liberalisation *per se*.[47] Their concern took account of the implications of the legal and social status of men and women. Bullock proposed 'that the marriage laws of the colony be recast or readjusted on the principle of complete equality and the economic independence of men and women', but the resolution was carried by a majority of only two.

'Economic independence' meant a legal right to receive a fixed proportion (generally one-third) of the husband's earnings. Contemporaries observed that advocates of this principle were not seeking to separate or discriminate between the interests of husband and wife. Rather, they wanted the law to recognise their equality as economic factors in the household and state.[48] It was an important tactic when there was still strong opposition to the employment of married women.

The League also fought for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, a prime example of the Victorian sexual double standard which demanded monogamy of women but condoned sexual licence for men.[49]

There were two final issues which resonated through many League discussions. The first was restriction of 'mongolian immigration'. Support for this measure was influenced by economic and cultural/racial motivations. Xenophobic beliefs that a yellow peril was about to invade the country gained in momentum over the period. Many thought that the Chinese were immoral (especially threatening to women and children) and a source of cheap labour, competing with Pakeha men and undercutting shop prices. By 1896 entrance was restricted and a stiff poll-tax charged on each arrival.[50]

In supporting restrictions on Chinese and other measures such as taking away parenting rights over illegitimate children, League members were not prepared to concede to other races and social groups the freedoms they claimed for women such as themselves. The acceptance of innate differences in reason and moral constitution in men and women opened the way for belief in woman's primary role as housewife and mother. Carried a step further, it also opened the way for racism and social Darwinism, and led women into similar conclusions about race and class differences.[51]

Constitutional issues were the second issue which occupied much time. After all, women's newly-won participation in parliamentary

elections was their power base. Enfranchisement was believed to have circumvented existing inadequate avenues of reform. In similar fashion, they now wanted the abolition of party government (carrying through the non-partisan constitutional principle of the League), restructuring of the Upper House, and an elective executive which would be separately responsible to the House of Representatives. The Legislative Council was a special target because so many reforms seemed to founder at its sessions. In June 1896, for example, members noted that the Legislative Council had just rejected the Asiatics Restriction Bill, the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act and the Divorce Bill. In September, the League passed a resolution supporting the 'statesman-like measure' of the Constitution Act Amendment Bill. It proposed the abolition of life tenure of the Legislative Council (with gradual retirement of life members), the eligibility of women for appointment, and a combined chamber where both houses would sit and vote as one. The League supported the principles of majority decision on an issue and referendum.

Last but by no means least, there was the close connection between the League and the NCW. Upon the latter's formation, agendas of issues to be discussed were sent out prior to the annual conferences. This constituted much of the year's programme for the League. The influence, however, was not all one way. League delegates were bound to vote as instructed, and their particular interests as women from Wanganui were often shown. The connection was strengthened by the direct involvement of Bullock and Williamson.

Wanganui hosted the NCW's annual conference in 1901. An obvious defensiveness, also apparent in the League, was creeping in among the sixteen delegates who met. 'Congratulations were again offered to the Council for having abandoned its former chimerical ideas and having settled down to a practical programme'.[52] A paper by Williamson on 'The Broadening of Women's Outlook' reflected contemporary assumptions about the results of the women's movement. As well as entering the civil service and giving added importance and weight to the presentations of women's societies, 'the result was immensely beneficial with respect to a great deal of social legislation'.[53]

The Wanganui Women's Political League started out strongly and enthusiastically, but surviving records indicate a diminution of energy and activity. The role of forceful personalities, in this case Margaret Bullock and Jessie Williamson, largely sustained the League. Bullock, in particular, stood on the more progressive side. Although she was a driving force in its establishment, her vision seemed to be diminished in practice by other members. In Wanganui, as nationally, the old feminist

leaders never seemed to gain a following and battled in relative isolation. Toward the end of the period a change of tactics is evident, as the League sought to popularise its work.

Nevertheless, compared to the local WCTU, it demonstrated a high degree of political activity and 'consciousness-raising', and thus could properly be said to be the main force behind the women's movement in Wanganui. Tactics and rhetoric reflected the national pattern, even if the structures used to express them differed.

Bronwyn Labrum has been working as a researcher and writer for *The Book of New Zealand Women/Ko Kui Ma te Kaupapa*, to be published by Bridget Williams Books early next year. She has just finished an MA Thesis which examines the influence of gender on the committal and treatment of women at the Auckland Lunatic Asylum between 1870 and 1910, and is currently a temporary lecturer in History at Victoria University of Wellington.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Margaret Tennant and Basil Poff who supervised the original research. Charlotte Macdonald and Beryl Hughes made thoughtful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

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Ettie Rout and the Volunteer Sisterhood:

Fighting to get into the Great War

Jane Tolerton

In July 1915 the *Lyttelton Times* reported that in the little town of Oxford in North Canterbury, the Women's Christian Temperance Union had pledged — individually — not to indulge in afternoon tea until the end of the war.

On the first Monday morning of the same month, the *Lyttelton Times* announced to its women readers that if they were intelligent and competent, between thirty and fifty (but preferably thirty-five and forty), 'physically and organically sound', had the required 'general capacity, character and good temper', and were prepared to give up a year of their lives for practically no payment at all, they could be among the twenty women to be chosen to go to Egypt and help nurse 'sick and wounded colonials.'[1] This was the first local announcement of Ettie Rout's Volunteer Sisterhood.

I juxtapose the two announcements not because, from our end of the twentieth century, they seem humorous (especially when put together) but because they are representative of two reactions New Zealand women had to the war effort. Only the first was the officially required reaction. The other was not required at all — and was strongly opposed.

In this article I focus on the Volunteer Sisterhood as an example of women's fight to get into the Great War. The sisterhood won — against the odds.

When Prime Minister William Massey said that if New Zealanders were asked to assist the empire they would go, no questions asked, he meant male New Zealanders. During the five years of peace before the outbreak of 'The Great War', in July 1914, New Zealand men had been subjected to compulsory military training. From the age of eighteen they became territorials, drilling one night a week and spending a week a year in camp. Many younger boys were cadets. When the war broke out, men rushed to join up, fearing that it would be over before Christmas, as the saying went — or, at least, before they could get there.

Women formed Lady Liverpool committees. Every tiny town had its committee, named for the Governor General's wife. The committees collected everything from condensed milk to cocoa, from camphor to coloured handkerchiefs. 'With that sure intuition which is the strength of womankind, ladies will know how to provide for the welfare of our boys', the *Lyttelton Times* commented. 'What about the usefulness of sox, for example.'[2]

The committees perfectly fitted the role the state prescribed for women at war. Lady Liverpool was the first lady of the land. She set forth the prescription in a poem on the front of *Lady Liverpool's Knitting Book:*

> For the Empire and for Freedom
> We all must do our bit;
> The men go forth to battle
> The women wait — and knit.[3]

Languid, expressionless, the woman on the cover of the little purple volume looks out the window with her knitting on her knee; outside soldiers with huge grins on their faces saunter by.

As the war put one Christmas behind it and then another, women did move into men's jobs. But in the middle of July 1915, this was still largely seen as keeping seats warm. 'Smart girls could well be taken on,' the *Lyttelton Times* thought, 'on the understanding that when the war was over the original holder of the position would be entitled to claim it...Should the young soldier display his gratitude to the girl who saved his billet for him by marrying her, so much the better.'[4]

There were attempts to set up a Women's National Reserve to mobilise women into men's jobs, but achievement on this front was piecemeal and local. In some areas, there were lists of women willing to work at this job or that. (In Christchurch women had to pay two shillings to add their names.) In others, courses were run. In Auckland these

included not only shorthand, typing and business methods but gardening, shooting and signalling. But in general the reserve seems to have been more written about than used. Going out to work was not the sacrifice women were called on to make for the war effort. A sacrifice *was* expected of women, but it was not one that would necessarily take them beyond the front door.

When the war turned the spotlight of nationalism on the New Zealand male it lit up the image of the warrior-protector, the young hero prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for the country he loved. When the spotlight fell on women it lit up not the nurse, off to war with her countrymen, not the female factory worker or clerk — but the mother. For women heroism lay in relation to the departing soldier hero, in the pain of his departure. This applied to sisters and daughters — but particularly to mothers. The supreme sacrifice for women was watching sons go away — and bearing up if they didn't come back.

A typical piece of women's page rhetoric expressed this in the wake of the Gallipoli campaign: 'The Mother, the daughters, sisters and wives of Australian and New Zealand soldiers now walk side by side down the dark path of pain and suffering and sacrifice; theirs the common cross, theirs the one bright crown.'[5] And one of the most popular poems of 1915 throughout the Empire emphasised that the inactive role ascribed to women was what they wanted: 'Ours but the waiting part and ours to give, To patiently endure without a word... The history of our times won't mention us, 'Tis so indeed that we would have it be.'[6]

This sort of rhetoric had the right ring about it at the time; but even then it was persuasive, rather than descriptive. The women of 1914 had grown up during the feminist era of the last decade of the nineteenth century and during the rampant jingoism of the first decade of the twentieth. Both had an effect on shaping their desires. And many women wanted to do something active for the war effort.

Rose Macaulay's poem, 'Many Sisters To Many Brothers', was the cry of such a woman:

> Oh, it's you that have the luck, out there in blood and muck;
> You were born beneath a kindly star;
> All we dreamed of, I and you, you can really go and do,
> And I can't, the way things are
>
> In a trench you are sitting, while I am knitting
> A hopeless sock that never gets done.
> Well, here's luck to you, my dear — and you've got it, no fear;
> But for me— a war is poor fun.[7]

Women fought a tough battle to be able to join actively in the war effort. Here I focus on the New Zealand Volunteer Sisterhood as an example.

But there were other groups of women with a better claim to being sent overseas — doctors and nurses.

Dr Agnes Bennett volunteered, but was turned down. She went to Egypt under her own steam. Although some individuals worked on getting her a commission in the New Zealand Medical Corps, this was not achieved and Dr Bennett left to work in Salonika, in the Scottish Women's Hospital. The doctors she found there had had the same experience as she had. British women doctors had offered their services to the War Office and had been told they were not required. So they had made their own hospital units — and offered them to other allied countries. The Scottish Women's Hospital units were staffed completely by women— from the doctors to the ambulance drivers.

Nurses faced the same sort of reaction early in the war. No nurses sailed with the main body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in October 1914. In the months that followed, they bombarded the Minister of Defence, Colonel James Allen, with applications to serve abroad. Finally, under pressure from a deputation of nurses in early 1915, Allen agreed to ask the British if they wanted New Zealand nurses and to offer fifty. He was confident that the offer would be declined. But Britain snapped it up. The nurses left in April 1915, arrived in England in May and were immediately sent on to Egypt, to the hospital in the Abbassia district of Cairo which had been allocated to the New Zealanders. As Hester Maclean, Matron-in-Chief of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service, put it in her chapter of the official history, 'It was a surprise to find this hospital run by New Zealanders, and staffed by Australian and English sisters, because the sisters had been so long assured that New Zealand nurses were not needed.'[8] They set about nursing the casualties of the Gallipoli campaign. Britain sent for more and two batches were hurriedly dispatched.

New Zealand had no system like the British Voluntary Aid Detachments, whose members were referred to as 'VADs'. The most famous of these was Vera Brittain, who wrote of her wartime experiences in *Testament of Youth*. Hospital VADs (as they were called), like Vera Brittain, were nurse aids. In the cartoonists' version of the war, nurses were old, tough dragon-women, while VADs were pretty, delightfully naive 'girls'. Partly because the scheme was initially voluntary and unpaid (and therefore attracted young women from well-off families), and partly because they captured the imagination of the popular press and were portrayed as the female heroines of the war, VADs were to some extent resented by the nursing profession, which complained that they were social butterflies who expected to be able to dance all night and hold sick soldiers' hands all day. As the war ground on and the

VADs became increasingly necessary — as ambulance drivers, x-ray attendants and a variety of other occupations as well as nurse helps — they ceased to work voluntarily and were paid. In the vast majority of cases the stereotype of social butterfly did not fit at all; as Vera Brittain makes clear in her book, the hours were long, the work physically and psychologically exhausting.

