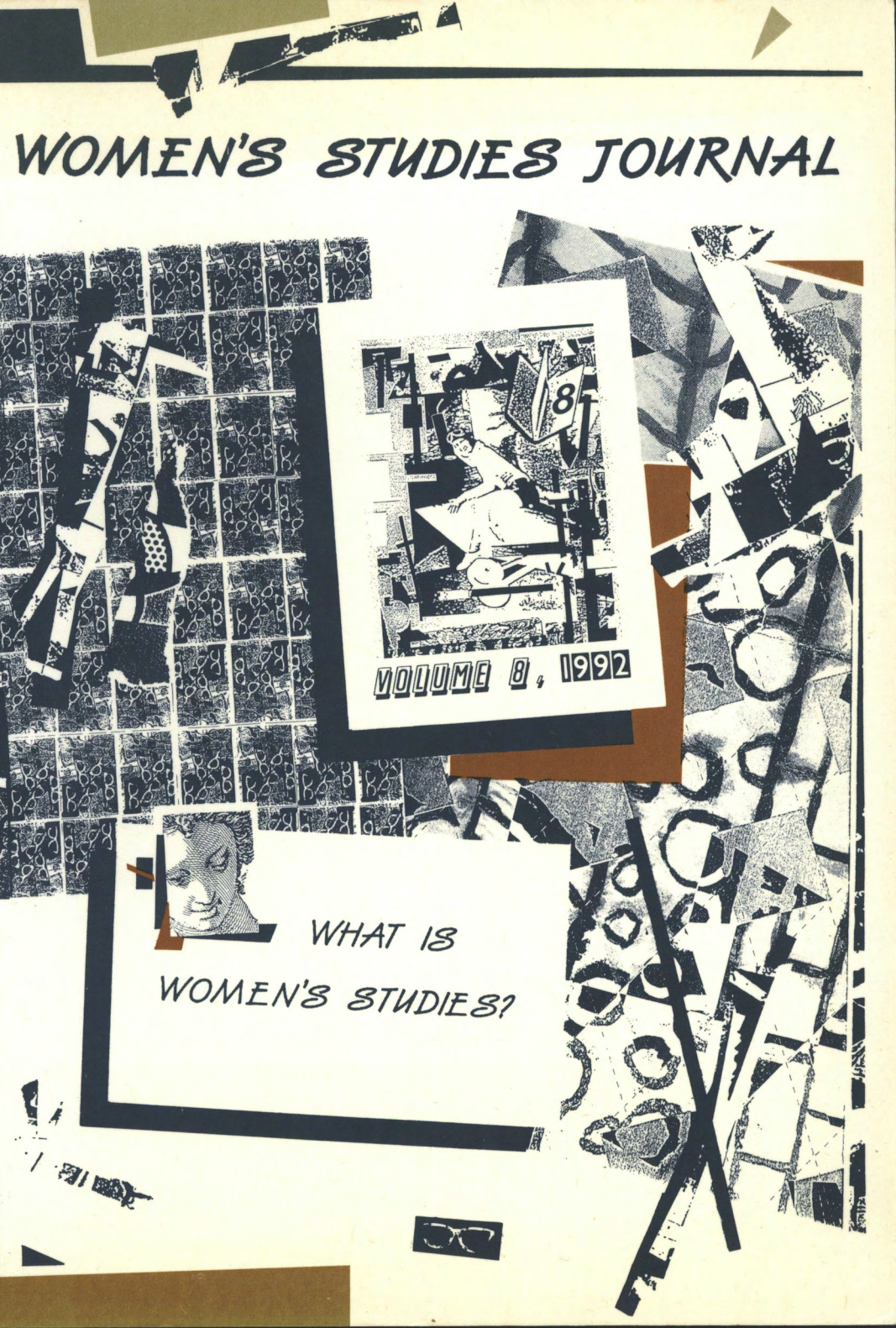
WOMEN'S STUDIES JOURNAL



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Women's Studies Journal

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Editor: Annabel Cooper
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This issue of the Women's Studies Journal is for Jacquie Matthews, to enjoy at leisure

Editorial

This is a critical time for Women's Studies in New Zealand. Feminism is always in flux, and while most of the earlier motivating forces remain, and with race and class now consolidated along with gender as questions central to feminist debate and action, new challenges question the bases from which our arguments proceed. Some of these challenges come from the direction of poststructural theory, the politics of which feminists may often query, but which has undeniably shifted the ground on which we stand.

Other challenges come from the need to address and meet the concerns of a changing discipline. The young women now arriving at tertiary institutions or graduating may have grown up in families informed by second-wave feminism, or may believe that we now live in a world of equal opportunity. Those who have had an ongoing commitment to feminism find in the 1990s that while many of their concerns may not have changed, the ways in which they think about and meet those concerns are altering.

The 'arrival' of Women's Studies in tertiary institutions also makes this time pivotal. In 1992, there are Women's Studies posts in all New Zealand universities for the first time. What happens on the way from the kitchen sink to the lecture theatre (as Jill Chrisp puts it)? Does the entry into the institution inevitably mean the de-politicizing of Women's Studies, as some feminists fear? Or can it mean the transformation of the disciplines Women's Studies touches, as others hope? How does its place in the institution affect the relationship between western feminism and mana wahine? Recent debates about Women's Studies appointments have been in effect arguments about what Women's Studies *is*, and what it should be here.

Since this is the first issue of the *Women's Studies Journal* to be formally produced from within a university, these are questions which are very present for us.

Auckland Women's Studies Association began the *Journal*, with limited resources but great enthusiasm, in 1984, and Wellington took over in 1988. We at Otago acknowledge the work of both those groups as we take it up; we hope to carry on both the enthusiasm and the feminist debate which have characterised the *Journal*. We are also aware that we will make new departures, already evident

in our position inside an academic institution, and in our new design. We welcome feedback on our handling of the editorial task and hope that the *Journal's* contents will stimulate wide debate on feminist issues.

In order to pick up on recent controversy, we decided to devote most of this issue to the topic 'What is Women's Studies?', and invited contributions. Jacquie Matthews reflects on a long career in Women's Studies, and the way in which its meanings and forms have changed. Kay Morris Matthews' article on the establishment of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities helps to locate many of the other contributions. Anna Yeatman, Noeline Alcorn, Jill Chrisp, and Hinematau McNeill offer differing understandings of what Women's Studies is through their writing about the discipline in specific contexts. Jenny Neale's report on Women's Studies in Asia provides a comparison with developments in that region. In other articles, Anna Smith's Suffrage Day commemorative lecture uses literary and psychoanalytic theory to critique the direction of political feminism, and on the economic front, Prue Hyman examines changes in superannuation and their implications for older women. Aroha Rereti-Crofts talks about the Maori Women's Welfare League and her role as president. To us, these pieces are welcome proof of a healthy diversity in the field.

Elizabeth Kerr's visual interpretation of these ideas and their diversity has produced a stunning new cover.

Two new regular sections of the *Journal* begin with this issue. The first is an expanded review section. Preference will be given to books on women with a New Zealand focus. The inclusion of a review of Judith Allen's *Sex and Secrets* in this issue, however, indicates that this policy will not be rigidly adhered to. Vivienne Scott Melton is the review editor for 1992.

The second new section is the listing of current research in Women's Studies in New Zealand, which we have introduced in the belief that one of the *Journal's* most valuable roles is in networking. This will be an ongoing part of the *Journal*. We have not attempted to be comprehensive with this first issue, but invite those engaged in feminist research to send in a short summary of their current activity. We will also welcome updates on entries. Bronwyn Dalley is responsible for compiling the listing.

A Tribute to Jacquie Matthews

Megan Cook

This short piece is written in appreciation of warmth, support, knowledge freely shared, discussions and a few arguments, graciousness and the ability to admit mistakes. Jacquie Matthews has been a cornerstone of my three years at Victoria University: I've taken courses with her, and listened to her lecture in others. A great deal is lost as she departs.

Jacquie, along with the unknown woman in Registry who told me to 'just turn up dear, of course we can fit you in', were the two conspicuously welcoming voices I heard when returning to university as an adult student. Going to enrol in Women's Studies courses, I found Jacquie's door (characteristically) ajar, and walked in to find, sitting in a warm and sunlit room, at an apparently chaotic desk, an elegant, tanned woman, silver hair piled high. Yes, it was possible for me to do this course, and that course, and would I be interested in another one also?

That 'other one also' was 'Women and Biography', which like 'Nineteenth-century Feminist Writing', was primarily taught by Jacquie, and it was during these courses that I became aware of the breadth of her knowledge. In a lecture summing up nineteenth-century feminist activism, each student was given an A3 sheet on which the principal writers and debates of four countries — Aotearoa, France, the United States, and Britain — were mapped chronologically, from 1790 to the early 1900s. Briefer notes referred to German, Russian, and Australian writers. An interesting exercise became more than that when Jacquie began to outline the connections between different groups of women, their travelling, the journals they wrote or wrote in, who knew who, or argued which position. Her enthusiasm for the women she spoke of, her belief in the importance of what they were doing and trying to do, the readings selected for us, turned the nineteenth century from dry dust into a time alive with ideas and argument.

Every so often a comment or anecdote would remind us of the advantage of bilingualism, or of holidays spent in libraries. We heard about letters between eminent men, arguing that they knew

the path the women's movement should follow, and about French feminist Jeanne Deroin, turning up at Hammersmith Socialist meetings in the 1880s, politically active to the end of her life.

Later that year, when Jacquie and I worked on the project that became 'Separate Spheres: Ideology at Work in 1920s New Zealand', the particular problems which a door left ajar posed for anyone working with Jacquie became clear. Time after time someone would knock, and look tentatively into the room. Although they were usually Women's Studies students, occasionally people would be sent from other departments, hunting information, a book, an article. I can remember Jacquie showing two Sociology students where the Women's Studies library was (they had walked right past it), where the catalogue was (labelled and hanging on the library door), and suggesting books they might find useful. After this, the latest of several interruptions, the door was finally, firmly, shut.

The interruptions were, I suppose, a recognition of how good Jacquie was with students on a one-to-one basis. She has enormous patience, and would listen to confused requests or explanations or academic arguments, unravelling strands, suggesting solutions or alternatives. Her aim seems always to be the active support of others' direction through the sharing of knowledge.

Jacquie's age is a great advantage to me. Wanting to see the different ways we grow older, I watch her with interest, enjoying the presence of a beautiful woman in her sixties. Sometimes, meeting her walking carefully up the stairs to her office, favouring a knee that wouldn't heal fast enough, the difficulties entailed in age were clear. (But perhaps it is age that has given Jacquie that valuable ability to admit, occasionally, that she might have been wrong—and how relaxing it is to be able to do that!) It's certainly age that's leading to Jacquie's ostensible retirement—an unlikely event. Working with her has been and will be a continuing pleasure, an opportunity to enjoy a rare combination of warmth, grace and knowledge.

Reflections and Recollections of a Retiring Woman

Jacquie Matthews

Early this century when Gertrude Stein returned briefly from France to America she visited several universities. Professors and lecturers, she said, wanted to hear only questions to which they knew the answers. *She* thought education was learning to ask the questions, especially those to which teachers did *not* have answers: the search was all.

That sums up what teaching in Women's Studies has meant for me. I've moved from a childhood obsession with right answers to an old age framing questions with students and colleagues, taking turns to learn and teach, criticise and endorse. Women's Studies students are special, of course. Midwives, teachers, nurses and artists, Maori and non-Maori, battered wives and lesbian grandmothers, computer witches or technophobes like me, graduates and second-year students, seventeen to seventy-seven, well-heeled or on the DPB, we have analysed the connections between power, poverty and personal pain, between race, class and sexual identity for women in the present and the past in Aotearoa/New Zealand and elsewhere. We have considered women as images, products, and victims and moved on to women as image-makers and agents. We have discovered lost heroines, then their (and our own) feet of clay. Much of what we learn comes from outside the university, from our everyday lives, from novels of last year and last century, from film-makers and trade-unionists, from storytellers and childcare workers. Increasingly and bewilderingly, for it's impossible to get your head around it all, it comes from writing by feminist scholars in virtually every discipline in universities, polytechnics and institutes of community education.

Sounds idyllic? It wasn't and isn't. Women's Studies has been subject to hostile rhetoric from both the Old and New Right and

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the Old and New Left outside and inside the University. It has suffered the silent indifference of much of the staff and student body. As embodied in university courses it has sometimes provoked the distrust of committed women teachers and activists outside the university who believe that the academy corrupts and footnotes corrupt absolutely. Many women being interviewed for course entry say 'I'm not a feminist but ...' and go on to explain why they fear the label but want the experience. Academic opponents of Women's Studies dismiss it as a Minnie Mouse subject but are apprehensive of its consequences. With reason, if you study the aims of the Women's Studies Association at the end of this journal.

Promoting 'radical social change through the medium of Women's Studies' and acknowledging 'oppression on the grounds of race, sexuality and class' are not easily accepted by an academic committee as the aim of a proposed course, whatever may be articulated in its University Charter.

Reflecting in this summer of 1991, as I retire, on past decades of my life as they relate to being a Women's Studies teacher there's no obvious path that brought me here. My generation didn't come to feminism or to Women's Studies on a wave of collective jouissance in the late sixties or early seventies; we were often isolated and out of step with our peers in the forties and fifties.

Yet I look for signs:

1931 I turned five in the Depression, and learnt my parents' disappointment at my sex (third daughter — my father wept) when the school wouldn't let me be called Jackie. (I mussed my ringlets and hid my socks and shoes under a fern on the way to school trying to look the same as children whose fathers were on the dole. Mine was in the Public Service and merely had his salary cut.)

1941 Turning fifteen, I knew I'd spend the rest of my life being a woman and a lot of it studying. They were in separate compartments — I'd have scoffed at the idea of Women's Studies — it would be the academic equivalent of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Methodist Church, which in total ignorance I presumed to be boring and ineffective. Mixed company was the ideal, even if it was wise for girls to conceal being clever. Knowledge was objective

and could be absorbed and regurgitated, even if its expression was 'original'.

I was the first of my Pakeha Scottish/English/Australian lower middle-class family to go to university. I was told I shouldn't do law because partnerships weren't offered to women: a pity — it would be good if I got paid for arguing, my family said. So I 'did' French and History, English and Political Science, wrote for *Salient*, the student paper, and on graduation was offered a job in the French Press Service as a journalist/translator. I married at nineteen, learnt to cook (enthusiastically), wash and clean (reluctantly), did my M.A.(Hons) rather badly, part-time, as a third shift. At a farewell faculty meeting recently, a male contemporary, retiring as a professor, recalled that there was a scandal in my M.A. translation paper — I communicated with the examiner by commenting that an account of an eighteenth-century naval battle with endless technical details of rigging and armaments revealed the obsessions of the examiner not the student's knowledge of French. I added that it was particularly unjust to women students. I wrote with some feeling as my work involved articles about European economic union, the arts, existentialism, the fashion industry, demography and social history. I believed I had no chance to demonstrate my competence in that examination.

I recall also a wave of fury when a Wellington lawyer, judging a university debate, announced that he couldn't place me first as people would think it was because of the delicious dinner I'd served him beforehand. (He'd spent dinner talking with my husband, a younger lawyer.) Who asked me to entertain him before the debate? Why was I fool enough to accept?

So there was awareness of sexual disadvantage and sexual oppression, of a great absence of women in history, literature and political analysis. They were segregated in chapters alongside other 'deviants' and 'minorities'. The terminology said it all. Yet I had absolutely no analysis of that oppression or of how it might be changed. I learnt rather that it was trivial, compared with the oppression of class and race and in any case would disappear with the revolution. I recently came across the programme of a V.U.W. Socialist Club weekend in 1948 'at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Keith Matthews'. The speakers were all Marxist males. Where are you, Mum? my daughter asked. I pointed to Lunch, Dinner

and Morning and Afternoon Tea. Only the male worker on the shop floor could carry the Marxist banner.

I don't now regret those questions about privilege, class, and race. They challenged the self-absorption of the adolescent girl I still was. (Later it made me wary of facile sisterhood, a 'we' that implicitly excluded Black, Maori or working-class women who didn't find the family their first source of oppression. Maybe also many of them were as reluctant as me to examine their cervix.)

1951 We were in France. I worked illegally as a journalist/translator. Reinventing myself/oneself in another language and culture was/is intoxicating. (Read about it in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette.*) Language and books were a dominant aspect of 'women's experience' for me. *How do we become what we are today?* Christa Wolf asks. *One of the answers would be a list of book titles.*

I read *Le Deuxième Sexe* (in French) in a Paris maternity hospital having my first baby. Both were painful experiences. I found de Beauvoir's erudition and analysis stunning but questioned her unease with the female, especially the maternal, body. I hadn't the language to make Rich's later distinction between the institution of motherhood and the experience of mothering. But when not wincing at cracked nipples and stitches 'down there' I was riveted by de Beauvoir's accounts of women in myth and in history, the concept of 'the gaze', of the male as norm and universal with woman as his other, as the marginal, what he is not, the object of his fear and desire, not herself a subject. It was de Beauvoir who introduced me to *A Room of One's Own* and to the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments at Seneca Falls. She mentioned women I'd never heard of in French history, Saint Simonian proletarian women of the early nineteenth century who published a women-only journal and who used only their first names because family names belonged either to fathers or husbands. Essential bits like this are missing from *The Second Sex* in English, as a feminist scholar was to reveal in a detailed study 25 years later.[1]

Many French women I worked with were politicised, had children and childcare (mothers, aunts and bonnes from Brittany). Others used creches and talked about the second shift they worked at home. In 1951 anti-nuclear marches were held in Paris, and I did door-to-door for the Stockholm appeal against the atomic

bomb and against the French 'dirty war' in Vietnam. Back in New Zealand, I had three more children, tried to be a superwoman, taught full- or part-time with hand-to-mouth childcare, sewed clothes and curtains, plastered and painted the joint family home. I debated Suez and Hungary, and thought a lot about the condition of women. A lecturer in Clinical Psychology seeing me talking with a group of friends while my husband walked our children, boy and girl, warned me they would be very confused about their sex roles. I said I hoped so.

1961 My youngest daughter was born just after the Easter CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmanent) four-day march which I'd helped cater for. The sixties for me in the private sphere were an exacting combination of teenagers, pre-schoolers and a workaholic husband. Professionally I began marking translations and doing oral classes for the French Department at Victoria. The expansion of the sixties permitted me to sneak in as a temporary junior lecturer relieving in turn for a professor, senior lecturers and the head of the language laboratory.

I read the Martha Quest novels and *The Golden Notebook.* Among other things, Lessing taught me that a woman could defy Bowlby, leave her children and marriage and write nourishing novels. I also read *The Divided Self, The L-Shaped Room* and *Silent Spring* and was incredulous that the prosecuting counsel in the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* trial could ask the jury 'to consider if it is a book you would wish your wife or your servants to read'. Mary Ellman's witty *Thinking about Women* appealed to me much more than *The Feminine Mystique* which seemed a rather bland American vulgarisation of *The Second Sex.* I read the *New Left Review* and was impressed by Juliet Mitchell's article 'The Longest Revolution' (in 1966 I think). I was also reading in French — Evelyne Sullerot, Michele Perrot, Edith Thomas, and later Foucault and Bourdieu among others. We all went on protest marches against the war in Vietnam and I translated Sartre and Jean LaCouture's speeches into English for the 1968 Peace, Power and Politics Conference.

In 1971–72 I was a lazy member of a women's liberation consciousness-raising group affiliated with the Wellington Organisation for Women. It was awkward to have to reply 'he does' to the vital question 'But who cleans the toilet?' Two other members

of that group wrote booklets: *The Synthetic Woman in a Plastic World* by Christine Wren and *Perspectives on Abortion* by Anne de Lacey Davidson. I didn't go to the first (April 1972) Women's Liberation Conference in Wellington. Seeing a close friend in Auckland who was dying of cancer took priority. At that conference the University Students' workshop discussed the possibilities of 'a Women's Studies programme to explore the special problems of women in our society'.

This impulse for a Women's Studies course was reinforced from several directions. 1973 was a peak year. Phillida Bunkle's arrival from the feminist ferment in Massachusetts was crucial. A group of students and a sympathetic lecturer in Political Science, Chris Wainwright, initiated a non-credit informal class in 1973 and papers from it were published as 'Learning about Sexism in New Zealand' with help from the Student Union. Germaine Greer visited. The Society for Research on Women in New Zealand (SROW) was active and Margot Roth edited its journal in 1972 and 1973. Bill Sutch published *Women with a Cause.* The first United Women's Convention was held. I'd come back from a visit to France with some early MLF (French Women's Liberation) stuff which I used in French classes.

For the first eight of the sixteen years I've been involved in Women's Studies at Victoria I was full-time in the Romance Languages Department teaching French language/literature/'civilisation' (in my case the press, politics, revolutionary thought and social history). In 1974 I'd just gained a tenured lectureship after four years of tutoring and nine of temporary junior lectureships. I was on the Victoria Committee of the Association of University Teachers, of which I was later to be local secretary. (The national secretary was Elizabeth Orr, now first woman Chancellor of Victoria University of Wellington.)

My activism focused on the disadvantages for women staff, and especially on pushing for (1) maternity leave; (2) adequate creche facilities which would allow staff to leave children for longer than the maximum permitted in the student creche; and (3) admission of the predominantly female part-time academic staff (teaching assistants, tutors, etc.) to AUT. Even if few could afford to join, this would enable AUT to initiate 'class actions' on their behalf. (The initial AUT resistance to this stemmed from their wish not

to benefit already highly-paid economists, accountants and lawyers who were casual tutors.)

The Campbell Committee on the Status of Academic Women, whose members included Beryl Hughes and Janet Holmes, was set up. Its report made ten recommendations which became the basis of the programme of the new Association of Women Academics in which Beryl Hughes from History and Ngaire Adcock from Psychology were the prime movers. (Beryl was later to become the first Convenor of the Board of Women's Studies.) One of the recommendations of the report was to set up an interdisciplinary six-credit Women's Studies course.