Ettie Rout's Volunteer Sisterhood was to be a VAD-type scheme based in New Zealand. In 1915 Ettie was a shorthand-typist who ran her own public typing business in Christchurch. She was an officially appointed shorthand writer for Supreme Court cases and Royal Commissions. But she spent much of her time working as an advocate and publicist for causes she believed in. In 1910 she had been the founding editor of the labour newspaper *The Maoriland Worker*, started by the Shearers' Union of which she was an honorary member.

On the surface of it, a scheme designed to send women to war seems a strange project for someone who had been so involved in the labour movement — particularly in Christchurch, the centre of anti-militarism. Numbers of Ettie's friends had been jailed in the fight against compulsory military training, or would be jailed for resisting conscription.

However, a few years before the war Ettie had read the works of the Swedish socialist feminist, Ellen Key. Ellen Key's doctrine is sometimes summed up as 'universal motherhood'; although this is a drastic simplification, this is the element that Ettie Rout took on in selling the volunteer sisterhood scheme to the public.[9] She insisted that it was up to New Zealand women to go and look after their men. It was not only their national obligation, she said, but their hereditary duty as women. Her contention that 'Women's racial duty is obviously to act as the guardian of the torch of life, to light it anew with every generation. She performs this duty primarily and completely as mother, secondarily and vicariously as nurse,' is a classic Ellen Key type of statement.[10]

'The Volunteer Sisterhood cannot stand for the abrogation of the primary duty by the mothers of the race,' Ettie assured the public. 'On the other hand the call on strong single women and those without ties is urgent and insistent. It should not be disobeyed to fulfil lesser duties to the past generation.'[11]

This was, perhaps, a message to her own family. Since her father's bankruptcy in the early 1890s, Ettie had supported her father, mother (until her death in 1911) and an invalid sister on her earnings. Because of this she had had to put off her plan of working her way round the world. In 1908 she told a friend she expected to be free of her heavy family obligation in six or seven years (possibly because her father would then turn seventy and be eligible for an old age pension). Her

targetted date coincided with the war.

In her initial publicity for the sisterhood, Ettie stressed that it was 'a woman's movement.'[12] It was, indeed, *a* woman's movement: Ettie was in charge. Instead of working through the established women's groups or calling a public meeting, she dubbed herself 'honorary secretary' — and selected an all-male committee, making it clear to them that she would do all the active work.

We have already seen that women with a much better claim to be sent overseas had encountered massive resistance from the government. Ettie could have been in no doubt that the sisterhood would face similar opposition. But she timed her announcement of the scheme very cleverly. If there was one week in the whole war when the government might have accepted a VAD-type scheme, it was the first week of July 1915.

New Zealand soldiers had been on the Gallipoli peninsula for about two months at that time. But Gallipoli was not the only place New Zealand soldiers were dying. In Trentham Camp, massing point of the NZEF, there had been seven deaths in the first three days of July. In the fortnight straddling June and July, men were going sick at a rate of 68 per day, until there were over 1000 in bed — or in the horseboxes of the Trentham racecourse, which had been taken over to form a hospital.

A major scandal ensued when Dr Thacker, a Christchurch member of the House of Representatives (and a friend of Ettie's), raised the matter in Parliament. This was fuelled by the inability of the army doctors to put a label on the killer disease (it was finally diagnosed as cerebro-spinal meningitis), and by the government's attempts to hush it up. The men had been ordered not to write letters home or contact newspapers; incoming letters were opened and censored.

Women, particularly, were horrified by reports that men had died before their families had been told they were ill. The Canterbury Women's Institute said the cause of death was the authorities' disregard for human life, and that the whole affair was an unanswerable argument for the principle that 'no department of human activity could be run without the co-operation of women'.[13] There had been no nurses at Trentham until 27 June, when Sister Brandon was sent in to set up the racecourse hospital. The highly embarrassed government set up a parliamentary committee to investigate. On the advice of the opposition they turned it into a commission of enquiry.

The Trentham debacle gave Ettie an excellent launching pad for the volunteer sisterhood scheme. The government was unlikely to turn down any help offered, and women's groups were likely to support the scheme. In the scenario she envisaged, the volunteers would gain

credibility and publicity by helping out at Trentham — and would leave shortly afterwards for Egypt.

When Ettie launched the scheme in the newspapers, she said the volunteers would have to submit to a month's training 'for preference in Trentham' before leaving for Egypt.[14] But this was by no means certain. Similarly, she had no actual volunteers on hand when she offered twenty of them to Dr Valintine, head of the Public Health Department, and therefore also director of Military hospitals.

Dr Valintine's first reaction to Ettie's offer was that he should reject it. He checked with Sister Brandon before saying no. Lacking every component of ordinary hospital life, Sister Brandon welcomed the offer of help. Dr Valintine telegrammed Ettie and, unaware that she had no volunteers as yet, asked for ten to be sent immediately. Ettie replied that she was advertising for volunteers next day (that is in Monday morning's newspaper) and would send ten to Trentham by Wednesday morning.

Two hundred women responded to the newspaper appeal that Monday. Many were so keen they lied about their age, said they were willing to go that very day, or offered to pay their own fare.

That same day, Ettie began interviewing women and sending them for medical check-ups to Dr Guthrie, the sisterhood's 'honorary medical adviser'. She had ordered the blue print dresses, white aprons and panama hats that were to be the sisterhood's uniform; and she had telegrammed Dr Valintine to say she could definitely send ten women. But then she received a telegram sent earlier by Dr Valintine to say that as the women were not ready, she was not to advertise for them until she had heard again from him. An hour later another telegram in reply to hers arrived. Dr Valintine thanked Ettie for her offer, but assured her that there were enough nurses at Trentham already.

Ettie telegrammed back that, in accordance with his instructions, she had engaged ten volunteers and a trained nurse to take charge of the group which would arrive at Trentham on Wednesday morning. Presented with this fait accompli, Valintine said he would accept the women on the basis that their status would be that of probationers.

It seems likely that Dr Valintine had encountered some opposition from nurses who resented the new scheme. Ettie, aware from the start of potential nurse opposition, had tried to allay their fears by saying 'sister' was used merely in its 'human sense', the way nuns used it.[15] Volunteers would do only the jobs for which nursing training was not necessary, the jobs that were a waste of time for trained nurses.

In fact many of the volunteers had had some level of nursing training. Of the first ten women to go to Trentham, three were mental hospital

nurses, one was a dental nurse, four (two married and two unmarried) gave 'domestic duties' as their occupation, one was a dressmaker, and one a shop assistant.

When the volunteers arrived at Trentham they were greeted by Sister Brandon, who said they were exactly the kind of nurses most urgently needed. Meanwhile Ettie met with Dr Valintine. Under the agreement they worked out, the women would stay for a month in Trentham and then the scheme would be reviewed. The sisterhood would pay the volunteers ten shillings a week — the kind of wage only the least ambitious housemaid expected to get. Ettie planned to raise £100 per woman to cover a year of such wages and another £1000 to cover contingencies. But she also hoped that when she and Valintine met again, he would be so convinced of the usefulness of the scheme that his department would agreed to provide finance for it while she continued to choose the women.

At first it looked as if the scheme would be a success. Within twenty-four hours, Dr Valintine asked for ten more volunteers. Ettie interviewed Wellington women and chose half a dozen to turn the Oriental Bay kiosk into a convalescent hospital. Later she went to Auckland and interviewed 120 women there. The mayor of Auckland told her that the city would pay £100 for each woman — if the scheme received government approval. There was also an enthusiastic response from prominent women such as Jessie Mackay and Eveline Cunnington, and groups such as the Canterbury Women's Institute and the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

Ettie asked organisations to give a lump sum of £100. If they did, they were to be assigned their own volunteer sister, in whom they would be expected to take an interest. The Shearers' Union gave the first £100, but no other union followed suit.

Although Ettie called the sisterhood ' the most democratic women's movement New Zealand has ever seen' and 'absolutely humanitarian' in an article in the *Maoriland Worker*,[16] an editorial in the paper replied that the humanitarian principle was all very well, but there were two 'pernicious principles' in the scheme as it stood. One was the 'shockingly sweated rate' at which the women would work, to which no union could afford to be party. The other was the source of funding. It was up to the government to fund the scheme. If unions funded it, they were 'simply aiding the Government to dodge taxing the land and incomes of its wealthy friends, for whose protection the soldiers are fighting'.[17] The Christchurch *Press* stood at the other end of the political spectrum from the *Maoriland Worker*, but it was equally opposed to the scheme. The *Press* did not mention the sisterhood when it was first announced. Eight

days later the paper mentioned it — just to say why it had not mentioned it in the first place. There was no room for amateurs in military hospitals, said the *Press*. It would be 'a crime' if volunteers were allowed in.[18] The women would not be accepted for service in Egypt because 'Egypt is the land of cheap and well-trained native labour and it would never do to set white women to perform the tasks which can be better performed by Egyptian orderlies and servants'.[19]

Ettie's reply stressed the extent to which women *were* trained. She told the editor his outburst was 'obviously based on your hereditary desire to obstruct public opinion and your constitutional capacity for "missing the bus"'.[20] The editor, William Triggs, replied that he would forgive Ettie's comments because of the good work the women were doing in Trentham — and the topic once again disappeared from the pages of the *Press*.

During the sisterhood's probationary month, Ettie set out to convince the government and the public to back, and pay for, the scheme. She wrote a 'Women's Appeal', a one-page document designed to pull at the heartstrings and open the purse-strings:

> We women of New Zealand are organising ourselves into a Volunteer Corps ready to help the sick and wounded. We want no payment for this work — just sufficient money to provide us with the bare necessities of life — food, shelter, clothing. Will you give us these? We give OURSELVES... We are without panic, but without blind, unreasoning optimism. We look into the future with that long clear vision which is our racial heritage as women. We see line upon line of diseased and disabled men filing past for months and maybe for years. Their call for human help sounds in our ears. Find us unready they must not.[21]

The collective pronoun 'we' belied the organisation of the scheme, with singular Ettie at its head, and a committee of men. But by the time the appeal was printed, 21 days after its first mention in the Christchurch papers, 1000 women had contacted the sisterhood.

Ettie made it sound as though the Public Health Department had already decided to take over the sisterhood. The term of one month had been set only to give the department time to make proper plans, she said. She suggested a central hospital be set up, in which the women could be trained. And she tossed in the odd veiled threat: 'The sisterhood has no desire to waste time and energy tilting at official personages. But let no man, officially or unofficially, dare to come between us and our hereditary duty of tending the sick and wounded. We want all the Departmental help we can get. But we will perform our duty to the sick and wounded with the Government's help or without it.'[22] There was no comment

from the government during this time. But there did not have to be for Ettie to keep the issue in the newspaper columns; she was an expert in what is now called public relations.

When the probationary month was nearly up, Ettie wrote to the Minister of Public Health, telling him how important it was that she get government help. Robert Heaton Rhodes passed the letter on to the Defence Minister, telling him he should decide whether the government was going to back the scheme to go to Egypt — and tell Ettie. 'I do not think it necessary. Do you? Perhaps we might cable and ask'.[23] They cabled Cairo. The reply came that there was enough first aid help.

That someone cabled back that there was enough first aid help is believable. That there actually *was* enough is not. Newspapers during the war had a penchant for publishing any letter sent home from overseas. Nurses wrote to their relatives, and the relatives passed the letters on to papers. Nurses' letters made it clear that the hospitals were understaffed and the nurses run off their feet. So were the New Zealand Medical Crops orderlies, young men faced with tasks such as checking and dispensing meals, fetching and emptying bedpans, and scrubbing floors — jobs in which the 'untrained' volunteer sisters had had far more training during their everyday lives.[24]

The probationary month ended. A week later Ettie had still heard nothing from the Public Health Department. At Trentham the women had not been allowed into wards. Even the trained nurses among them were kept at wringing out sheets and clothing in disinfectant before they were washed. 'I don't think the medical officers were in sympathy with the scheme,' one volunteer concluded.[25]

The list of bodies hostile to the sisterhood was already quite long; now the St John's Ambulance Association added its name. The Association announced that it had a prior claim to tend sick and wounded soldiers. The new Health Minister in the newly formed Coalition Government, G.W. Russell, encouraged them in this attitude by collecting names of women who were offering themselves for service and forwarding them to the ambulance association — with the suggestion that 'a volunteer sisterhood' be formed.

Faced with two organisations contending for the same job, Dr Valintine held a conference. A basis of agreement was drawn up beforehand. This tallied roughly with Ettie's scheme, and included her idea for a central hospital where training would take place.

But at the conference her scheme was turned on its head. Only trained nurses would go overseas; probationers would step into their jobs; the 'trained ladies' of St John's would become probationers. Ettie was told at the conference — and personally by Russell later — that there

was no room in the Government's policy for her 'patriotic, sincere but untrained ladies'.[26] As far as the government was concerned that was the end of the sisterhood's plan to go overseas.

Ettie spent the next ten days in Wellington and reported the shearers' annual conference. On her return to Christchurch, she wrote to the volunteers to say the sisterhood was going to Egypt. Had the volunteers been wanted in New Zealand, they would have stayed. Since they weren't, they were going, she said.

Ettie set out raising the money to make this possible, using every means she could to increase the credibility of the organisation. She published letters from the Public Health Department, enthusing over the women's work in Trentham, as if they were an endorsement of the whole scheme. She asked the Defence Minister if he would transmit money through official channels for the sisterhood — and then translated his agreement to do so into his 'consent'. She asked him to write letters of introduction for the trained nurses in the group — and published these as if they were representative of such letters for all the volunteers.

Some of Ettie's committee had now got cold feet. The trustee wrote to Russell saying he did not approve of Ettie raising any more money from the public. Russell wrote to Allen that 'it may be necessary to pull her up'.[27]

Ettie was finding it hard to raise the money. She was reduced to asking the women of the civil service, who had sent £13 they had raised among themselves, to sell the decorated hatpins she was making. She also changed the rules on funding. Previously she had barred women from contributing money themselves. 'No woman buys her way in here,' she had announced.[28] Now women brought their own money and their friends' money. Gradually patriotic societies in the towns from which women were chosen began to come to the party. So did several large shops, including Kirkcaldie and Stains in Wellington and the Farmers Co-operative Association in Christchurch.

Still some hundreds of pounds short, Ettie turned to her best friend for help. Fred Hornibrook ran the Christchurch School of Physical Culture and was secretary of the Christchurch Athletes' Club. The club regularly donated the money it raised from sporting events to good causes. Now it decided to hold an Athletes' Club Carnival in the Square to help out the sisterhood.

Two huge stages were erected in the Square and filled throughout the day with all manner of sporting displays — including Fred's assistant Annie Hart giving a demonstration of how a woman could fight off a man using ju jitsu. Choirs sang the popular songs of the day, and children sold sweets and tobacco. As well as circulating collection

boxes, Fred's booming Irish brogue called intermittently for showers of coins to be flung at the stage. Three hundred pounds was raised.

Two weeks later Fred announced that the money was being given to the Volunteer Sisterhood — an announcement which sparked off a furious argument recorded in the columns of the newspapers. The Mayor, launching the carnival, had named the Canterbury Patriotic Society's Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Fund as the recipient. The programmes had said the same thing; so had the collection boxes, borrowed from the Fund. The Mayor felt there had been a breach of faith. The *Press* more than agreed. Fred said that he had never actually said where the money would go, only that it would benefit sick and wounded soldiers.

The *Press* now launched an attack on the way Ettie had used Allen and the Health Department. The basis of its argument remained the same as previously — that 'untrained' women must not be allowed near soldiers. It assured its readers they would not be.

Eileen Neilson was exactly the sort of woman Ettie was looking for for the sisterhood. When she received Ettie's telegram inviting her to join the group going to Egypt, she was doing the milking on the farm she ran with her brother in the Pohongina Valley. 'Ten men have gone from that valley to serve their country at the front. Eight of them are killed or wounded. Others go to take their place,' Ettie stormed, in response to William Triggs' jibes. 'Now this woman is sent out to help and tend them. And you, you sit in your little chair in a city newspaper office and sneer and jeer at such women — women who have made this country and this country's men what they are. Can you wonder that we feel nothing but a blazing contempt for such ill-timed misconduct! Fancy you or any man thinking he can keep us out of any hospital we know we ought to enter.'[29]

The *Press* replied that it only wanted to prevent a public scandal. 'Should the military authorities in Egypt remain firm in repelling the threatened invasion [of the sisterhood] then we have a misgiving amounting almost to certainty that the next step in the drama will be that the New Zealand Government will be asked to bring back the sadly disillusioned "Volunteer Sisters" to the land which they never ought to have left.'[30]

For the Health Minister there was another concern in the sisters' intended trip: '...it is impossible to allow white women to go to the front for the purposes of undertaking a class of duties which entirely devolve on the coloured races'. If they did, 'the white race would sustain a serious loss of what we in New Zealand call our "mana".'[31]

Russell had heard through the press that the sisterhood was planning

to go. He was surprised and pained, he said, and threatened to exercise his powers as minister in charge of national war funds to stop the sisterhood from raising any more money. The *Press* saw this as an 'official prohibition'.[32]

Ettie lined up Russell's comments against Allen's helpfulness with money transfers and testimonials, and said there was a conflict of authority between the Health and Defence Departments. Allen had always made it clear that the government could not actually stop the women; he merely asked them to make careful enquiries before setting out.

Ettie also countered that England had just called for 200 women volunteers to go to Malta. Russell undertook to check this out, on the understanding that Ettie put her plans on hold in the meantime. He cabled the New Zealand High Commissioner in London. The cable asked if the women were wanted; it also said that the government strongly opposed women going overseas, but could offer several hundred trained nurses. Not surprisingly, the British asked for the trained nurses.

But by the time the reply came from Britain, the first contingent of the volunteer sisterhood was in Wellington, ready to sail next day for Egypt via Australia, where passports were obtained through the New Zealand Government's agent. Back home in Christchurch, the letter columns remained full of the scandal for days.

Before Ettie and five other volunteer sisters followed at the end of December, they had heard that the first group had landed and were all working — not in hospitals, but in the New Zealand YMCA's canteen in Cairo's Esbekia Gardens. But they also heard that a new order banned women from landing in Egypt without permits — and that permits had to come from the commanding officer in Egypt. They left anyway.

Ettie had ended up borrowing money from friends and mortgaging her life insurance policy. She planned to go to Egypt, then to England to check the hospitals New Zealanders were in, then return home.

The volunteer sisterhood did valuable work in soldiers' canteens and hostels and in hospitals in Egypt, Serbia, England and France. Some were mentioned in despatches, some were awarded the Croix de Misericordiae by the King of Serbia. When the war was over, the government refused to pay for their voyage home — because they had not been sent under government auspices.

Ettie did not return for more than twenty years. In the meantime, she was banned from the columns of the New Zealand newspapers for having advocated prophylactic kits and inspected brothels as a means of reducing the venereal disease rate among soldiers. Ettie never received

much credit for organising the volunteer sisterhood; this was partly because of the opposition she faced at the time, but also because any credit she might have been given was swept away by her activities as what we might now call a campaigner for 'safe sex'.

Jane Tolerton is a freelance writer and oral historian, currently resident at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington. She is the co-author (with Nicholas Boyack) of *In the Shadow of War: New Zealand Soldiers Talk About World War One and Their Lives*. Her biography of Ettie Rout will be published by Penguin Books in 1991. This paper was originally presented as part of a lecture series in connection with the 1990 Gallipoli Exhibition, *Empire and Desire*, National Library, Wellington.

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Archives:

Separate Spheres: ideology at work in 1920s New Zealand
Letters to *The Katipo*, 1923-1924

Megan Cook and Jackie Matthews

The passing of pay equity legislation is another milestone in the herstory of New Zealand women in the paid workforce. To whom the honour of making the first public demand for equal pay belongs is unclear, although it was probably prior to 1893. In that year educational authorities began to consider paying women teachers the rate for the job, not the gender, while in 1894 Mrs H. Livingstone, a member of the Women's Franchise League, proclaimed equal pay 'most important next to the franchise itself.'[1] For nearly a hundred years we have struggled toward that goal, gaining ground inch by arduous inch.

The attitude of government has been central: 'it provided general guidelines for the nation's employers. As the employer... of the [public] service, it demonstrated how those guidelines should be implemented.'[2] Within government departments, women fought for equal pay and opportunity. A significant example of that struggle can be traced in letters to *The Katipo*, journal of the New Zealand Post and Telegraph Officers Association (often just called the Association, and now the Post Office Union) between October 1923 and July 1924.

From an initial argument about the competence of women workers and their right to equal treatment, a broader debate developed between the writers concerning gender roles and the existence of natural and separate spheres. While one faction portrayed women as acted upon or acting dangerously, their opposition attacked a biologically determinist formulation of female and male abilities, criticised male conduct within and beyond the Post Office, and encouraged women to 'educate, organise and agitate' (O.R. King).

Those letters are now republished in this issue of the *Women's Studies Journal*, although unfortunately not in their entirety. The broad range of ideas expressed and the need to cut their length made editing extremely difficult. Some aspects of the debate (comments about Victorian corsetting, for instance) are not represented, and several letters have been left out altogether, as has almost all the supporting material published at the time. *The Katipo* reprinted articles by Rebecca West, Nora Miles, and Constance Clyde from English magazines, with reports on the position of teachers and civil servants in New Zealand and overseas, and editorial comment was consistently sympathetic. In November 1924, four months after the last letter printed, an editorial summing up the argument ended with: 'the women who advocate "equal pay for equal work" deserve all the help and encouragement the male members can give — they are fighting the men's battle just as much as they are their own.'[3]

The attitude of Post Office management was quite different. In September 1923 *The Katipo* reported a statement by Mr A. T. Markman, Secretary (administrative head) of the Post Office, stating the Department's position.

> It is recognised in other institutions in New Zealand and other parts of the world that women are not entitled to the same rate of pay that men are... Let us go back to the war period when we had to employ girls and women. We had invariably to put three women for two men or in some cases two women for one man. They cannot do the equal of the work of the men... we all know they cannot stand up to the strain a man can, and do it every day for six or seven hours a day. Some women are different, perhaps, but it is only one in a thousand... I do not think on the whole women earn the amount they are paid... I do not think anyone can dispute it.[4]

It was one of the two replies to Markman's statement that provoked the following battle by letter, perhaps because the women depended on the Association (and therefore its members) to protect them from the Department. Signed 'Square Deal' (the writer is never identified further), it presents an extraordinary confusion of ideas, claiming to 'stand

for the emancipation of women' and equal pay for equal output, yet arguing that women lacked every quality necessary for positions of responsibility, including tact and assiduity, two qualities usually regarded as feminine.