In 1975 the first labelled credit-bearing Women's Studies course in a New Zealand university was taught at Victoria. Just as Molière's character M. Jourdain discovered he'd been speaking prose all his life, some teachers found they'd been practising Women's Studies for a long time — in the Society for Research on Women, as educationists examining girls' 'failure' in maths and science, as researchers probing different voting patterns in women and men. Virginia Woolf had even suggested a basic Women's Studies programme in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), calling for 'a mass of information' to answer the questions 'At what age did she marry?; how many children had she as a rule?; did she do the cooking?; what was her house like?; had she a room to herself?' She wrote 'It would be ambitious beyond my daring, I thought, looking about the shelves for books that were not there, to suggest to the students of those famous colleges Girton and Newnham that they should rewrite history, though I own it often seems a little queer as it is, unreal, lop-sided ...'. Woolf also foresaw men's opposition to women's emancipation — and doubtless to Women's Studies courses. She suggested that some Girton or Newnham student might 'collect examples', and deduce a theory to explain this opposition.[2]

That was indeed how Women's Studies began — seeking out the women lost in history, secreted in chapters on the family or demographic trends, ignored in macroeconomics but seen in National Geographics, bare breasted or with a baby on their backs, pounding millet. Women's Studies began largely as a 'filling in the gaps about women and women's experience', what Gerda Lerner calls an 'additive' history, rather than by 'making women central to our conceptual framework' as is now its basis.[3]

The 'Women in Society' course begun at Victoria in 1975 called, over the next years, on a number of disciplines — Education, History, Law, Languages and Literature, Psychology and Anthropology. I gave an occasional lecture (on Simone de Beauvoir as I recall), regularly attended the others, and took one or two tutorials weekly. My input was limited. We relied on Phillida's coordination and experience in women's studies/women's history courses in the United States. She was already very aware of the issue of medical control of women's bodies and impressed by the work of the collective which produced *Our Bodies, Our Selves.* She also had experience of the sexual dynamics of American civil rights and New Left groups. She made personal approaches to those women and men who might have lectures to offer — and 'shaped' the course. Her energy and vision, her husband Jock Phillips' extra workload and the forbearance of the History Department of which she was a part-time member 'allowed' the course to get going. This pattern has been repeated for all teaching and development in Women's Studies at Victoria. Energy, thought, financial commitment and 'voluntary' contributions have come from women inside and outside the university. Visiting speakers often 'gave' their lectures in both senses, for our resources were pitiful. Later on, Women's Studies tutors from community education and contract research work (Marg Leniston, Lyn Jowett, Jo Lynch, Anne Else, Christine Dann *et al.*) had enormous input into the development both of teaching/learning methodology and of assessment procedures, for derisory remuneration. Women's Studies has served as a community resource and information centre for women, long before we had even a Room of Our Own. The continuing close links with community organisations, women unionists and researchers, together with Phillida's high profile as a women's health activist have perhaps saved Victoria's Women's Studies programmes from being stigmatised as elitist, but have not ensured us funding or support from the university administration. In a sense we've paid for our relative autonomy in content and pedagogy by being marginalised and financially starved.

Times of support and occasional special funding have come when the Convenor of the Board of Women's Studies (set up in 1978) and the Dean of the Faculty both had status, energy and

administrative expertise. One such time was when Prue Hyman was Convenor, and Janet Holmes Dean.

A second course, 'Images of Women', was introduced in 1979, after bitter opposition in a faculty meeting. It was thought that we might contaminate literature by mining works of art for feminist thoughts, and not using a 'proper critical method'. I remember asking which one Professor Robinson had in mind. In French we did an honours paper in comparative criticism using four different critical approaches. 'Images of Women' became my main responsibility, although Phillida was its official coordinator. I was still teaching full-time in French. It was not until 1982 that half of my lectureship in Romance Languages was 'redeployed' to Women's Studies. In many ways I would have preferred to remain like that, as my research into the nineteenth-century women's network of writers and activists in France-England-America and New Zealand would have been easier to nourish. My first brief sabbaticals in 1977 and 1981 permitted me to follow Foucault's lectures on the History of Sexuality at the College de France, to read Cixous, Irigaray and Kristeva in context (in fact I met Irigaray while attending a meeting organised by the feminist group of the Socialist party during the run-up to the 1981 presidential elections), to follow the often bitter internal debates involving Cixous, Wittig, Delphy, Basch and from a certain distance de Beauvoir. But as the economic constraints of the eighties tightened, my position became untenable. The university refused to award Women's Studies an additional half-lectureship — the deans would only reallocate the rest of my post. When I hesitated they suggested one of the other women in French might like to make the change. It seemed to them that to teach in Women's Studies you needed only to be a woman and a lecturer. To us this was not enough. But it was not until 1987 that I finally accepted that the only way we would get that half-post was by my transferring completely from Romance Languages to Women's Studies.

Teaching in the 'Women in Society' and 'Images of Women' courses, and becoming academic advisor to women students of the Languages and Literature Faculty became one focus of my commitment to women students. Another was taking an overtly feminist perspective in teaching language, literature and civilisation. The majority of students were women and it was easy

to demonstrate the sexism of teaching materials and 'deferring to Daddy' dialogues, or to introduce translations/comprehensions from controversial women writers. A few male students resisted, but there's nothing like a little indignation to get conversation going. A number of women students in French enrolled in the two Women's Studies courses.

It was not until 1982 that Women's Studies had any secretarial hours and it was 1984 before it had any administrative 'home'. This was a tiny study for Phillida, a small secretarial office for Janey Bedggood (who worked three hours daily for Women's Studies and two hours for International Relations and is still the heart of our system today), and a resource room for study and tutorials. In the last four years the university has been much more generous with accommodation. The opening of Kate Edger House at 20 Kelburn Parade has given Women's Studies a true home, able to house our resources and many of our classes, and serve as an evening and weekend meeting place for community women's groups.

In 1983, despite the fact that Phillida and I together constituted only one full-time Women's Studies appointment, we introduced a 300-level course, 'Feminism and Social Theory'. When I transferred fully in 1987 I developed a 300-level course, 'Feminist Writing', and in 1988, together with a visiting Fulbright Scholar, a Special Topic on 'Women and Biography'. The provision of supplementary equity funding allowed two part-time positions to operate for three years, 1989–91. Alison Laurie, who had already been a relieving lecturer, occupied one and the other went to Maori women — first to Roma Potiki, then Alison Green and then Lorna Kanavatoa. Courses have burgeoned — we now teach eight six-credit courses including a special topic on 'Lesbian Identity' taught by Alison Laurie, 'Sex Roles in the Economy' taught by Prue Hyman as a double-labelled course with the Economics Department, and 'Feminist Analyses of Science, Technology and Medicine', taught by Phillida. This has permitted a major in Women's Studies, with our own courses supplemented by those on women or gender from other disciplines.

The expansion of Women's Studies has been paralleled by the development of courses relating to women in the Departments of History, Education, Anthropology, Philosophy, Political Science, English and Religious Studies. This has led some academics to

ask the question 'Is Women's Studies still necessary?' Strange to relate they are the ones who never thought it necessary in the first place! For me there is no conflict in these developments. I see core interdisciplinary Women's Studies courses, courses within separate academic disciplines, the integrating of the study of women and gender within conventional curricula and, finally, debate, and research and publications outside the academy, as all being necessary and interdependent aspects of Women's Studies. They can feed one another, rather than compete. The History Department at Victoria with the appointment of a heartening number of young women offers a number of women's history papers, all naturally requiring prerequisites in history. Students fulfilling majoring requirements in both Women's Studies and History have a particularly rich offering but those history lecturers and their students have also been generous in contributing lectures and seminars accessible to non-historians. Combinations of Women's Studies with Sociology, Education, English, Political Science and Anthropology have proved equally fruitful.

This is not to deny the existence of contradictions, paradoxes and tensions within Women's Studies. These are partly generational. There are those like me who came in from different disciplines, finding in Women's Studies transdisciplinary connections and theoretical analyses which were profoundly satisfying. Then there were those marked by a feminist vision that was materialist but unitary, seeing patriarchal oppression as primary, establishing a sisterhood across language, culture, race, class and sexual preference. Rearing the world's children, gathering (in a field or supermarket), preparing and cooking the world's food, doing its unpaid work, not figuring in the GNP and being subject to men's violence was enough common ground. 'Women's experience' or 'women's reality' were terms used without further qualification. Finding foremothers was a favourite task. A new generation now in their late twenties or early thirties, again more specialised in a variety of disciplines — history, economics, anthropology, biology — can't imagine that the complexity and conflict inherent in race, class and sexual relations, between mistress and servant, black and white, colonist and colonised, was so little acknowledged. Difference and diversity now must be explicated. Foremothers, like 'real' mothers, provoke critical distrust.

One tension, which has been painful but finally positive, gave rise to the challenge and sometimes the angry frustration expressed by Maori women students and lecturers. In 1981 I spent a month in the USA and Canada visiting Women's Studies programmes. Returning to our 'Women in Society' 201 course at Victoria I was struck by the paucity of material concerning Maori women compared with the visibility of black women in US programmes. As Phillida was ill I went straight into coordinating WISC 201 and taking her tutorials. Like others in one tutorial group, I was shocked by a Maori woman student's presentation on the use of Depo Provera in her home district. She based her research on many interviews with Maori women.

Two extremely able mature Maori students, Miriama Evans and Irihapeti Ramsden, decided to remedy the absence of Maori material and to heighten the visibility of Maori women. They voluntarily undertook to organise a series of lectures for both the WISC 201 and WISC 202 programmes. They invited women of great prestige like Keri Kaa, Georgina Kirby, Irihapeti Murchie, Patricia Grace, Robin Kahukiwa, Ripeka Evans and later Bub Bridger who came as guest lecturers. Some of them came back year after year. Looking back it is clear we accepted their taonga too lightly. They received payment for lectures but it was certainly an inadequate acknowledgement of their gifts. Women's Studies relied on the energy and generosity of these women. I have learnt since that some paid for their own travel. This was an area where our very limited resources hampered fuller and earlier recognition and development and blinded the Pakeha staff to the gravity of the issue.

It was not until 1988 that Women's Studies employed a Maori tutor and from 1989 a part-time Maori lecturer. In their different ways Karen Wickliffe, Roma Potiki, Tania Rei, Alison Green, Powhiri Rika-Heke and Lorna Kanavatoa, Maori students of Women's Studies, and board member and senior lecturer Kathie Irwin, challenged Women's Studies to address issues of partnership in relation to access to resources, decision-making, course content and equal employment opportunities. This challenge has paralleled that addressed to white feminists by women of colour throughout the world but it has particular significance when the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism have become of primary importance in all aspects of the political scene of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

We hope that the appointment of a full-time Maori lecturer in Women's Studies is imminent.