It is only when placed in context that the fundamentally conservative nature of Square Deal's apparently liberal pay proposal is revealed. He argues for equal pay for equal output after setting up a structure within which the output of women cannot be compared with that of men: women are the manual labourers, men the professionals of the Post Office hierarchy. Within this framework, women and men would very rarely be found doing exactly the same work — some minor difference could always be found to justify a higher male wage.

Over his three letters about women workers, Square Deal's argument develops and the language used ripens. Woman, 'the direct opposite to man', is at first passive, foolishly unaware that work will undermine her ability to marry and mother. Next, those women who insist on working rather than gratefully retiring to the home and post-war 'reproductive toil' are threatened with cancer, goitre and consumption. The language used is increasingly virulent, accusatory and finally tied firmly to Lucy Carr (a writer with opposing views), who is described as a venomous feminine bigot, 'manhaterlike', 'viperlike'. Square Deal's own 'considered opinions' have become 'the irrefutable facts' by the second letter and 'irrefutable logic... untrammeled and still impregnable' by the last.

Two other writers support Square Deal in differing ways. 'Safety and Efficiency' produces a particularly crude effort, sugar coated with concern about fairness, to women — ' usually of the nervous type' — who are called upon to be postmistresses; to the 'lads' handicapped by working under a woman's tutelage; and to the Department, whose property will not be taken care of.

Far more interesting is a superb example of 'after the revolution' from A.B. Powell, arguing that the 'present competitive system' forced women into the labour market, where they engaged in a 'sordid struggle for existence in unnatural competition with men'. His essential belief in biologically determined separate spheres is clear: freedom, after a revolution wrought by social control of modern industry, will allow women to 'cultivate the beauties and refinements of life'. That women might want to work, and might enjoy a sordid struggle in the world rather than a sordid struggle with dirty nappies at home, is not considered.

The three letters written by Lucy Eileen Carr, an office machinist working in the Auckland Money Order Savings Bank, provide a comprehensive rebuttal of the arguments put forward against women

workers, adding some trenchant criticism of male conduct and abilities along the way. They are the bedrock on which the other pro-women letters rest.

The letters opposing Square Deal go behind the 'equal pay for equal output' argument to analyse the conditions under which women worked, noting the demands of home and children, pointing out the structural bars to women advancing within the Post Office, suggesting ways in which these could be overcome. At times the arguments and emotions are startlingly familiar. Lucy Carr's sarcasm ('the sacred domain of men's work'), or the indignation of 'A Woman Officer' ('Had the women the same training, the same salary, the same prospects of advancement? Certainly not') are often heard in current discussions of women in the workplace. The letters pay little more than lip service to the doctrine of separate spheres, and the writers commonly insist that supposedly male virtues are shared throughout the population, while paid work makes better wives and mothers'. Marriage, for Square Deal 'the crowning glory of a woman's life', is identified as a health hazard, and men are advised to look to their own preparation for marriage and fatherhood.

The debate is broad: O.R. King's awareness of women's herstory (the fight to participate in all aspects of the anti-slavery struggle for instance) and of nineteenth century feminist writers such as Frances Wright is truly impressive. C.E. Collins, President of the Association, firmly states: 'the supposed sex characteristics of women and men are the result of a social system in which men are the dominant sex', and suggests that differences between the sexes are also culturally determined. Lucy Carr mentions women's activities at the Versailles and Washington Peace Conferences, publications such as the feminist weekly *Time and Tide*, and activism among Turkish, Egyptian and Indian women (an awareness that does not disturb the casual racism of a later comment comparing Pakeha men and the 'unspeakable Turk').

The 1920s saw the defeat of a female challenge to the gender division in administrative work that is still in evidence today. Meta Zimmeck, when considering the situation at the same time in England, argues that a decision was made to root women out of all public service work but that 'of a very low type'.[5] A similar decision was made in New Zealand, where women may have posed an even greater threat to male dominance of the workplace, finding positions within still malleable government bureaucracies.

The changing situation of postmistresses, mentioned frequently in the letters, is one example of this process. In the expansion of the Post Office that occurred during the early years of this century, an increasing

number of women were employed, many in the expanding telephone exchanges or offices; but a significant number were postmistresses, often running post office stores. These offices, usually in small villages or city suburbs, did not provide a full range of services. In 1911 there were 82 postmistresses; by 1914 there were 109 (approximately one third the total number).

In the first post-war classification list there were 142, a significant increase, but still almost exactly one third of the total. Through the 1920s their numbers were steadily whittled down. In 1925 there were 80, but by 1927 numbers had fallen to 65. A similar pattern occurred with counterwomen, whose pre-war existence is acknowledged only in Association conference resolutions opposing their existence, and with Clerical Division (administrative) workers.

The employment of women in government service was a relatively recent development, encouraged by the rapid growth in the number and size of government departments, and the introduction of new technology (typewriters, telephones, cyclostyles and various calculating machinery), both of which resulted in a division between, and increasing amount of, administrative and copy transcription work. This development was supported by long and short term demographic trends. The sex ratio of New Zealand's Pakeha population, although still male dominated, was increasingly even.[6] In the four main centres (Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland) women began to outnumber men, particularly in the 15-35 age group, and an increasing number of them were working outside the home (the rate for all females rose from 11.1 per cent in 1874 to 20.7 percent in 1921).[7] Access to paid work increased: teaching and nursing were growth areas employing many women, and during World War I a greater variety of jobs was available. In the new areas of paid work a marriage bar operated, supported by social perceptions of women's place and the reality of unpredictable pregnancy.

The experience of women within the Post Office was quite different from that of men. While most women were held captive in the telephone exchange, or restricted to office drudge work, the men moved through a system of divisions, grades and classes, arranged according to occupation, seniority and status, made public in a yearly classification list. The fact of being female meant relegation to a sub-class within this system, where prospects of promotion and payment were severely limited. There is evidence in the letters themselves that the women tended to be better educated; entering the service at a later age (a minimum of fifteen, compared to a male entry age as low as twelve), they may have had some secondary schooling. If education is accepted as a measure of class

position, it is probable that many of the women entering the Post Office were more middle class than the men. The Post Office and the Railways were the only government departments that did not require entrants first to pass an exam, which may have attracted more working class men.

While all public service workers suffered under the intermittent recessions of the 1920s, enduring a series of legislatively enforced leave and pay cuts, women were singled out by special measures. In 1921 it became a matter of Public Service policy that no more female clerical cadets would be employed, and two years later the Post Office (known as the Department) started transferring women from administrative to copy transcription and machining work, regardless of their grading, on the grounds that vacancies could not otherwise be filled. In the same year Regulation 8, against which there was no right of appeal, was invoked against women. It placed an arbitrary limit on the salary they could earn, regardless of their seniority, skills and position.

Although Association Permanent Secretary Harry Combs and President C.E. Collins were supportive of women workers, the hostility of many male members was regularly expressed in Conference remits. A 1922 Conference resolution asked '[t]hat no senior male officer (the word "senior" to cover either status or age or both) be called upon to work under female supervision'. The Department, when refusing to act on the resolution, identified periodic day duty given to night Exchange workers (all male) as the time men were likely to be supervised by women. If the resolution had been agreed to, women would have been barred from any position of authority within the Post Office, even within what was recognised as a female work area. This issue came up at Association conferences repeatedly, as did protests against women doing work identified as male (such as postmistressing).

The beliefs expressed by the Square Deal faction were shared and acted upon by a significant section of the male community and the Post Office hierarchy. Faced with such powerful opposition, women's protests were ineffective. Going from 16.4 percent of the Post Office workforce in 1921 to less than 10 percent by 1929, and remaining at that level until the second world war, women were corralled in badly paid, repetitive work. Their position in the Post Office was tailored to the needs of men as managers and workers — another facet of the disadvantaging of women in a sex segregated workforce which pay equity legislation seeks to overcome.

Lucy Carr's experience is instructive: employed in 1911 at the age of 21, she earnt her highest wage (£230 a year) for four and a half months in 1921. In the fourteen years remaining before her retirement, Carr's wage was never to reach that level again: for most of the 1920s she earnt

£205.[8] She was structurally bound to machining work, unable to move to the Clerical Division where, in the mid 1920s, a woman in Grade 7 with 14 years of service might earn £250, compared to a man's £295. Writing about a later battle in the equal pay war, Margaret Corner says 'in the late 1950s the Post Office Union... seemed either not interested in or opposed to equal pay and opportunity. Their women workers were in such lowly positions that the possibility of a better status does not seem to have occurred to them'.[9] Lucy Carr would have turned in her grave.

Megan Cook is a student in Women's Studies and History at Victoria University of Wellington.

Jackie Matthews teaches in Women's Studies at Victoria University.

Notes

1 Mrs H. Livingstone, *Evening Star*, 30 September 1894. From the Cohen Scrapbook, quoted by Corner, p.12.
2 Zimmeck, p.902.
3 *The Katipo*, 20 November 1924, p.322.
4 A.T. Markman, *The Katipo*, September 1923, p.250.
5 R.F. Wilkins, quoted by Zimmeck, p.903. In England ex-servicemen were given preferential treatment at the expense of women after World War I, but this does not seem to have been so much the case here. In the analysis offered by the letters, women and ex-servicemen are not played off against one another.
6 At that time the number of Maori people employed by the Post Office was minute. This had not always been the case: initially most of the mail carriers were Maori (their 1856 strike for higher pay was a Post Office first). In recent years increasing numbers of Maori people have found work in the Post Office, but that is another article altogether.
7 These are census figures and will tend to underestimate the number of women in paid work.
8 Information obtained from National Archives, Wellington.
9 Corner, p. 5.

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Letters to *The Katipo* (1923-1924)

20 October 1923

"THE SEX PROBLEM"

Sir, — The question of "equal pay for equal work" is advocated, and as a "rank and filer" I feel compelled to voice my considered opinions. I stand for the emancipation of women, but not for preferential treatment. The Department, I think, can easily substantiate its apparent contention that women generally do not perform the amount of work men do. They are temperamentally and physically unsuitable for positions requiring initiative, tact, high sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and assiduous application and consequently their nervous system generally becomes impaired. Then again how many officers — male or female — relish the thought of working under the control of women. One will invariably hear complaints of domineering tactics and unreasonable vocal outbursts caused through an acquired, "nervy" disposition. Is it fair to expect them to "rise to the occasion" as men should? Women naturally arrive at conclusions by instinct and men by reason. In positions such as exchange attendants, typists and machinists they are very successful; in fact, this applies to most positions where resourcefulness and initiative are not absolutely necessary requisites.

I would like you, sir, to consider the economic aspect "equal pay for equal work" might mean: (1) Equal time rates (no morning tea), (2) equal exertion rates, (3) equal output rates. The claim is unquestionably just in the last sense, but has not been secured for the following reasons:

(1) Comparative weakness.
(2) Superiority of men in design, resource and judgment.
(3) Slower work, hence higher overhead charges where women are employed (an ex-C.P.M. mentioned that three women were necessary to replace two men).
(4) Reluctance of men to open up many professions to women.

(5) Social prejudice and law also closing avenues of employment.
(6) Less incentive to diligence and the acquiring of industrial skill owing to expectation of marriage.
(7) Weakness of organisation due to same cause.
(8) Irregular time-keeping owing to inferior health (vide Department sick leave report).
(9) Inferior mobility.

Relating to the standard of life the main reasons are—

(1) Lower standards of life.
(2) Men generally have a family to support or are contemplating matrimony and demands a family's living wage.
(3) Women are often partially dependent on home or relatives.

Regarding the intensity of competition, the reasons are—

(1) Class feeling.
(2) Sex hostility.
(3) Faulty organisation.
(4) Over-supply of unskilled labour.
(5) Pressure of powerful women workers.

The fundamental trouble is that many avenues are shut off, therefore competition is correspondingly keener in the permitted ones, ... This makes the position of the woman with dependents very serious indeed.