Contradictions, paradoxes and tensions can be a positive impulse. They have to be teased out and debated. Women as a biological class are manifestly oppressed. Massing paid and unpaid work together they do two-thirds of the world's work and receive one-tenth of its income. They are subject to male domination backed up by violence. This applies to all societies, 'free enterprise', 'socialist' and 'traditional', as they conform to a model of progress that places increasing economic responsibilities on women without redefining their role as mainstays of family life and child support. In any class, race, nation, economic region or ethnic group women are poorer than men. Divorce in 'western' societies enhances the man's economic situation, degrades the woman's. In Africa development projects often actually lead to a decline in women's subsistence food production, while financing 'cash-crops' produced by men. The feminisation of poverty is global. But at the same time as documenting 'women' as they currently exist feminist theory has to examine the dynamics of domination and subordination and how it relates to the concept of 'masculine' and 'feminine'. Examining the way 'women' and 'men' are socially constructed and represented in language, art and culture may involve abolishing 'woman' as a category and questioning the concept of a universal 'women's experience'.[4]

I find some paradoxes even harder to tease out. How does Women's Studies 'challenge a modern western rationalism which dominates women, indigenous peoples and "nature", and yet accept 'the current shift ... to market-led employment'?[5] Rather than concentrating on professional success in market-led employment, Women's Studies may lead to the advocacy of alternative strategies and interpretations of economic events. Subversive that I am, I like the comments of Thomas Balogh (1982), a former Minister of State in the British government, on the mathematical models of 'fashionable economics'. He dismisses the 'rigor' of current conventional economic thought as rigor mortis.[6]

'Academic rigour' joins the terms 'women's experience' and 'objective knowledge' as having no single absolute meaning which could be applied to produce a model Women's Studies programme. There is a certain discomfort in acknowledging that

The Truth can't be revealed in one fell swoop by an overarching feminist theory. Feminist scholarship and a female self grow in specific historical, cultural and economic contexts. (How sick I get of that list!) This need not be paralysing. We can engage ourselves, write and act without absolutes.

Some teaching methods have proved extremely fruitful for us. The student as analytical observer takes herself as a legitimate subject of study and, usually working in pairs or in a group, places that self in her historical, cultural, sexual and economic context. This may result, according to course requirements, in a sociological analysis, a submission to a select committe, an autobiography or a 'story'. The form or medium is also subject to examination. One group last year filmed itself discussing issues of 'truth' and 'fiction' in biography and autobiography. Presenting this film to the rest of the group they asked the class to discuss whether the medium of film rendered the people and ideas more authoritative. (It must be true — I saw it on T.V.!) We exchanged 'stories', read 'stories' of the past, discussing the significance of French/English word contrasts. French 'histoire' is both history and story; French 'genre' is both gender and genre.

Some of these thoughts ran through my mind as I listened to the speakers at the launching of *A Book of New Zealand Women/Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa.* These stories were History. For most contributors the reward for their story was a copy of the book. I had recently perused the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Report on University Research, setting out priorities for funding. The word 'Maori' was mentioned in priority No. 16 (out of 20) and 'women' in No. 18. Animal health was of course high on the list. My mind came back to Merimeri Penfold and Cath Tizard who were celebrating this book, and the audacity and agency of the lives recounted. Victoria's Vice-Chancellor looked on benignly. Was this Research?

Let there be more books and films and paintings and research, some by Women's Studies students, and let me have time to read and see and enjoy them!

* * *

Jacquie Matthews has said enough about herself in the article. She proposes to go on writing about Robin Hyde, Barbara Leigh

Smith Bodichon and Jeanne Deroin to save herself from full-time grandmotherhood and gardening.

Notes

1. Margaret A. Simons, 'The Silencing of Simone de Beauvoir: Guess What's Missing From *The Second Sex*', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 6:5 (1983) pp. 559–564.
2. Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (Panther, London, 1977) pp. 44–45, 54.
3. Gerda Lerner, 'Reconceptualising Differences Among Women', *Journal of Women's History*, 1:3 (1990) pp. 106–122.
4. For a useful discussion of these issues see Jill Julius Matthews' article in the *Women's Studies Journal*, 3:2 (1988) pp. 38–43; and the reassessments of 'Women's Studies at Twenty' in the *Women's Review of Books*, 6:5 (February 1989) pp. 13–22.
5. Anna Yeatman,'Viewpoint', *Listener*, (December 16, 1991) p. 7.
6. In Hilda Scott, *Working your Way to the Bottom: The Feminization of Poverty* (Pandora Press, London and Boston, 1984) p. 137.

'For and About Women': Women's Studies in New Zealand Universities, 1974–1990

Kay Morris Matthews

Background

This paper presents the preliminary findings of a review of patterns of development in the establishment of academic Women's Studies in New Zealand universities. Its origins lie with discussions I have held over several years with others engaged in the teaching of Women's Studies, and a sense of the diversity of opinion, beliefs and ideology held by feminist academics.

Research data was obtained from a number of sources. The most comprehensive lists of Women's Studies courses are published annually in university calendars. The editions for all New Zealand universities from 1974 to 1990 identified most of the 112 courses and the year in which they were introduced. The founding dates, names of staff and course information were obtained through a questionnaire mailed to departmental heads. In addition, most course teachers provided copies of past and present course outlines.

Between April 1990 and August 1991 I conducted over forty interviews with feminist academics and male administrators from New Zealand universities. This information supplemented that gleaned from the minutes of faculties/schools, professorial boards and advisory committees of most institutions.

The location of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities has been dealt with in a number of studies.[1] Here, my particular concern is to investigate the key factors associated with the establishment of Women's Studies and to highlight the issues as

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they are raised by feminist academics currently teaching Women's Studies.

Two theoretical approaches are posed as possible explanations for observed differences in developmental patterns. The first, drawn from curriculum theory, suggests that characteristics of size, power, material interest and demand for an innovation by groups and sub-groups of academics within the hierarchy are associated with earlier or later development.[2] The second approach suggests that as Women's Studies has become an academic discipline, the divisions between what is perceived as grassroots feminism and academic feminism have intensified over the issues of content and pedagogy. This has in turn encouraged innovative individuals or groups to pursue as goals either autonomy or integration of Women's Studies within the university.[3]

Establishing a discipline

The first Women's Studies courses were established between 1974 and 1979. Three of them were based in departments of sociology. 'Sociology of Women' was introduced by Rosemary Seymour at the University of Waikato in 1974, 'Women in Society' by Rosemary Novitz at the University of Canterbury in 1975, while Ephra Garrett at Massey University introduced 'Women in Society' at second-year level in 1978. Other courses were based in psychology, by Jane Ritchie in 1976 ('Women and Psychology'); in law, by Margaret Wilson at the University of Auckland in 1977 ('Women and the Law'); and in classical studies by Elizabeth Duke at the University of Otago in 1979 ('Women in the Greek and Roman World'). The remaining courses were not based in a department. At Victoria University of Wellington, Phillida Bunkle was released from her part-time teaching post in the History Department to introduce the first interdisciplinary course in Women's Studies in 1975 ('Women in Society'). Another interdisciplinary course at the second-year level was offered at the University of Waikato in 1979 ('Women's Studies: An Introduction'). Here, the Psychology Department released one of its staff, Robyn Rowland, to enable the course to proceed.

These first teachers of Women's Studies courses had much in common. They were new appointees, they had recently completed qualifications which contained women-focused research, most considered themselves to be part of the women's movement, they had been employed at or had recently visited overseas universities, and usually were the sole woman in the department. Their backgrounds and experience tend to confirm an early hypothesis advanced to explain developmental patterns in the establishing of an academic discipline, namely, that a new discipline emerges when ideas about it have been available over a period of time and in several places and that when someone is motivated to take up the idea, it is not only because of its intellectual content. Motivation is also part of establishing a new intellectual identity and potential occupational roles.[4]

The development of Women's Studies courses overall has been closely linked to the positioning of women academics within the university. This has reflected the general employment pattern: women have been employed mainly in the arts, languages and social science sectors of the university, and almost invariably at lectureship and assistant lectureship levels.[5]

Two 1990 surveys revealed that women academics comprise a mere 19.1 per cent of the total academic staffing in New Zealand universities, that three-quarters of these women academics are employed at lecturer level, that only 332 or 53.2 per cent have permanent tenure, and that the majority were employed in schools of social sciences, education and humanities.[6]

Correspondingly, these are the areas of the university in which Women's Studies courses predominate. However, feminist academics have also established courses in other sectors. For example, students can elect to study aspects of women's art at Auckland's and Canterbury's Schools of Fine Arts, 'Women and Management' courses in the Schools of Business/ Management Studies at Auckland, Waikato and Massey, 'Women and Law' in the Law School at Waikato, 'Women and Architecture' and 'Women in Planning' in the associated schools of study at Auckland, 'Women and Religion' in Religious Studies at Massey and Victoria, 'Women and Recreation' in the School of Parks, Recreation and Tourism at Lincoln, and in the School of Physical Education at Otago, and aspects of women's health in the School of Medicine at

Otago. In 1990, there were seventy Women's Studies courses taught outside Women's Studies centres, and staff reported that their introduction had generally benefited departments in terms of the numbers of students attracted to them.

A quite different situation presented itself to university administrators when the two early autonomous programmes of Women's Studies were approved and became competitors for funds. A survey of the two original programmes at the University of Waikato and Victoria University suggests that while considerable kudos was gained by these institutions for having offered core courses (to overwhelming numbers of students), commitment remained at a token level. Both were allocated inadequate resources and staffing to cope with a new, fully-fledged programme. Only in the last three years has the situation improved at Waikato. At Victoria, however, scarcity of funding continues to present real difficulties for the programme's operation.

The core programmes of study introduced in the past two years at the University of Canterbury, Massey University and the University of Otago have emerged rapidly and with seemingly adequate intitial funding. In 1990, however, representatives from each of these universities reported current or predicted difficulties over budget allocations given increased competition for reduced university incomes.

The three programmes offering an undergraduate major in Women's Studies have core components: at least one introductory interdisciplinary course, a co-requisite or follow-on course in feminist theory, and another in research methodology. Other courses offered reflect the research interests of staff and cover such topics as feminist writing, feminist analyses of science, technology and medicine, lesbian studies, sex roles, the economy, public policy and women's health.

At graduate level, Waikato, Canterbury and Massey programmes offer compulsory papers in feminist theory and feminist research methods taught by Women's Studies staff. Students then choose either other papers from the core programme or papers offered from other departments. At Waikato, for example, the range includes women's health, feminist history, women and politics, women and public policy, women and globalisation, women and work in New Zealand and the sociology of women's education.

Women's Studies has been gradually accepted as an academic discipline in New Zealand universities, since it has attracted thousands of students and generated valuable research and a great number of publications. This burgeoning has vindicated a subject which many pundits had earlier claimed would be a 'passing phase' in the life of the university. Yet remnants of this attitude remain. There is almost a sense of disbelief from some sectors of university communities that Women's Studies now dares to compete for resources on an equal footing with other departments. This is tied to the fact that a new development threatens the integrity and status of existing disciplines, an argument used by scientists at the University of Waikato in the 1980s. Representatives from the humanities, education and social sciences reacted more mildly, fearing that Women's Studies would make inroads into their student numbers.