The evils of women's work is twofold: — (1) In its effect upon the present and future mothers of the race by deteriorating the national physique by muscular and nerve over-strain; (2) in displacing men from industry.

As far as women are equally efficient with men, they do tend to displace them at a lower wage. If that goes far enough, it will make the male population partially dependent on their women. The best policy, I submit, sir, would be for the Association to insist on "equal pay for equal output," and I think members would heartily support it. ....

.... happy home-life cannot eventuate when present-day marrying girls have only a perfunctory knowledge of domestic requirements and are thus quite unsuited to thriftily maintain a home and rear children. Is not this the most honourable and elevating work of all — the crowning glory of a woman's life? ....

"Square Deal."

The Other Side

Sir, — From the point of view of the officers of the Department it would surely be difficult to read anything more depressing and discouraging than the speech reported in the September "Katipo".

The only satisfactory point about it is that male and female officers

are likely to be affected, though in different ways, and this may make for unity of action....

I want to protest most strongly of the attitude to women officers and the statements made. Wherever women have been called on they have usually made good; of course they should have fair play .... We read that during the war the department had to put two women in the place of one man or three women in the place of two. That may be true. Had the women the same training, the same salary, the same prospects of advancement? Certainly not.

And think how the difference of salary alone affects women. They have to do the work of a general before they leave for the office; the smaller salary does not allow for help. Instead of getting a hot meal in town they more often have to take an unappetising sandwich with them. More work awaits them on their return at night.

Only when you give men and women the same training for a position, and put them on the same footing as regards salary and promotion can you fairly judge between them. And at any rate in one particular [women] may be expected to excel judging from the records, there would be fewer dismissals for theft and a greater feeling of security in the public mind.

And what have we recently seen? The sorry spectacle of lads being trained by the Department at a special school in order to qualify for the Service ...

Hours of attendance: .... There are male officers within a few miles of my office who regularly work their 38 per week; I do 42-44 and more. Increments of salary are awarded to officers passing certain examinations. I had the pleasure of seeing my junior officers (some of whom I had coached) receiving increments while the poor Postmistress was calmly told she did not come under the regulation.

Again has our Secretary never known of one woman doing the work of two men? There have been offices where a mere woman has been removed owing to the office becoming too large for her feeble efforts (though the control of staff was satisfactory) and two higher-salaried male officers replaced her. And I have in mind an office at the present time that has grown the last ten years, and a woman is in charge, no increase in staff, and if any request is made she is told the office is getting large enough for a male officer.

If women are so incapable why did one of the Chiefs make this statement: "Madame, we are determined whatever their qualifications women shall go no further." ....

A Woman Officer

Letters to The Katipo

20 November 1923

THE SEX PROBLEM: Views of Lady Members

Sir, — ...Every act of independence on woman's part has been greeted with cries of opposition and derision from the average man. And in this, the twentieth century, we are faced with howls of opposition because we dare to invade the sacred domain of men's work.

The latest bleat comes from "Square Deal".

Apparently he has no objection to women working, providing they keep to the most monotonous and lowest paid work; but he would infinitely prefer to see them devote themselves to the unpaid drudgery of the wash-tub, the gas-stove, and the scrubbing-brush. So much for his idea of the emancipation of women. ...

With regard to women workers in the Service, I would like to point out that we are all in agreement with the demand for "equal pay for equal work," but we go further and demand equal opportunity of advancement. At the present time there is no open door for women in the Service, not even a bridge from one class of women's work to another. We are not eligible for controller's examination. We have practically no chance of advancement. Why is this? Not because women are not capable of qualifying, but because men are filled with a deadly fear that if women are allowed to compete, they will have to work harder, be more alert; and a still deadlier fear hounds them that the women in some cases may surpass them.

I realise that there are "duds" of women in the Service, but I am also very much aware that there are ever so many more "duds" of men... The reason we have "duds" is due to the lack of discrimination shown in selecting officers. No woman had anything to do with these appointments. They were the work of some undiscriminating man!

"Square Deal" seems to think that the mere stating of a position makes it true. According to him, "women are temperamentally and physically unsuitable for positions requiring initiative, tact, high sense of responsibility, resourcefulness and assiduous application, and consequently their nervous system generally becomes impaired." Does he not realise that these are the very qualities so necessary for marriage and maternity, which, in another paragraph, he informs us is "woman's crowning glory." Does he for one moment expect us to believe that all men in the Department are possessed of the said qualities in an active form? It is quite contrary to fact. There are some men possessed of these qualities, and there are some women who have them in a high degree. All men are not born leaders, neither are all women. ...

As for office work having a detrimental effect on women's nerves, that is a question of disposition; and the same applies to men. Nerves more often attack the mother of a family, who, in this country, is usually the household drudge, and who, in addition to bearing and rearing children, is forced, generally through lack of money, to do without adequate help...

Neither is it true that all "women arrive at conclusions by instinct, men by reason." Women's instinct is generally stronger than men's, but the majority of women also reason. A great many men use neither instinct nor reason. The threat that equal pay might mean — (1) "Equal time rate (no morning tea); (2) equal exertion rates; (3) equal output rates," fills women with no terror. ... Women are quite prepared to work as hard as men for the same rate of pay. In some cases they work as hard now. All men do not put forth the same amount of energy, because no two persons are built exactly alike.

The statement that it takes three women to do two men's work evidently applies to war-time... Three women might have taken the place of two men, but the fact must not be lost sight of that they were three untrained women and the men had years of service. It must also be recognised that the salaries of the three women did not equal, let alone surpass, the salaries of the two men.

Nothing has been said of the woman who did equal work with the men. Nothing has been said of the suburban offices, run for years by women on comparatively low salaries that have been regraded and handed over to men.

"Square Deal" states that women are partially dependent on homes or relatives, but he says nothing of the women who are the sole supporters of homes, with aged dependent parents, or of the families that are partially dependent on the earnings of women. Nor has he mentioned the widows in the Department, often of deceased officers, who are doing the work of a man and a woman, on oftimes a pitifully small salary; women who have to run an office, do the housework and bring up children...

Few fathers of families can make enough to support their daughters at home and provide suitable incomes in the event of their not marrying. The late war has brought this fact home, especially to the women. The war has, as it were, widowed millions of women before they married, and women are faced with the problem of supporting themselves and providing for old age... The war did not end war, neither has it made the world safe for democracy or anything else. There is every possibility that the next generation of men may be swept away in an even more terrible slaughter; and women have to look to the future.... How illogical

"Square Deal" is when he urges us to prepare for marriage. Doesn't he realise that there are not enough men to go round?... It is high time he realised that the women of today are not particularly concerned about what men in general think of women.... "Square Deal" should know that most New Zealand girls grow up with housework, and many women run their homes as well as their business.... no word is said of what a man should do to prepare himself for marriage and paternity — mentally, morally, or physically. If preparation is necessary for a women, it is equally necessary for a man.

.... Marriage at any time is a lottery, and it can hardly be wondered at if some of us prefer to risk our luck on Tatts or the tote, where we do get a run for our money and the prizes are more evenly distributed...

Throughout the world women are breaking down the barriers — they have entered the professions; they have entered parliament, and are busy in every walk of life. Even the women of India, Egypt, and Turkey have made their voices heard, and are throwing off the bonds of dependence. It is impossible to stem the rising tide of women's progress... I cannot help noticing that there is a tendency, on the part of some men, to look at women's mistakes through a magnifying glass; at their own with a blind eye to the wrong end of the telescope. That we make mistakes I readily admit, but are we not all human, and do not men make the same or greater ones? CONSIDERING THAT MEN HAVE HAD IT ALL THEIR OWN WAY FOR CENTURIES, IT IS RATHER AMAZING THAT THEY HAVE NOT MADE MORE OF A SUCCESS OF THINGS...

God never intended hostility between man and woman. Each is the complement of the other. Men and women should co-operate in their work to obtain the best conditions for all and to fulfil the ideals of justice and harmony ...

It is practically impossible to prove that women generally are superior or inferior to men in the Department until girls are appointed at the same age as cadets, given exactly the same training, the same opportunity, and the same rate of pay. We women do not desire to lower the standard of living, but the policy of the Department, backed up by many unthinking men, is to endeavour to force us back into a state not of living, but merely existing....

Lucy Carr
Money Order and Savings Bank, P.O., Auckland

20 December 1923

THE SEX PROBLEM: Correspondents' Views

Sir, — ... While I —and, I venture to say, the majority of male officers throughout the Service — agree with the views expressed by "Square Deal", I should like to voice my opinion on what I consider a very important subject. The numerous requests made from time to time by the Association to obtain equal remuneration for female officers performing duties undertaken by their brother officers have been more than justified, and with such claims I find no fault. But, Sir, in fairness to my sex, I must at the outset enter my humble protest at the way the Department allows to go on almost unchecked, the control of the more important sub-offices, particularly those adjacent to and in the four centres by women. ... the principle of such management is not in the best interests of efficiency, to say nothing of the inadequate protection afforded to the Department's property. .... the average postmistress cannot be expected to exercise the control over her staff, especially junior members, desired by the Department. ... is it fair to lads entering the Service through such offices to be handicapped at the most vital period of their official careers through no fault of their own? .... Then, again, does the public have the confidence in offices controlled by women? I say without hesitation, "No". ...

... what protection can such officers give to the Government's property after business hours? The answer is plain to anyone who gives the matter the slightest thought. Further, is it fair that such officers, who are usually of the nervous type, should be called upon to bear such a grave responsibility? ...

Safety and Efficiency

Sir, — The letter from "Square Deal" is ... of very special interest to women, as apparently it is a summary of the attitude of men towards women in business. Men and women are fundamentally different, and there are some employments that are suited only to one sex individually — e.g., policemen and nurses, for instance — but women are, without doubt, proving themselves to be the equals of men in business. It is simply a question of opportunity, as hitherto women have not had sufficient scope for the qualities they possess. In a greater degree than men, they show themselves possessed of tact and intuition, and are generally good organisers. .... In the States, where women hold business positions of all sorts, many of them requiring high executive ability, it is granted that women stand as much work as men. It is open to dispute

that men have more resource and judgement than women. The fact must be accepted that women will more and more enter into avocations which have been looked upon as only suitable for men, and custom will overcome social prejudice. ... It is granted that women's greatest work is making the home happy for her husband and bringing up healthy children to be upright men and women. No other career can give greater content and happiness or be of higher value to the State. Still, every woman does not marry, and in any case there are years when women can work with men (not compete against them), so that the qualities of both can be used to the highest advantage. With regard to marriage, it is nonsense to say that a business career can affect a woman's health — unless she is working under unhealthy conditions, and this, of course, applies equally to men. A man or woman using their faculties in any business must be better physically as well as mentally. ... the fact that women are workers does not incapacitate them as potential mothers. .... Logically, it follows that, because a woman is successful in business, she will run her household on the best lines—even a short business training must make one more methodical and careful. ... Equality of sexes must come, and "Square Deal's" policy of "Equal pay for equal output", is what is required. Let the best worker have the highest position, whether man or woman, and if a man does not like being under the control of a woman, it is up to him to prove himself more capable. Things will right themselves, and men and women will find the work they are best fitted for, and neither should get preferential treatment. Women do not demand more than men, but they certainly should have equality with men. Merit should be the only standard. A man, because he has dependants, should not be given the higher post.

By all means have legislation to encourage family life. An allowance or increase in salary for each child might be made or whatever was found to be the most suitable way, to make things easier for parents. The world will be a better place when men and women work together, each giving of their best.

Waikato Postmistress

Sir, — May I congratulate Miss Carr on her outspokenness in regard to "The Sex Problem". It is generally recognised that the position of a woman in a community is a test of its civilisation, and it is assuredly one of the first marks of social progress to relieve woman of the burden of injustice and subjection.