How Women's Studies is regarded within the university hierarchy is important, both for understanding its potential impact for educational reform and in predicting its future viability within the university system. Now viewed as competitors, programmes require powerful advocacy for survival. A review of annual budgets indicated that Women's Studies programmes of similar size currently operate on grants of between $3,000 p.a. and $17,000 p.a. This highlights the fact that universities are keen to be seen to offer a liberal programme of Women's Studies but some are less enthusiastic about according it realistic funding.

The other theme central to the development of core Women's Studies is associated with sponsorship. For every core programme there has been a group of committed feminist academics and students who have lobbied for its establishment. There has also been at least a dean or a head of department who has provided resources and staffing to enable it to happen. The pattern then appears to be that maintenance and extension of that development has been dependent on the initiative and energy of the feminist academic group, which by this time constitutes an advisory committee.

The first programme in Women's Studies at the University of Waikato was actively sought by members of the Women's Studies Advisory Committee and many of their heads of department in 1985. At the higher level, however, only a minority of deans

and professors backed the initiative. Despite the opposition, the newly arrived vice-chancellor was keen to launch the programme and the Centre for Women's Studies was established in 1986. It is interesting to note that while the university provided new staffing for a half-time directorship, the programme could not proceed with this allocation alone. Director Jane Ritchie's home department, Psychology, gave the one half-time junior lecturer, accommodation, secretarial services and sessional assistance which enabled students to be taught. It could be argued that departments such as this also received the funding for the student numbers generated in Women's Studies. However, most benefactors of Women's Studies were heads of large departments where altruism and a genuine concern were reported as the reasons for becoming involved.

Similar benevolence by departments occurred at Victoria, Massey and Otago. At Victoria and Massey, the initial impetus for interdisciplinary Women's Studies came from faculties of humanities and social science. Here, the departmental heads involved were also deans of their respective faculties. At Massey and Otago, both deans were also assistant vice-chancellors. All three attribute the establishment of core Women's Studies programmes to a number of factors: the effectiveness of the lobbying campaign mounted by women colleagues, an awareness of a growing feminist literature in their own discipline, an appreciation of the types of Women's Studies programmes in overseas universities, the influence of feminists within their own families, the degree of control each exercised over faculty resources, and that 'the time was right'.

At Victoria and Massey, deans created staffing positions from their own department's entitlement and supplied offices and secretarial support. At Otago, over thirty heads of department wrote in support of the creation of a 'new blood lectureship' in Women's Studies and then with the dean's assistance had resources made available to operate the programme and have the appointee housed with her home discipline in the Department of English. At Auckland, while there was verbal support for the establishment of a Women's Studies programme from the Professorial Board, no resources were forthcoming. It was left to a few women to find the funds for staffing from a community bank. Their efforts have

culminated in the inaugural Chair in Women's Studies and an appointment is pending.

A more liberal academic climate may well have been a contributing factor to the emergence of programmes in the late 1980s. Certainly, many senior administrators reported little opposition at professorial or council level. A more important factor, however, is that several universities (Canterbury, Otago and Massey) have recently devolved responsibility from vice-chancellors to deans of faculty. The new degree of autonomy which deans have enjoyed has provided a framework in which programmes of study can be nurtured to a point where they can be self-sufficient.

The ongoing development of core programmes is very much dependent on the efforts of members of Women's Studies committees and senior women academics who are also members of decision-making bodies within the university. Yet, in the main, those involved occupy positions of lower status. Of the sixty-four feminist academics teaching Women's Studies courses in 1990, four were assistant lecturers, forty were lecturers, fifteen were senior lecturers and five were associate professors/readers.[7]

This review suggests that the early Women's Studies courses were largely ad hoc, idiosyncratic local versions of what feminist academics believed Women's Studies should be. Lecturers in a wide range of disciplines introduced courses, often unaware of other developments on the campus. Most feminist academics attended meetings to discuss further developments in Women's Studies. Two main sub-groups are evident: those who believed that Women's Studies should remain within the realm of existing disciplines, and those who believed that it should be established as a discipline in its own right.

The first group generally represented strong traditions within existing disciplines and had substantial support from within the university. The second group generally represented a number of new appointees and were supported by feminist activists from both inside and outside the institution. This group promoted their version of Women's Studies as the 'proper' and 'real' version and did so in ways which made many of the first group adopt defensive attitudes towards women's studies. A number of overseas radical feminist speakers (Charlotte Bunch in 1979 for example) and strong local challenges (like Donna Awatere in 1980) provided a

public image which the first group did not want to have associated with academic Women's Studies.

Groupings such as this confirm the view that the development of a new subject is accompanied by a continuing state of flux, with shifting amalgamations of sub-groups whose boundaries and priorities change. The issue of the nature of academic Women's Studies is also closely tied to the developmental patterns of a discipline. Other curriculum histories suggest that once successfully promoted as an academic discipline, the nature of what is taught becomes paramount in defining and legitimating the subject.[8] The strategy for achieving this stage was the establishment of autonomous Women's Studies centres at Waikato, Victoria, Massey, Canterbury and Otago and with Auckland's intention to do so in the immediate future. To complete its identity, core courses have been placed in the hands of specially defined scholars whose job it is to promote the academic tradition. By claiming its place, attracting large numbers of students and having its staff engaged in commissioned research, such centres should expect a range of material improvements. This final stage will be achieved when Women's Studies centres become departments in their own right, with corresponding access to staffing and resources.

Such moves do not in any way detract from the valuable contributions made by those feminist academics who continue to offer Women's Studies courses from their home departments. Indeed, a wide range of integrated courses are essential to the success of a Women's Studies programme, as are their teachers to subject advisory committees.

Issues and development

Bitter opposition to Women's Studies was consistently reported in the area of curriculum. As the first courses were introduced, this opposition arose from male departmental colleagues and centred on content. A psychologist contributing to the interdisciplinary course at Victoria was accused of 'penis envy', while at Auckland, students of the first 'Women and Law' course were told by some male lecturers that they would not get jobs if they enrolled in such a course. Many feminist academics reported snide remarks. By the

mid-1980s, however, attitudes appeared to have changed, at least in public, leading a male administrator at the University of Waikato to suggest 'that it would be a very brave man indeed who opposed such developments'.

Criticisms of Women's Studies courses by students and feminist groups outside the academy have also focused on content. In the early 1980s, this focused on the invisibility of Maori and lesbian women's experiences within the curriculum and by the late 1980s had centred on the issues of race, gender and class. Maori and lesbian academics have been quick to point out that the appointment of Maori and lesbian staff and the introduction of courses on Maori women and lesbian women's experiences has not removed the responsibility for including these perspectives in other Women's Studies courses.

The nature of Women's Studies courses is the subject of ongoing debate between those who currently teach in the area.[9] A few believe that the value of Women's Studies continues to rest with the original aims of courses offered in the 1970s. At that time, emphasis was placed on the androcentricity of academic knowledge and that Women's Studies offered alternative and compensatory viewpoints. Many interviewed seemed to agree that Women's Studies has moved on from this point. As theoretical perspectives were developed to account for the position of women in different societies, Women's Studies scholars sought solutions to the many injustices women experienced.

Approximately two-thirds of the feminist academics interviewed reported that their approach to Women's Studies is exactly the same as for any other academic discipline. That is, the purpose of the course is to present information and tools of analysis. The core of the disagreement between this group and the remainder of those interviewed lies in the interpretation of what constitutes intellectual endeavour. Many newcomers to Women's Studies were very concerned that they should not be identified with any semblance of consciousness-raising occurring in their classrooms. Longer-term staff tended to report that there was room for academic excellence as well as personal awareness and that the two were not mutually exclusive.

Other areas of contention which have emerged in recent years relate to staff appointments in Women's Studies programmes,

the presence of men in Women's Studies and the relationship of the wider women's community to academic Women's Studies. Of the ten existing academic positions in Women's Studies in 1990, only half had been advertised. The remaining positions had been filled in a variety of ways. At Victoria University both permanent staff, Phillida Bunkle and Jacquie Matthews, were transferred to Women's Studies from positions in other departments. Over a fifteen-year period at Victoria, therefore, the university had not allocated any specific staffing positions in Women's Studies. Contract appointments secured through external equity funding provided staffing until the end of 1991.

The first appointments in Women's Studies at Canterbury and Massey and the second position at Waikato were all created out of existing salary funding by senior male academics in 1987. This they believed was a way of launching and maintaining programmes. At Canterbury, Livia Zulauf-Wittmann was transferred from the German Department, while at Massey and Waikato both appointees were offered jobs having been interviewed for other positions. On the strength of our credentials and past teaching experience in Women's Studies programmes, Nicola Armstrong became the inaugural Women's Studies appointment at Massey, and I continued an appointment in the Centre for Women's Studies at Waikato. Understandably, an increasing number of aspiring feminist academics viewed these developments with dismay, their only comfort being the knowledge that when contract positions expire and are replaced, they will be advertised. That no Maori academics hold permanent positions in Women's Studies and that there is a valuing of overseas applicants ahead of New Zealanders by appointments committees are matters of current debate.

Disagreement still exists over the role of men in Women's Studies. At the student level men have generally been enrolled in undergraduate courses but in small numbers only. Very few lecturers reported classes of more than ten per cent male students. At the introductory level women students have been able to opt for either all-women or mixed tutorials, providing a solution for those students who object to the inclusion of men in small-group discussion.

The issue of men teaching Women's Studies is not as well-resolved. In the first two interdisciplinary courses, at Victoria

in 1975 and Waikato in 1979, many of the lectures were presented by male academics. When women gained appointments in contributing departments, they tended to become part of the Women's Studies lecturing team. By 1981, men teaching in Women's Studies had become a rare event, although in 1988 a male tutor employed at Massey University attracted considerable comment from extra-mural students.[10] Currently there is only one course introduced and taught by male academics. In 1989, the Department of Phenomenology of Religion at the University of Otago offered a level two course on women and religion. There are no women staff in this small department and the course is taught by three male academics. The course is included in the university's Women's Studies programme.

The institutionalisation of Women's Studies has brought its own difficulties with the women's movement outside academia. Interviews conducted with several women involved in teaching and administering non-degree programmes in Women's Studies indicated a depth of feeling around this issue. Most believed that core programmes in Women's Studies had gained acceptance within universities but were increasingly isolated from the community. They believed that in severing these links, academic women were losing touch with the daily realities of women's lives. They feared that programmes would become more elitist and theoretical, obsessed with the research dollar and less concerned with students.

Feminist academics, however, considered that the most important contribution they could make to the women's movement was through the publishing of research. Many believed that distributing the results of creditable research and making knowledge about women's lives more public could bring about positive changes in public policies. An overwhelming number of those interviewed expressed regret at not being able to sustain memberships of community women's organisations and cited combinations of workload, family commitments and fatigue as the reasons for withdrawal.

Many feminist academics are concerned for the maintenance of proper academic standards within Women's Studies. Courses must be intellectually rigorous and not viewed as an easy option for students. While these are worthy goals, there is a sense that many

do not believe that teachers of community-based women's studies courses share this view. I believe that those inside the academy would do well to remember that continuing education and community development programmes stimulate student interest and provide a valuable bridging programme for the many mature students who go on to enrol in degree courses.

On the positive side, there are some innovations in this area, such as the current partnerships between regional polytechnics and the University of Waikato. Students in Northland, Bay of Plenty, Rotorua, Poverty Bay and Taranaki are enrolled in a six-paper Unitech Certificate in Women's Studies, with plans to have polytechnic staff teach introductory level university courses under an articulation arrangement.

The future of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities

The nature of the curriculum and programme resources emerge as key factors in the future development of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities. The politics of the curriculum means that in the process of becoming an academic discipline, the subject has had to renounce its utilitarian nature — its practical outcomes. A paradox now exists, however: Women's Studies grew out of utilitarian concerns to become 'academic' but now has also to be seen as a 'meal-ticket' in order to survive.

The historical investigation of the curriculum conflict over Women's Studies suggests the pursuit of material interests as a major factor in understanding curriculum change. Lecturers' salaries, promotion and conditions are linked to the future of Women's Studies and self-interest of lecturers is closely connected with the status of the discipline. The conflict over what should be taught and how it should be taught is about material resources and career prospects for the Women's Studies community.

The problem of funding is universal and is particularly characteristic of women's enterprises. Academic budgets are generally tight because of the economic recession and only one current programme has a chair which can influence decisions about resources. Funding problems mean that overload and its attendant personal costs will continue if women want Women's Studies.

It also necessitates greater tenacity and creativity on our part. Although research centres have been signalled for Waikato and Otago, this is at a time when commissioners of research have less money to spend. This means that women and Women's Studies programmes will have to be pro-active in securing external funding to continue their work. If student interest and enrolments continue to rise, then programmes will have a better chance of pressing administrators for greater support. If not, Women's Studies in New Zealand universities will remain a vulnerable entity in a patriarchal hierarchy and dependent on the goodwill of a few liberal administrators.

* * *

Kay Morris Matthews has taught in the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of Waikato since 1986. Here she has had major responsibility for curriculum development and the Women's Studies distance education programme. Her research interests in feminist educational history and curriculum design have converged in a doctoral thesis on the history of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities.

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2. I. Goodson, 'Subjects for Study: Towards a Social History of the Curriculum', in I. Goodson and S. Ball (eds.), *Defining the Curriculum: Histories and Ethnographies* (Falmer Press, London, 1984).
3. 'Integrated Women's Studies courses' refers to those courses taught within the staff member's home department (e.g., 'Psychology of Women' within a department of psychology). Students can accumulate a number of integrated courses towards a supporting major for an undergraduate degree. 'Autonomous Women's Studies' refers to those courses taught within independent Women's Studies centres or units by staff specifically appointed in Women's Studies. Students are able to accumulate specified core courses offered within an autonomous programme towards an undergraduate major.
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7. *University Calendars 1990*, staff listings.
8. D. Layton, *Science for the People: The Origins of the School Science Curriculum in England* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1973).
9. Renate Klein, 'The Dynamics of the Women's Studies Classroom: A Review Essay of the Teaching Practice of Women's Studies in Higher Education', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 20:2 (1987) pp. 187–206; Robyn Rowland, 'What are the Key Issues Which Could Be Addressed in Women's Studies?', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 7:3 (1987) pp. 167–176; Jane Aaron and Sylvia Walby (eds.), *Out of the Margins: Women's Studies in the Nineties* (Falmer Press, London, 1991).
10. Jill Chrisp, 'Men in Women's Studies', *New Zealand Women's Studies Newsletter* (July/August 1988).

A Vision for Women's Studies at Waikato University

Anna Yeatman

This is a revised version of a speech given as part of a seminar series, 'Feminist Scholars Who Captured the Campus', sponsored by Continuing Education at the University of Waikato in August 1991.

In what follows I offer two things: a programme for change in a particular institution, and an analytical evaluation of tasks facing a particular discipline of knowledge. The first reflects my institutional role of leadership, a role which is policy-oriented. The latter reflects my position as a university-based and oriented intellectual working in the new discipline of Women's Studies.

Both roles have to contend with the tensions that arise when an emancipatory social movement's activities and vision give rise to knowledge which is then institutionalised and professionalised within the conservative institution of the modern university. These tensions can be represented as three-fold: firstly, the reshaping of the movement's idea of itself because of how its knowledge becomes influenced by the critical, sceptical culture of the modern university, an influence which specifically operates to destabilise the movement's commonsense view of itself as obviously change-oriented, radical, and opposed to the *status quo*; secondly, the opening up of a difference, a rupture, between the professionalised and non-professionalised ideas, people or intellectuals of the movement, where the former can bring to bear on movement debate and discussion the expert scholarship and critical apparatus of a contemporary academic discipline; and thirdly, the development of a tension between the explicit value commitments of a movement-oriented discipline such as Women's Studies and the important ethical conventions of a 'value-neutral' spirit of scientific enquiry. These tensions also operate to make the contemporary university seem as though it is segmented into

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mainstream components of the non-political or generic disciplines and these non-mainstream components of new disciplines arising out of the political impact of social movements on the university. All these tensions find their way into the following discussion, although it has to be said that they would be represented differently than they are here by feminists positioned outside the university.

The Women's Studies programme at the University of Waikato is the most established of its kind in New Zealand. It now has a full undergraduate major up and running as well as a graduate programme. This makes it established by world standards and the number of staff contributing to Women's Studies at Waikato makes it a very established programme indeed.[1] In an historical sense, this reflects both the energy and the commitment of feminist academics at this university, and it reflects also the contemporary vision and relative lack of hide-bound tradition on the part of the university at large. I see the University of Waikato as a creature welcoming to programmes that represent new vision and challenge. Contrary to the older universities, it is much more inclined to go along with programmes that represent the future and its demands, and there are many aspects of both its culture and its structure that support this. By creating the first Chair of Women's Studies in Australasia, the University has shown a pioneering confidence in the academic potential and significance of Women's Studies, and it is likely that over the next five years more universities with Women's Studies programmes will follow its lead in according full professor status to the leadership of the programme.

In talking about a vision for Women's Studies at Waikato, then, I am talking about the vision for a university-based programme of Women's Studies. Different kinds of vision are necessary for different kinds of institutionally-oriented programmes. Accordingly, I am not attempting here to speak to how Women's Studies should be oriented within polytechnic and continuing education programmes. Women's Studies in New Zealand (and in Australia) has developed to the point where there can be an effective division of labour between these different types of programmes, and where the task becomes one of articulating a relationship between them.

The University of Waikato, by its commitment to biculturalism and to women, breaks with the traditional cultures of universities,

and signals its capacity to offer leadership in what are times of considerable challenge to modern western ideals and values. In offering this leadership, the University of Waikato is showing the distinctive value of university leadership in responding to the challenges of the present time. This value resides in the insistence of the university both on a critically reflective relationship to values and on the importance of ensuring that such claims as we want to make about reality are tested by scepticism as to both their empirical and their theoretical validity.

Perhaps the value of the university is greater now than it has ever been. For it is in these times that the whole tradition of western culture and knowledge has come under challenge from those whom it has marginalised, those whom the west has colonised, and those whom it has treated as secondary to the main business at hand. One of these groups of course is women. The temptation in the context of these challenges to the whole authority of the western knowledge has been to throw the baby out with the bath water. This is a challenge we should resist. Let me give an example of the kinds of challenges that I think we are experiencing at the present and how they affect the development of Women's Studies. Women's Studies came into being with the development of the second wave of the feminist movement toward the end of the 1960s, at a time in which a higher education system, a university system, was well-established in advanced capitalist countries. By this time it was a mass university system in the United States, and at the point at which Women's Studies became institutionalised as a part of the curriculum in the 1980s this quality of being a mass system had extended to Australian and New Zealand higher education as well.

The social movements of the sixties drew much of their base from university students and it was inevitable that the kinds of claims they were making, both in terms of values and in terms of claims about the nature of reality, would find reflection in the academic curriculum. So the second wave of the feminist movement was taken up within the university and expressed as Women's Studies. This means that Women's Studies is necessarily bound up with the projects of professionalisation that the contemporary university represents. The first wave of feminism, the wave that we associate with the second half of the nineteenth

century and the first two decades of this century, was coterminous with the professionalisation of knowledge. Not only was there an especial attraction for nineteenth-century feminists of the professional ideals of career open to talent, and of trained service, but many of these feminist reformers were profoundly engaged with projects that laid the groundwork for social work and the other human services as professions.[2] The confluence of the first wave of feminism with that of professionalisation did not mean that feminist values were allowed to contaminate the culture of scientific objectivity and value-neutrality which characterised the ethos of the professions. That now there is an open politics of contesting and contestable knowledge claims within the contemporary university is an important change which may owe more to the subjection of the university to 'outside' political influence than to the self-regulation of the collegial community of the autonomous university.[3] Such political influence represents a demand that the public universities democratise themselves in the sense of being more accountable to the community of tax-paying citizens which funds them. Such democratisation has been understood to mean universities should adapt their entry and other credentialling procedures so as to permit access and entry to groups traditionally poorly represented in higher education. It has also been understood to mean that the values of movements placed in a contestatory relationship to modern western, patriarchal rationalism should enter the intellectual debates of the university.

This politicisation of the university has been understood by many of the custodians of western masculinist reason to constitute a threat to the very foundations of the university. There is an uneasy and often highly conflictual relationship between the older principle of rational enquiry and that of multiple, contestable and openly politicised claims on 'truth'. Where this relationship works as a binary opposition between two camps in the contemporary university, there is a dreadful game played out between a scientistic representation of rational enquiry on the one hand and 'politically correct' forms of moral certitude on the other. Necessarily, the first wins hands down since the latter abandons all pretence to rational enquiry and commits itself to moral terror as its practice. The promise for the future lies in refusing this binarism and in an open, reflective embrace of the tensions which arise as to what

rational enquiry means in a universe of multiple, politicised truth claims where there can be no monorational mode of closure for debate.[4] The politics of Women's Studies within the contemporary university is thoroughly subject to the tensions between rational enquiry and political correctness. However, it is arguable that it has been assisted in making this a productive and creative intellectual enterprise by a further development, namely the challenge to western (white and middle class) feminism by non-western women and women of colour. This challenge has unsettled the moral certainties of this movement-oriented intellectual discipline and propelled it into its own distinctive sociology of knowledge.