Apart from all controversy in regard to woman's sphere, there is no question but that she has been treated in civilised Europe with the most profound injustice. ... The prolonged and impassioned struggle of the

women of Europe and the United States for recognition of their human rights is proof enough of the long injustice.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century in England the education of a woman was ridiculous; her legal rights were far below those of a man. She was condemned by the marriage service to obey her husband like a child, and she was reviled when she attempted to share in such great human reforms as the abolition of slavery. Who carried on the struggle in those dark days, when the espousal of her cause meant to incur jeers and ostracism and bitter hostility from the men, whose domination was threatened? It was women like Frances Wright, Harriet Martineau and George Elliott, *[sic]* and other such apostles.

... To the women of today I say: "Educate, organise, and agitate, and the position to which you are relegated will disappear as mist before the morning sun".

O.R. King
Taumarunui

Sir,— ...my chief reason for addressing you is to ask why do Executive Officers generally "blindly" follow the paths of Departmental policy?

It is the policy, and no doubt arrived at after due consideration, to expect women clerks to work alongside men at less salary; yet Executive Officers, because of that policy, almost to a man, steadfastly refuse recognition to women whose average performance per day or per year is higher than that of the highest paid male clerks doing the same work.

The Department protects itself by defining the women's duties at a lesser responsibility than those allotted to the men, ..shuts its eyes, and its purse, when on the plea of exigencies of the Service, local controlling officers employ these women on all duties and obtain results which cause the average Service clerk to realise his own shortcomings, but not to proclaim them, and to loudly advocate the immediate transference of these interlopers to the wash-tub and the nursery.

I believe, sir, the cause of this inequitable state of affairs is due to fear on the part of Controlling and Executive officers that they may be adversely criticised by other males. ...

...[why not] allow a few of the Department's splendid women clerks to graduate by merit or examination, if necessary, into open competition with the male clerks and so prove to the Post and Telegraph world that women armed with so many natural advantages, plus, in many cases, scholastic attainments and keen intelligence, are more fitted to successfully perform many duties at present allotted to men, and efficiently (in every manner) performed by not more than 25 per cent of these same males?

The creation of a competitive division for women need not upset the much discussed "policy", and it will not reduce efficiency. ....

D.M. Robertson

Sir,— "Square Deal" states that he considers that women are temperamentally and physically unable to perform, with the same degree of efficiency, the duties which he and many others suppose to be the prerogatives of men. ....The supposed sex characteristics of woman and man are the result of a social system in which men are the dominant sex. In arriving at this position there have been many evolutionary changes from the time when the female sex was the dominant sex, and those changes will continue to take place until women gain at least a position of equality with men, despite the efforts of some men to retard them. If we go back to pre-historic times, we find that women did all those things which today we suppose to be male prerogatives. ... There is not a single masculine quality that cannot be paralleled as a feminine quality in the history of one race or other. ... Give to the women the same freedom we claim for ourselves, and we go a long way towards evolving a race of women who will render service equally efficiently with men. Full equality is the only path to freedom for both women and men.

C.E. Collins
Auckland

20 January 1924

A Reply to Safety and Efficiency

Sir,— ... in this country the attitude of many men towards women despite the fact that, politically, the sexes are on an equal footing, is as Oriental in its conception as that of the unspeakable Turk. The objections raised by "Safety and Efficiency" are another proof of it. Women ask for no special concessions because they are women, merely the right to work without restrictions and the right to be paid adequately for that work. But these MALES — and rightly I term them so, to distinguish them from and in justice to the MEN in the Department — are claiming the monopoly of positions on the mere accident of sex. They go further and demand special treatment on account of marriage, as if by marrying they had conferred an inestimable benefit on the State in general and the Department in particular; ....

The Department is not supposed to run its business on sentimental lines. It does not pay on the basis of an officer's private responsibilities, only for the position occupied and the work performed. If it paid on the basis of the number of dependants each officer had — whether married

or single — then the highest positions would naturally go to the officers with the largest families, irrespective of qualifications.

It is an absolute injustice and quite contrary to fact to state that all the women postmistresses are less efficient than men. A perusal of inspectors' reports on offices run by women would dispel any illusions "Safety and Efficiency" has with regard to their work. ....

There are many offices nominally in charge of men, where the actual work is done, and done thoroughly by women clerks or counter women.

The statement that the public has no confidence in women postmistresses is unwarranted and incorrect. There have been numerous occasions... when the removal of a postmistress ... has been the occasion of meetings to see whether the postmistress could not be retained. ....

"Safety and Efficiency" has no need to worry about the appointment of women postmistresses. Every endeavour is being made to oust women from these positions. When a woman vacates office it is immediately regraded and handed to a man. The expenses of the office are increased, but there is no appreciable increase in revenue or in the efficiency of the running of the office, though there is usually an increase in staff.

Some women may be weak on control, but there are also many men who have not the slightest idea of discipline. Some of our best-trained messengers have come from suburban offices run by women.

As for the ridiculous footle about women being nervous and incapable of looking after departmental property, I might state that I know two women in the Auckland district who risked their lives in the Department's interest — one in defending the office against burglars, and the other in rescuing official books and cash from a burning building. ...

Lucy Carr
M.O.S.B., Auckland

29 February 1924

The Sex Problem

Sir,— ...Let us calmly and scientifically again analyse the irrefutable facts previously expounded, ... The discussion is about "equal pay for equal work", irrespective of sex, and not for the broadcasting of women's grievances generally. ...

The indifference of our womenfolk generally to the economic and industrial welfare of the community is tragic and appalling. The subordination of the things that matter to the recently-acquired lust for pleasure, dress and ease is astounding and inexplicable. While women sit back indifferently, ignoring their responsibilities to help repair the

human wastage of the late war, our men folk are driven to desperation by unemployment and reduced purchasing power of their wages. With less women in the industrial field, both sexes will be happier and more healthy children propagated. Thus more hands to toil reproductively would be assured. The present wages fixed by the Arbitration Court is calculated to provide sustenance for a husband, wife and two children, and in many cases non-marrying spinsters are drawing this wage to the detriment of married men and those contemplating matrimony — four mouths should be fed where one is living in an orgy of extravagance.

Anyone possessing even a perfunctory knowledge of economics cannot deny that where women compete with men they do tend to displace them at a lower wage. Woman is, physically by nature and psychologically, the direct opposite to man, and as such cannot function as efficiently in the latter's industrial or naturally-adapted sphere and vice versa in the sphere of feminine adaptation. ....

Take the case of men displacing women at certain suburban offices simply because postmistresses were failures. In nearly every case, the staff was reduced and the office conducted cheaper and more efficiently — women were tried and found wanting, hence the change in policy.

Before concluding, let me say this: Women who are defying the laws of nature are being inexorably punished with unrelenting vigour — viz., cancer, goitre, consumption and the like. A broken-down or impaired nervous system reduces the vitality and encourages disease. Do women not know this? Do they not heed the warnings continually given? If they would only cultivate and resuscitate their finer natures of inspiration, pacificism and restraining influence, how different the world would soon be ...

"Square Deal"
To all and Privileges to None.

20 March 1924

Sir,— ... It is true that woman has entered into the professions, into commerce, and into almost every field of industry, and considering the handicap of centuries of subjection and the obstacles of convention and tradition placed in her way, she has succeeded admirably. But woman was not, as Lucy Carr infers, a free agent in the matter. It is not woman's initiative, primarily, but the bitter necessity of economic pressure that has forced her into competition with men, a pressure which must continually grow more intense and severe. Here is the immediate cause of that ignorant hostility to woman which she so naturally resents,

though she wrongly ascribes it to sheer cussedness and unnatural jealousy. In a labour market already restricted, men regard the competition of women as a menace to their well-being. They see the immediate cause, but they do not reason out the inevitability of the situation. ...

...Recriminations can serve no useful purpose when neither side is responsible for the situation except in so far as it is maintained through their passivity. ... Under the present competitive system the wages and working conditions of all workers are determined by the cost of living according to the accepted standard of the time and place. As Lucy Carr observes, the majority of men and women must sell their power to work in order to obtain the necessaries of life. There is always an over-supply of their commodity — labour power — on the market, therefore its selling price will always fluctuate about the cost of production, and as women can live more cheaply than men, and have even less organised capacity for resistance, they can be forced or persuaded to accept lower wages. Thus sentiment cannot enter into the matter, and women are the victims of the inexorable laws of our anti-social system. The inherent qualities of men and women remain what they always were, and any apparently new characteristics are merely reactions to changing economic conditions. Not only can the male officers bring but little practical influence to bear on the status and conditions of their sisters in the service, but the departmental heads and even the Government itself are almost impotent in the matter. Within certain narrow limits policy is determined for them by the almost automatic operation of the machinery for the production of rent, interest, and profit, which we call our social system.

Man has conjured up a giant, the giant of Modern Industry born of social labour, able to relieve him of all the toil and drudgery of life, yet he had allowed that giant to be bound and controlled by a narrow anti-social class. ... If that control is not seized by society as a whole, if there is no escape from this system which sets man against man, class against class, nation against nation, finally and inevitably culminating in the horrors of international war, then the indications are that man is doomed to disappear from the earth in a welter of blood. ... The infinite possibilities of social labour applied to modern machinery only wait for social control to raise man from a meagre existence comparable to that of the beasts of the field to abundant and glorious life. ...

Only through this great social and economic change can woman win complete emancipation. Only then will economic independence for all ensure leisure and opportunity to develop all their faculties and to cultivate the beauties and refinements of life. Instead of a more or less

sordid struggle for existence in unnatural competition with men, vivid and glorious life in co-operation with them will be hers....

A.B. Powell
Dunedin

20 April 1924

Sex Equality

Sir, — "Square Deal" acknowledges that where women compete they tend to displace men at a lower wage. Exactly! Whose fault? Men's foolishness in this respect is the Department's best weapon.....

Now, Sir, "Square Deal" says women have been failures as P.M.'s etc. Women have been replaced by men because the male officers coveted the positions, and kept up a continual agitation for their removal, as they are continuing to do; and in all the cases that I know the Department have had to pay dearly for the change. How inconsistent, "Square Deal". One moment you state lower wages and next greater cost. ... we poor little postal crowd have no resource or initiative. Yet, according to "Square Deal", we may be able to bring up a family, make what a bachelor has spent on himself do for two or more, and also acquire a home by dint of scraping and saving, and having done so have the pleasure of hearing that "He" works and keeps "Her".

As for all the terrible diseases we are laying up for ourselves— well, we must all die some day, so what does it matter— only all the people I know suffering from goitre, etc., are married women. ...

Just a Female

20 May 1924

Women Fitter than Men for Life's Battle

Men like to believe that their womenfolk are weak and helpless. ...

The fact is that woman is the stronger sex. Her constitution is tougher than man's. She can afford to take risks which must prove dangerous to him....

Woman has managed to live longer than her partner in every year of her recorded history. In the great race of life there are more boy than girl starters; but the number of boys who "drop out" by the way is always greater than the number of girls. ....

But it is not only in her physical health that woman is stronger than man. She seems to be less dependent than he is on the circumstances in which she lives.

Thus, married men live considerably longer than bachelors, whereas

unmarried women live longer than married ones.

Nor has this any thing to do with the anxieties and risks of motherhood.

It seems to be the case that men are more dependent on women than are women on men. "Gay bachelordom," in fact, is not so gay as it is supposed to be, whereas the old maid's fireside is a place of happiness, contentment and long life. ...

But we have one consolation. Widows fare worse than married women. ...

Women are growing much healthier than they used to be, whereas the health of men is increasing at a slower rate. By adopting man's games and exercises women are discovering the secrets which have, until now, enabled us to keep fit.

It follows that the number of women in the world in relation to the number of men is likely to increase. There will be still "fewer men to go round".