The feminist movement has been increasingly challenged, since about the end of the 1970s, by non-western women and by women of colour. These challenges have brought out the neglect of class, racist, and ethnic oppression by the feminist movement's tendency to concentrate on gender issues. Those making these challenges have said over and over again that the feminist movement's tendency to oppose women to men overlooks the critical fact that for Black women, depending on the context, racist oppression may be often more primary than gender oppression, and that to oppose racism their allies are Black men, not white women. This kind of politics is expressed by the Afro-American feminist theorist bell hooks who declares:

> Feminism in the United States has never emerged from the women who are most victimised by sexist oppression: women who are daily beaten down, mentally, physically and spiritually, women who are powerless to change their condition in life. They are a silent majority. A mark of their victimisation is that they accept their lot in life without visible question, without organised protest, without collective anger or rage. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* is still heralded as having paved the way for the contemporary feminist movement — it was written as if these women did not exist. Friedan's famous phrase, 'the problem that has no name', often quoted to describe the condition of women in this society, actually referred to the plight of a select group of college-educated, middle and upper class married white women — housewives bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life ... She did not discuss who would be called in to take

> care of the children and maintain the home, if more women like herself were freed from their house labour and given equal access with white men to the professions.[5]

Bell hooks also makes the point that the feminist ideal of equality with men tacitly presupposes shared class, race and ethnic group status with men from the *dominant* group. It does not make sense for women who are racially, economically, and ethnically exploited to seek equality with their male peers:

> Knowing that men in their groups do not have social, political and economic power, they could not deem it liberatory to share their social status. While they are aware that sexism enables men in their respective groups to have privileges denied them, they are more likely to see exaggerated expressions of male chauvinism among their peers as stemming from the male's sense of himself as powerless and ineffectual in relation to ruling male groups rather than an expression of an overall privileged social status.[6]

It is logical that the only women who are positioned to make gender inequality their primary concern are those of dominant race, ethnic and class status. However, this is not an insight achieved by these women on their own: it has depended on challenges from women positioned in ways which exclude them from this privilege. The effect of these challenges has been to make evident the interested quality of feminist politics and ideology, an interestedness that expresses the tendency of its leaders and followers to be white, western and middle-class. Nancy Cott, a feminist historiographer of US feminism, makes this quite clear in the introduction to her 1987 publication, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*: 'The woman's rights tradition was historically initiated by, and remains prejudiced toward, those who perceive themselves first and foremost as "woman", who can gloss over their class, racial, and other status identifications because those are culturally dominant and therefore relatively invisible.'[7]

If this is generally true of feminism, it is especially true of its professional domains: femocracy and Women's Studies. The degree to which academic practitioners of Women's Studies have been willing to respond to these challenges has been mixed. It is fair to say that the theoretical work with which Women's Studies

is currently associated is a genuine and positive response to those challenges. There are several aspects of this response. First, there is a deconstructive response, which demonstrates that feminism as critique necessarily confirms the very ground it seeks to challenge, that is, it tends to reproduce and confirm the binarisms of a patriarchal gender division of labour, and, paradoxically, becomes complicit with that order.[8] This deconstructive response is conducive to an examination of the history of how Women's Studies and feminism have participated in western, white and masculinist modes of knowledge. For example, there is work on how white women in colonial settings were and are complicit in a gendered way with white, Western, masculinist colonisation, and on how this colonisation has inscribed the policing binarism of 'good' and 'bad' women within the racialised hierarchies of coloniser and colonised.[9]

A second response to these challenges has been a theory of the intersections between different bases of oppression, that is, working with the idea that there are multiple bases of oppression, that there is class, gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and that not any one of these bases of oppression can be viewed as a master key to the rest, that they have to be analysed separately and then examined in their historical intersections. This is making for some mature and exciting work.[10]

A third response which is clearly indicated by the second is the opening up in theoretical and practical terms of a politics of voice and representation within Women's Studies. Specifically, in theoretical terms, Women's Studies is beginning to debate the proposition that white western women cannot speak for all women. It is now accepted that for all women to be a part of Women's Studies a dialogical process which is open to differently positioned women, that is women who regard themselves as differently positioned in terms of ethnicity, race, class and sexuality, has to be opened up. This is a politics of difference and it is arguable that it is predicated on abandoning a radical feminist insistence on the unity of women. This is a highly contentious proposition at the current time, especially as it calls into question ideas of immediate and transparent personal experience and face- to-face community. Iris Young argues against the totalising tendency of these ideas and the way in which they work to suppress or to deny

difference, and she is one of the more significant feminist theorists of a democratic politics of difference.[11]

These theoretical responses are emergent, they have a kind of maturity, but they have a long way to go. They are participating in a more general theoretical renaissance within social science. Women's Studies, or more adequately, the feminist theory that I have indicated, is contributing to a significant new wave of theorising in the humanities and the social sciences, a wave just as significant as the intellectual revolution which psychoanalysis, sociology and anthropology brought about at the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. This new body of theory is both supremely sceptical and democratic in relation to the values which are always embedded in knowledge. It refuses to authorise any knowledge claim that makes that claim appear as though it is grounded in the nature of things, as though it is a mirror image of something out there that is simply true. This is a radical scepticism which accepts that proposition of Nietzsche that truths are metaphors. This is because truths are a function of the politics of representation, since representations rather than reflections of reality are at issue. My point is that such scepticism is in the traditions of the modern university. It is democratic because it is able to use methods of analysis which show how any positive representation of humanity tends to 'other' that which it is not. This kind of analysis creates a space for those who have been 'othered' in discourse.

Feminist representations construct their own representational economies of inclusions and exclusions. An example of this is the commonly held feminist view that women are more co-operative than men. The new critical theorising problematises all aspects of that statement. It questions for whom and in what contexts it is meaningful to speak of all women. Secondly, it suggests that, if some insist on speaking for all women this is because they are naturalising the condition of being a woman, a rhetorical gambit that contradicts precisely where feminist interventions tend to operate, namely to denaturalise, to refuse to essentialise this business of being a woman. It also brings out the way in which the proposition that women are more co-operative than men necessarily conforms to a binary politics of inversion which 'others' men, and conflates who men might become with a patriarchal

masculinist *status quo*. This particular representation also 'others' women who are not co-operative or who refuse to conform to what co-operative means within the rhetorical context at hand.

If the new critical theorising problematises this kind of binary categorical claim for women it does so in a spirit of self-critical irony. It accepts, not only as a condition of feminism, that such binary categorising is necessary. It makes it clear that the very necessity of feminism arises from the material existence of a patriarchal ideological binary and hierarchical ordering of the terms male (masculine, men) and female (feminine, women). In short, this theorising adopts a deconstructive relationship to its own discursive practice.[12]

This example underlines the point that feminist theory has matured to the point where it is able to subject its own premises to an ironical, sceptical and critical mode of analysis. Here I join and celebrate with Teresa de Lauretis in her statement that:

> A feminist theory begins when the feminist critique of ideologies becomes conscious of itself, and turns to question its own body of writing and critical interpretations, its basic assumptions and terms and the practices which they enable and from which they emerge. This is not merely an expansion or a reconfiguration of boundaries, but a qualitative shift in political and historical consciousness. This shift implies, in my opinion, a dis-placement and a self-displacement: leaving or giving up a place that is safe, that is 'home', (physically, emotionally, linguistically and epistemologically) for another place that is unknown and risky, that is not only emotionally but conceptually other, a place of discourse from which speaking and thinking are at best tentative, uncertain and unguaranteed. But the leaving is not a choice: one could not live there in the first place.[13]

She goes on to say: 'Both dis-placements, the personal and the conceptual, are painful — either the cause or the result of the pain, risk and a real stake'.[14] This thematic of how an open politics of representation, tied as it is into a contemporary politics of difference, requires us to relinquish that great icon of the cult of domesticity — 'home' as refuge and sanctuary in relation to the fray of the public marketplace — is importantly developed by Minnie Pratt in her 'Identity: Skin Blood Heart.' There Pratt, a

white, middle class, Protestant, Southern US woman, shows how the home of her childhood was predicated on strictly and violently policed exclusion of all that was (who were) not white, middle class, Protestant, and 'normal', thus prescribing her own exclusion as the lesbian she later became.[15]

I offer this quick sketch, and that is all it is, of how contemporary critical feminist theorising operates, to indicate how far it is from ideological self-congratulation and dogma, and how much it participates in the critical, reflective and sceptical spirit of a university. My argument is also that this spirit is as central now as it ever was to a democratic and non-totalising politics. It is undoubtedly true that such critical theorising depends on the legitimacy a university affords not only to critical reflection but to the erudition and scholarship on which such reflection depends. In short, the professionalism of modern university-based knowledge is required for this critical theorising to be possible.

If, then, we acknowledge the merit of the by now established lines of critique of professional domination, it cannot be because those of us who are critical feminist theorists are willing to abandon our professionalism. It is arguable that all professions make a bid for power through their monopoly on particular kinds of knowledge claim. It is this which is at issue in the critiques of professional domination, for example in the women's health movement's critiques of the medical profession. It is no less at issue in respect of critical feminist theorists. That this is so, however, does not warrant the abolition of the authority which resides in scholarly erudition and expertise. The answer does not lie in attempting to preempt the differentiation of expert and non-expert feminist theorising by making all conform to the homogenising dictates of feminist community and its inevitable totalising moral strictures. Instead it lies in maintaining this differentiation but requiring both dialogue and accountability across it.

Just what this might mean requires rather different models of political accountability, dialogue and democratic participation than those we inherit. I was permitted some insight into these by a consultancy I did, an evaluation of the largest home and community care service type in South Australia. This evaluation was jointly sponsored by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments. Its context was both fraught and complex: the

stakeholders comprised the bureaucrats of both governments (these included inter- and intra-agency tensions), the managers of the services concerned, the direct service deliverers (allied health professionals and paramedical aides, almost all women), the consumers and carers, and a range of interested third parties (local government, older people's advocacy groups and so on). The strain of increasingly rationed and scarce services was most acutely felt by the direct service deliverers, consumers and carers. The latter were angry not only about the lack of service but its delivery in ways that did not always respect the expressed needs of consumers and carers.

One of the most important lines of conflict concerned precisely the ethos of professional domination which coloured the service. On the service-delivery side, commitment to this ethos was much more strongly maintained by the medical directors of each regional service than by the allied health professionals. Most of the paramedical aides had been recruited from enrolled nurses, and had been trained in a culture of professional domination. Doctors tend to be quite sure not only that they can discern the 'real' needs of the patient but that these needs are more real than the expressed needs of the patient—in short, that they know the needs of patients better than they know their own needs, and that, therefore, the voice of a patient is redundant to him or her receiving a service. The younger disabled consumers in this service area tend to be veterans of the disability movement, a movement oriented in part to contesting precisely this professional paternalism in service delivery. So, there was eloquent and sustained protest against the ethos of professional domination from the most active consumers. They were supported in this by the Commonwealth Government's declared commitment to designing services around the need of individuals rather than *vice versa*. The doctors interpreted this debate as a zero-sum game: either they continued to be God, or civilisation (science) as we have known it would disappear. The consumers were more sophisticated. If one listened closely, and picked one's way through their rhetoric of frustration and anger at not being heeded by the service, they were suggesting that there is a place for both expert-defined *and* expressed needs, and that the issue was one of ensuring an effective and reciprocally accountable relationship between these

two types of need, and the actors voicing them. Since I had no doubt that expert knowledge and professional experience were crucial to the quality of the service, and I rightly discerned an anti-professionalism in the bureaucrats' brief with which I wished to be non-complicit, I worked on a partnership model of a dialogical relationship between the service deliverers on the one hand, and the consumers and carers on the other.