That means that more women must enter the world of business, and complete with men for jobs. It means, too, that women are certain to play a larger part in the educational and political life of the country.

Nor will this change be confined to our own country. Exactly the same process is going on in Europe and in America.

Civilisation, as we now understand that term, is altering its complexion, it is becoming more feminine. ...

The decline of heavy drinking during the past 50 years is one of the first results of this new feminine influence.... woman herself has changed since the necessity of taking her place as a worker .... has been laid upon her. She has developed a new responsibility, and she is getting rid, gradually, of the "dependent streak" in her nature. ...

It does not mean, as some people feared must happen, that she has lost any of her feminine characteristics.

Cyril Stern

20 June 1924

The Sex Problem: Another Interesting Contribution

Sir,— I did not intend to write again on "The Sex Problem," as I considered I had made my points sufficiently clear, and proved the weakness of "Square Deal's" alleged arguments, but I cannot allow his remarks to go unchallenged. ...

I have no means of knowing where "Square Deal" gets his idea of women's general incompetency — of their ignorance concerning matters of social and political importance— but he evidently consorts with women devoid of education and intelligence, and must himself be like Rip Van Winkle. Otherwise he would not be so lamentably ignorant of

women's activities at the Peace Conference at Versailles and Washington. The growth of women's suffrage movement throughout the world, the status of women in Sweden, America and England; the recent election of women to the English Parliament and the positions of control and responsibility occupied by women at home and abroad. Has he never heard of or seen papers such as "Time and Tide", run by women? Even the activities of women in this country are apparently beyond his comprehension. Has he never heard of the National Council of Women and the paper recently launched by them; the Civic Leagues and Progressive Leagues in many of the towns? Does he know nothing of the women's clubs throughout New Zealand, where the questions of the day are argued and discussed? Where has he been that he has never heard of the work done by women before, during and since the war? Has he never heard of the Housewives' Association in Australia, organised for the purpose of preventing the cornering and subsequent artificial rise in the price of food commodities? During the war the women of this country did take steps to lower the cost of living and attempted to stop profiteering. What did the men do? Nothing — till the price of beer and tobacco rose; then there was a frenzied outburst about the COST OF LIVING! ...

I have yet to discover the positions that women in the service are occupying that the men are so envious of and anxious to usurp. It evidently hasn't dawned on "Square Deal" that even if the Department dispensed with women, their places would not be filled by men walking the streets looking for work, but by cadets.

"Square Deal's" contention that marriage is a solution of all these problems is absurd. Nobody argues about the happiness that comes from right-mating, but marriage to thinking women is too serious a matter to be entered into lightly for such material consideration as food and health. If all the women left the Service tomorrow there would not be enough men to go round, and starvation, not marriage, would be the portion of the majority.

It is a great misfortune that the Medical Conference held recently in Auckland was not informed of "Square Deal's" amazing theories regarding marriage, cancer, goitre, and consumption. .... Far from marriage being a cure-all, it is often directly responsible for ill-health. The death rate from cancer is higher among married women than single. ... the alarming increase of social diseases is another proof of the risk a woman takes in marriage. A fact that is significant is that we have the highest maternity mortality rate in the world in New Zealand. ... So from a health point of view marriage is not altogether alluring. ...

The problem that confronts women is not what they might die of, but

how they are going to live?

...in theory [a great many men] put women on a pedestal, in practice they consign her, or would like to, to the lowly occupation of charring and cleaning— after spending seven hours a day in their company, most women go home breathing a prayer of thanks that they are not forced to spend the whole of their lives with them, dependent on them for food, clothing and shelter.

"Square Deal" refers to the nervy outburst of women — their tears and temper. While I and all thinking women deplore such methods, it must not be forgotten that men themselves have admitted that tears and temper are women's best methods. For some reason a tearful woman is supposed to be more womanly. She rouses the protective instinct in man, and gives him that much-prized thrill — superiority. ...

Women in the Department are not inferior to the men. The fact is at the present time it suits the administrative branch to decry and depreciate the women's work. An extraordinarily high standard is apparently demanded of them, and an abnormally low standard of the men. ...

Men are replacing women in post offices not because the latter are failures, but because the Department is forced through the congested state of the 7th class, and the prevailing discontent in the Service to find sufficient avenues of promotion for the men. It matters not to them that it is being done at the expense of the women, for women numerically are weak and apparently not an organised body. The Department is well aware that this injustice will meet with the men's approval .... several offices run by women have been regraded (as much as £90 in one case), though there is no increase in work, and handed over to men.

It must not be forgotten that a great many postmistresses are widows of Departmental officers. ... In appointing them to post offices, the Department, from a point of sentiment, attempted to do what the Pensions Board should have tackled in a businesslike way — provided them with suitable pensions. ... Had their work been unsatisfactory, they would certainly not have been allowed to retain these positions. The trouble at the present time is that the Department is promoting women in a class instead of on individual merit, and obviously classing women not on a fair average but on the basis of the least competent, and paying them accordingly. ...

It has apparently not occurred to "Square Deal" that women are members of the Association as much as men.... There is something illogical, unjust, ... in admitting women and accepting their subscriptions to an organisation when the majority of the male members ... would take any steps to deprive them of their means of livelihood. Unity is strength, especially at the present juncture. Women's help may not only

be useful but an actual necessity to the Association, and it ill becomes a member of it to cause dissension in its ranks. ..

Lucy Carr
M.O.S.B., Auckland

20 July 1924

Sir, — The sophistical peregrinations through "space" of your one and only erudite expounder of feminine bigotry with viper-like bitterness makes one serenely smile at the audacious nonsensical condemnation of this scribe. The discussion was "Equal Pay for Equal Work", and Miss Carr has venomously retaliated by unleashing her pent-up "personal affection" for me with a "manhater-like intensity" savouring of vindictiveness, in order to propagate sex animosity with glutonous vengeance. A "bad loser" generally indulges in a condemnatory harangue of an opponent who hits hard and often free from ill-feeling and petty personalities — surely an admission of disgruntled defeat.

The irrefutable logic which opened this controversy remains untrammelled and still impregnable. The solid foundation of the Department's decision on this subject is, therefore, unassailed and unquestionably established ad infinitum. I do not expect women to efficiently and expeditiously perform the same volume of work in artificially adapted spheres as their masculine confreres, and vice versa. The former should not attempt to lower the present meagre standard of living by advocating "equal pay for unequal work".

Our Association has been no respecter of persons, and has fought, jointly and severally, for improvement in status and the bettering of working conditions. ... Adequate women representation in the Association, in Parliament and on local bodies must lead to social betterment; diversity of opinion harmoniously expressed is mutually and collectively beneficial.

Miss Carr may retain woman's prerogative and have the "last word" if she wishes. ...

"Square Deal"

20 November 1924

Man's Work, Women's Pay

The very interesting controversy which appeared in this column on the subject of "Equal Pay for Equal Work" has been allowed to lapse, with honours on the side of the ladies. This problem is mainly a social one,

and looked at from this point of view we expect both sides to the controversy will admit—

(1) That women have a right to live;
(2) That industrious, honest women are entitled to a good standard of living;
(3) That women have the right to decide whether or not she will marry;
(4) If she does not wish to marry she is entitled to expect her good standard of living as the result of or in return for her services;
(5) That her rate of remuneration should not be settled with a view to forcing her to try marriage as an alternative to a poor standard of living;
(6) That to so determine her rate of remuneration inevitably tends to the lowering of the man's standard;
(7) That the lowering of the man's standard renders less and less tempting the prospect of marriage as the means of escape from the economic labyrinth;
(8) The aim of the employer the world over is to save expense to his business without regard to the consequences, indirect or even direct, on the social standard.

...Therefore, the women who advocate "equal pay for equal work" deserve all the help and encouragement the male members can give — they are fighting the men's battle just as much as they are their own.

The Woman's View

Goodbye to Romance: stories by New Zealand and Australian women writers 1930-1988

Edited by Elizabeth Webby and Lydia Wevers

Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1989

A Woman's Life: writing by women about female experience in New Zealand

Edited by Anne Else and Heather Roberts

Penguin Books, 1989

Reviewed by Noeline Alcorn and Jill McLaren

'The difficulty for colonial writers is always that of accommodating the new in the conventions of the old', wrote Elizabeth Webby and Lydia Wevers, introducing *Happy Endings*, their first collection of short stories (1854 to 1928) by Australasian women writers. And the problem of writing as a colonial is compounded for the women, who find themselves doubly colonised. Like their male counterparts, they must

explore and express a new land and cultural identity in the idiom of the old; at the same time, if they are to find a true voice, they must discover and expose the particularity of their own gender-based experience, for which no satisfactory idiom has been established at all. In their introduction to A *Woman's Life* Anne Else and Heather Roberts quote Virginia Woolf on the 'very difficult question of the difference between the man's and the woman's view of what constitutes the importance of any subject. From this spring not only marked differences of plot and incident, but definite differences in selection, method and style.'

Although the sequel to *Happy Endings, Goodbye to Romance* (short stories from 1930 to 1988), and the New Zealand anthology *A Woman's Life* make an interesting contrast in some respects, both are designed to illustrate 'the woman's view'. The first contains 58 stories by Australian and New Zealand women in a rough ratio (some writers are claimed by both countries) of 36 to 22, chosen for individual excellence, with an emphasis on the last twenty years. The collection shows, in the words of the editors, that women's writing on both sides of the Tasman has taken a decisive turn away from the romance themes and univocality evident in the earlier book, and now announces itself as 'polyvocal, polyglot, exploratory and different'.

A Woman's Life is necessarily more limited in style and range. New Zealand institutions and publishers have been slow to recognise New Zealand fiction, particularly women's fiction. The earlier extracts in this anthology go back as far as Edith Searle Grossman in 1893, but most come from work published in the 1970s (when the output of new Zealand women writers lagged noticeably behind that of their infinitely better funded Australian counterparts) and from the 1980s when the balance began to shift. Confining themselves to previously published material, Else and Roberts regret the too few voices of Maori women and the lack of an overtly lesbian one, so why nothing from Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's 'Tahuri the Runaway' — lesbian, Maori and included in *New Women's Fiction?* That quibble aside, the editors have roamed widely to provide new or little-known material depicting 'what are generally considered to be the "ordinary" aspects of life for women', and to achieve their feminist aim of 'bringing that background forward'.

Their sources include autobiography, biography and oral history, arranged thematically under the headings of childhood, adolescence, sexual experience, close relationships, motherhood, work, old age. While such an approach sacrifices the intensity of the shaped Australasian fictional collection, it is well suited to the editors' purpose of rediscovering and bringing together texts which provide a most accessible reading of women's experience in New Zealand, giving it validity,

coherence and centrality. The oral history extracts in particular bring a welcome freshness from worlds outside stereotypical middle class experience. They will help to satisfy the vast hunger of New Zealand women to have their stories told, in spite of the disdain for social realism so often professed in circles where serious discussion of gender seldom troubles debates about modernism and postmodernism. What readers now are looking for is 'the different view' described by Woolf, although this collection may confirm the heterodox impression that in work, motherhood, relationships, New Zealand women see little to celebrate.

A Woman's Life is a lively book which will be read with interest by general readers. It will also serve as a useful text for promoting class discussion, as well as proving helpful to those engaged in serious study of women in New Zealand society who want to flesh out statistics with personal or fictional narratives. The editors note that the first and last sections, on childhood and old age, were the most difficult; in spite of what seems a plethora of stories about childhood in New Zealand literature, they found few accounts of girlhood. (They made a deliberate decision not to include any extracts from the most fully realised account of New Zealand childhood in Janet Frame's autobiography, feeling that it should be left whole.) The current emphasis on oral history and women's confessional writing may make the first section of a future collection easier to fill, but old age could remain difficult. This is not just a New Zealand problem. Though both Margaret Lawrence and Doris Lessing have given us vivid pictures of old age in their fictions, and May Sarton's journals are documenting her seventies in precise and exquisite detail, there are still few literary accounts of female old age.

Childhood is represented by five extracts, the first, best-known and most satisfying being Janet Frame's short story 'The Reservoir', a loving recreation of the limited yet limitless world of children daring to venture into mysterious, forbidden, unknown territory at the end of a summer that seems to have gone on for ever. The new country they enter is, like so much of their lives, full of mythic danger created from the cryptic warnings of the adults, fused by the imagination with already-known terrors. Two of the other stories describe loss of innocence, awareness of betrayal, hypocrisy or deceit in the adult world. A slight and little known story by Katherine Mansfield exposes unfairness and notions of respectability.

Adolescence predictably brings the onset of menstruation, frightening to the unprepared, the misery of secondary schooling for the clever girl who does not fit in socially, and a horrifying account by Mary Findlay of the plight of a penniless teenager with a drinking father, who discovers that although all sorts of people are shocked by her victimisa-

tion, no one is prepared to take her in, so that she is forced to choose between leaving school for life as a servant and returning to the violent uncertainty of home.

Sexual experience, already prefigured in the first two sections, begins with an anonymous reminiscence of secondary schooling in Wellington in the 1940s, where the girls are protected from the boys in the adjacent school by rules and fences, as well as a uniform designed to 'produce a slab-sided androgynous effect'.[1] But in spite of the care and allegories of the principal, her attempts to restrain her 'delicate blossoms' founder on the arrival of the Americans. 'It took very little time for it to be demonstrated that the United States Marines who roamed the streets of Wellington did not recognise the Wellington East uniform as a protector of feminine purity'. The extract should stir memories for generations of women. The official fear of sexuality it reveals helps to explain the joylessness and lack of communication, the difficulties for mothers and daughters in recognising each other's sexuality, which are evident in other stories. Only the piece from Sue McCauley's *Other Halves* shows a woman finding unexpected pleasure with her lover, although Lauris Edmond reflects on the terrifying power of passion.

Other close relationships in women's lives are also permeated by loss in this anthology. Only the romance of Hinemoa and Tutanekai, retold by Makereti, stands outside the pattern. Patricia Grace writes of a young Maori girl who travels to the South Island with her netball team only to feel miserable and homesick away from her family, unable to explain to others. Jane Mander's Asia, aware of her overwhelming need to get away from home into the world, has to face the hurt of the mother who will lose her closest companion. Edith Searle Grossman describes a marriage where the dominated wife blames herself for her husband's displeasure, Grace Morton another wrecked by growing alienation and a husband's violence. Yvonne du Fresne writes of a wife whose husband is dying and whose family cannot communicate or understand. Margaret Sutherland shows the easy comradeship of women with small children in the suburbs, who are brought together by propinquity rather than affection or real closeness.

'Motherhood' includes several autobiographical pieces: Mary Findlay's account of her employer's self-induced abortion, Robin Hyde's decision to keep and support her baby, and an interview with a mother who was talked into giving up her baby for adoption. Amiria Stirling tells Anne Salmond of the pain of losing a son. There is also fictional shaping of experience: a short vignette on giving birth, at once humorous and poetic, by Patricia Grace, and an examination of the ambiguities of parenthood by Fiona Kidman, in which a woman remembers how she

failed her daughter, lacking the strength to support her in the face of social pressure. This last is the only account here of motherhood in the suburbs as described elsewhere by such writers as Sue McCauley, Wendy Symons, Alison Gray or Marilyn Duckworth; nor does this section portray the inevitable conflicts between the care of children and outside interests or work, husband or lover. Perhaps it is churlish to wish for more on a theme which demands a book of its own.

The section on Work seems designed to illustrate diversity, give a new look to standard middle class notions of work and highlight the oppression of women workers. Though the story describing the round of the housewife married to a patronising businessman reads like formula polemic rather than felt experience, Mary Findlay's description of her temporary employment as an exploited cook has immediacy, as does Pauline O'Regan's recollection of life as a novice in the convent. Other extracts deal with harassment, unemployment, working in factory and library. The traditional female occupations of teaching, shop work and nursing are not represented. The final extract gives us Sylvia Ashton Warner determining in her late thirties that writing, not the other activities that clamour for her time, will be her occupation. She is determining her own direction, listening to herself.

The final section, Old Age, opens with the frustration of no longer having control. Amy Williamson lies in a hospital bed after a suicide attempt, aware that the medical staff can give her sympathy but not understanding; that she will not be allowed to return home alone. Julia Millen describes the year she shared her home with a mother suffering from Alzheimer's disease, quoting from the diary she kept as she tried to understand and to develop practical strategies to cope and to help the parent who has become a child. Is this all that old age promises? The final extract, a piece of oral history recorded by Stanley Roche, gives us the reminiscences of Matarena Reneti. The life she recounts has been hard and sometimes tragic, but she does not feel unhappy, although she cries out for her grandchildren to obtain the knowledge and education she has missed. In these grandchildren she feels blessed. Her final words, the final sentence in the book, suggest that old age may have its satisfactions: 'I think I've done marvellous'.

In *Goodbye to Romance*, the organising principle is chronological not thematic, while selection is based on literary interest and diversity rather than content. More than half the stories were first published in the 1980s, with roughly equal numbers coming from the 1960s and 1970s. The fourteen earlier stories give us satire, social realism and social commentary. If the family appears a place of constraint and oppression in Greville Texidor's depiction of New Zealanders at the annual com-

munity picnic, readers will surely agree with the editors that Christina Stead's gothic story of family horror, 'The Triskelion,' stands out. In its concentration on 'the deforming and deterministic patterns of family relationships imaged in the three-legged triskelion, bound together at the ankles to form a wheel', and its 'severance of the connection between landscape and the fulfilled human (female) spirit', it gives an ominous foretaste of the more muted disjunctions in the stories to follow.

Robin Hyde moves from an extravagant satirical description of New Zealand architecture to symbolism and death. Romance twitches on its deathbed to provide material for light satire in 'Every Saturday Night', where two girls compete for the favours of Allen the motor mechanic, and Ruth Park's 'Regatta Day', which ends in a form of comic justice. Both this story and Lyndall Gee's narrative of the two war wives in adjoining units are somewhat pat. J.C. Sturm's edgy protagonist, who walks out on her family for an afternoon and evening, finds it difficult to step from one world into another. Ethel Anderson's carefully mannered description of the rector's wife whose 'nyppe', though fearfully potent, fails to affect the Bishop who she hopes will further her husband's career is amusing, but there is pathos as well as humour in the story of Miss Carter's unmentionable adventure in France in Helen Simpson's 'A Posteriori'. And Eleanor Dark in a tongue-in-cheek story describes an experience which proves that, whatever women say, their relationship with snakes is uneasy. 'As to all true daughters of Eve, every snake is the Serpent'. It is interesting that all the stories in this first part of the book are distanced by third person narration and sometimes irony. There is none of the immediacy of the confessional here. The authors are observers and recorders rather than participants.

Many of the stories from the 1960s and 1970s reflect the impermanence and disillusionment of love: the gaze of the lover upon the beloved is deconstructed and rewritten. Glenda Adams' neglected bride, Gwen Kelly's deserted lesbian lover, Thelma Forshaw's cynical aunt, and Amelia Batistich's desperate wife all experience variations on this theme. Judith Wright's sensitive story reveals complexities of love and betrayal as they are grasped by the young narrator in her relationship with the German couple on the next farm. Vicki Viidikas shows us a relationship where a girl finds herself framed as an aesthetic object in a world cocooned by drugs and money. Webby and Wevers believe that it 'is not just a question of bursting out of the frame or rewriting the self in opposition to the past that is at work in the stories of women writers, but a more general destabilising of the boundaries which construct the gendered subject, calling into question all the terms which might presuppose identity: wife, mother, daughter, lover, woman, narrative,

story'.

Several writers explore the possibilities of creation and self-creation: Janet Frame's narrator in 'Jan Godfrey' moves from self description to asserting identity for the fictional character who has appeared through her desire to write a story. Lyndall Hadow's protagonist seeks to escape the pattern her parents have mapped out for her, though she needs the support of romance to do so. Finola Moorhead's schoolteacher reflects on her failure to reach an illiterate runaway pupil whose one poem had touched her deeply, inventing alternative futures and pasts. Elizabeth Jolley, too, through the persona of her character Jasmine Tredwell, blurs the lines between life and art.

The third and last group of stories, first published in the 1980s, is less easy to categorise, ranging from the warm realism of Patricia Grace's Maori family to the sophisticated fantasies of Sue Reidy, the comic observation of Carmel Bird or the ironic awareness of Kate Grenville. Self-consciousness about writing is still being explored. 'Home Time' by Beverley Farmer gives us a story within a story, as two women talk in a bar after watching *Casablanca* while their partners play pool. One tells the other the story of her life. The listener, on returning home, writes down the narrative, hoping she does the woman justice. Her man accuses her of scavenging and exploitation, fearful of being represented himself. He reveals a destructiveness which mirrors the male violence of her story. Yet he is writing his thesis on a writer. At the end of the ironic, playful and episodic 'Romance, Gardening and Feminist Theory', one character remarks to the other what a great story their plot would make, dwelling on the cliches, 'the stuff of real romance'. In the last story in the collection, Barbara Anderson's 'Up the River with Mrs Gallant', the carefully flat dialogue reflecting the emptiness of the speakers is framed by the artificiality of the stage directions which identify the characters.

There are new themes among these stories. Genealogies and origins are explored, as in Anne Kennedy's rediscovery of Great Grandmother's experience. Helen Garner and Yvonne du Fresne show unmarried daughters visiting their parents, unable to shake off the power of the past in spite of their apparent independence. Fiona Farrell Poole's wry Jane is an academic researcher from New Zealand, travelling around England with the older husband who had left wife and family years before for her student self. The story shifts between the life of Jane now in her late thirties, her need for a child, previous journeys with her husband and their 'rational adult relationship'.

It is interesting that most of the women whose relationships and encounters are described in these last stories are growing older, like

Fiona Kidman's Ellen, the wife travelling alone between London and Paris who 'might pass for a maiden aunt or a missionary who might pass for a whore'. The focus has become middle age rather than youth, the denial of romance more explicit. The mother in 'The Girls Love Each Other', continues to learn, and gives up her 'sheik dream' through contact with the two unemployed lesbian teenagers who move in with her daughter. Even youth has no illusions. Keri Hulme's protagonist, who leaves home for uncertain independence with her tools of trade, the knife and the stone with which she guts fish, says 'I don't have much to offer. A body and a baggage of words. A hate. A knowledge of how to gut things. But it must be better.'

Anyone who wants to read about and reflect on women's experiences in twentieth century New Zealand and Australia, whether for relaxed enjoyment or the more recondite pleasure of analysing local re-writings and re-inventions of the female subject, will find both *Goodbye to Romance* and *A Woman's Life* invaluable. Different in concept and execution, together they provide a wealth and diversity of material by a range of women writers whose 'different' voices and multiple but still 'different' perspectives fall into patterns so unprecedented in our literature as to emphasise the black hole which has always existed at the heart of traditional Australasian mythology.

Noeline Alcorn is Director of the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland, where she teaches women's literature and educational administration. She formerly spent fifteen years working in teacher education.

Jill McLaren taught English part-time at all levels in Africa between babies and her husband's postings to various places. On their return to New Zealand she became a full-time lecturer at Auckland Teachers' College. Now retired, she reads, researches and writes, usually for and about women.

1 *Editors Note:* Geraldine MacDonald has since informed *WSJ* that she is the author of this piece.

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