This model democratises the service-delivery relationship but does so in a way which does not homogenise the roles of all the parties to that relationship. Each becomes the appropriate 'expert' for their distinctive role. Since the parties are non-substitutable in the relationship, the voice of each must contribute to its working and development. There is a strong likelihood that differences in judgement and policy for the relationship will arise. Some of these may be irresolvable. This notwithstanding, the partnership model requires the differentiated parties to the relationship to be dialogically accountable to each other for these differences and to be responsible for negotiated pragmatic compromises which permit, if not consensus, a decision with which all can live. For such a partnership to be possible, the parties concerned have to be resourced. Professionals have to be trained to be accountable in these ways and consumers need to know that there are information and advocacy services they can call on if they need them. This partnership model actually privileges all the parties. It does not invert the usual relationship of professional domination by making the consumer, rather than the professional, top dog. Indeed we should be wary of contemporary governmental policy which is making the consumer sovereign. By a relative marginalisation of professional knowledge (and a relative deprofessionalisation of human services), governments are achieving a cheapening of services but are depriving consumers and carers of the contribution of expert knowledge to how their needs are defined and met.

The partnership model solves some of the problems we have inherited from the democratic tradition. The alternative to representative models of democracy has been participatory democracy, which has been understood in terms of face-to-face community and a politics of equality. Everyone is put on the same level, difference is not able to be worked with, and, inevitably, those most adept at manipulating the communitarian ethos of the interaction prevail.

How far is this model of a democratised, expert-informed service delivery relevant to working out what should be the relationship of university-based Women's Studies to women and the women's movement outside the university? Should the academic enterprise of Women's Studies be understood as analogous to the delivery of a service, and, if so, to whom is this service delivered?

The fundamental obligation of a university-based Women's Studies practitioner is to be an expert in terms of the conventions of scholarly expertise which characterise the contemporary university. In this regard, her service-delivery roles concern her university-based constituencies: primarily her students, both undergraduate and graduate, whom she is inducting into this scholarly discipline, but also her academic peers, and the academic management of the institution to whom she is responsible for her university practice. For her *expertise*, accountability to these constituencies overrides accountability to extra-university constituencies.

An academic in the politically marked university disciplines — such as Women's Studies and Maori Studies — is accountable also to extra-university constituencies which make claims on her through shared political and movement affiliation. For her *politics*, then, accountability to these constituencies overrides accountability to the university-based constituencies. However, as will be clear, this is not a simple issue.

If the Women's Studies academic has an obligation of accountability for her value orientation and her politics to these constituencies, on the model of partnership I have offered above this obligation cannot be understood as one which requires her to deny the ways in which her scholarly expertise informs her values and politics.[16] These ways make her a critical and reflective participant in politically-oriented dialogue, and she may often substitute reflection for policy action to the justifiable frustation of those oriented to action. In this context, she has a dual obligation: firstly, to be an effective communicator in relation to these non-academic constituencies; and secondly to appreciate and respect their expressed needs regarding how she realises her role in relation to them, which among other things may require that she become more familiar with the world of policy action.

The requirement of effective communication requires her to become bi- if not multi-lingual in the sense of being able to operate

across different contextually-bound dialects and modes of rhetoric. Anyone who aspires to be a public intellectual must develop these lingual competencies. Her own academic language must appear as so much arcane jargon to non-initiates. Linguistic difference of this kind is one of the clear hallmarks of the line dividing expert from non-expert knowledge. Her academic language is appropriate for the university classroom and for communication to her academic peers. It is not appropriate for communication to non-academic audiences, but, again, her 'plain' language competencies will be always coloured by the byzantine intricacies and esoterica of her academic tongue. What her 'mother' tongue is, is a moot point since like all intellectuals her self(selves) has(have) become re-created through the rhetorical artifice of the modern intellectual disciplines.

It cannot be denied that those who claim expertise have a tendency to construe their relationship to the non-expert along hierarchical lines so that the former believe they know *in general* more than the latter, that their esoteric language makes them *in general* cleverer and more insightful than the latter. These beliefs are clearly undemocratic. If, ultimately, knowledge is oriented by some reference to need, it is clear that no amount of expert attention to need can substitute for what I have called above 'expressed' need, that is, need as constructed by those who *have* the need. The non-expert knowledge of needy persons is just as much crafted by experience and learning as is expert knowledge. They, remain, however different kinds of knowledge.

Much of my argument here concerns this difference and its importance. If it is important to require Women's Studies academics to be politically accountable to the expressed needs of women's movement constituencies, it is equally important to accept that their expert knowledge has a place in relation to these expressed needs. This kind of knowledge permits these needs to be historically situated, and critically and reflectively analysed. Among other things, this ensures that the interested quality of feminism, its inflection by the privileged race, ethnic and class positioning of its follower, is subject to critical challenge and reflection. This, in turn, is conducive to a democratic politics of difference within feminism where it is accepted that the needs of differently positioned women are different. The values of reflective critique, empirically-oriented

enquiry and logically coherent analysis remain as crucial to the health of an emancipatory social movement such as the women's movement as they are in general to a society oriented within democratic, dialogical and civil process.

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Professor Anna Yeatman took up her appointment as foundation professor of Women's Studies at the University of Waikato in April 1992. Previously she was a senior lecturer in Sociology at Flinders University, South Australia. Her research interests cover feminist restructuring and women's labour markets. In recent years she has been involved in a number of public policy and public management consultancies. Her book *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State* combines both these theoretical and practical interests.

Notes

1. By 1993, the Centre for Women's Studies at Waikato will have become a department with a complement of four full-time academic staff on continuing appointments who offer the core components of the undergraduate and graduate program. In addition, about twelve to fourteen women academic staff from other departments/schools offer elective topics at both levels at any one point of time.
2. I owe the first point to Nancy Cott's chapter on 'Professionalism and Feminism' in *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1987). Cott remarks: 'Because of the close relations of the professions to education and service (where women's contributions were acknowledged to an extent); and because the professions promised neutral standards of judgment for both sexes, collegial autonomy, and horizons for growth, they became a magnet among the potential areas of paid employment for women'. (p. 216)
3. Cott suggests that 'the impact of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in effectuating feminist protests within and about the professions in the 1960s and 1970s cannot be minimized; women in the earlier generations had no such support from outside the professions themselves' (pp. 234–235).
4. See Anna Yeatman 'Minorities and the Politics of Difference,' *Political Theory Newsletter,* (forthcoming March 1992.)

5. bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (South End Press, Massachusetts, 1984) pp. 1–2.
6. ibid., p. 18.
7. Cott, p. 9.
8. There are a number of significant contributions to this important self-critical insight, notably: Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (Routledge, New York and London, 1990); Denise Riley, *'Am I that Name'? Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (Macmillan, London, 1988); Elizabeth Grosz, 'Contemporary Theories of Power and Subjectivity', in Sneja Gunew (ed.), *Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct* (Routledge, London and New York, 1990). Grosz proposes: 'To say something is not true, valuable, or useful *without posing alternatives is*, paradoxically, to affirm that it is true ... Thus coupled with this negative project or rather, indistinguishable from it, must be a positive, constructive project: creating alternatives, producing *feminist*, not simply *anti-sexist*, theory' (p. 59, emphasis in the original).
9. See, for example, Jane Haggis, 'Gendering Colonialism or Colonising Gender? Recent Women's Studies Approaches to White Women and the History of British Colonialism,' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 13:1/2 (1990) pp. 105–115, and Jane Miller, 'Imperial Seductions', in *Seductions: Studies in Reading and Culture* (Virago, London, 1990).
10. See, for example, Gill Bottomley, Marie de Lepervance, and Jeannie Martin (eds.), *Intersexions: Gender/Class/Culture/Ethnicity* (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991); and Daiva Stasiulis, 'Theorizing Connections: Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class,' in Peter Li (ed.), *Race and Ethnic Relations in Canada* (Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1990).
11. Her critique of the 'metaphysics of presence' in the ideal of community is 'The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference' in Linda Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (Routledge, New York and London, 1990). Her development of a democratic politics of difference is to be found in her *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1990). It is noteworthy that her development of democratic theory *as a* politics of difference is predicated on her acceptance of the limits of her own positioning as one which requires her to dialogue and connect with differently positioned movement actors: 'As a white, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied, not old woman, I cannot claim to speak for radical movements of Blacks, Latinos, American Indians, poor people, lesbians, old people, or the disabled. But the political

commitment to social justice which motivates my philosophical reflection tells me that I also cannot speak without them. Thus while my personal passion begins with feminism, and I reflect on the experience and ideas of the peace, environmental, and anti-intervention movements in which I have participated, the positions I develop ... emerge from reflection on the experience and ideas of movements of other oppressed groups, insofar as I can understand that experience by reading and talking with people in them. Thus while I do not claim here to speak for all reasonable persons [a reference to the universal standpoint of liberal and republican democratic theory], I do aim to speak from multiple positions and on the basis of the experience of several contemporary social movements' (ibid., p. 14). This insight might be developed to become one of investigating and understanding what I call the reciprocal interpellations of the social movements of the contemporary present: for example, it is arguable that the postcolonial, national liberation and anti-racist movements not only called each other into being but they did so in respect of feminism as well, albeit indirectly.

12. See especially Riley and Butler, cited above.
13. Teresa de Lauretis, 'Displaying Hegemonic Discourses: Reflections on Feminist Theory in the 1980s', *Inscriptions*, 3/4 (1988) pp. 138–139.
14. de Lauretis, pp. 127–145.
15. Pratt's piece appears in Elly Bulkin, Minnie Pratt and Barbara Smith, *Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-semitism and Racism* (Long Haul Press, New York, 1984). Biddy Martin and Chandra Mohanty offer an insightful commentary on it in the collection edited by Teresa de Lauretis, *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies* (Indiana, Bloomington, 1986), where de Lauretis herself picks up on both in her Introduction. Together these pieces constitute a mini-tradition of feminist theory.
16. Equally the university cannot require that she deny the ways in which her values and politics inform her teaching and scholarship. All it can require is that these ways are accountable to critically reflective, analytical and evidential procedures.

Women's Studies: Influencing Practice in Continuing Education

Noeline Alcorn

Feminist challenges to knowledge have taken many forms, all of which attack hegemonic androcentric assumptions. Such assumptions have denigrated women's experience by marginalising or ignoring it, have privileged certain forms of thinking, and have compartmentalised knowledge. Feminist theories have mounted a series of challenges: to the epistemological bases of knowledge, to gatekeeping mechanisms which have excluded students from access to knowledge, to the separation of intellect and intuition in the formal acquisition of knowledge, to concepts of total objectivity and value-free research activity, and to the androcentric bias of much Western curriculum construction. Feminist writers and scholars draw different conclusions from such challenges. All would agree that feminist perspectives, taken seriously, must clash with or transform conventional social assumptions about curriculum and the educative process. Some decide to withdraw from the mainstream of patriarchal institutions, others to work within them to attempt to effect change. Both courses of action are valid and valuable. This paper describes a commitment to the second option.

The Centre for Continuing Education at the University of Auckland has been offering courses in Women's Studies for more than fifteen years and over that time the programme has both expanded and changed. So too has our thinking about what we do, how we answer the question 'What is Women's Studies?' and to what extent we can incorporate women's issues and feminist perspectives within our programme. Our answers are limited by our academic location, working at the interface between our institution and the diverse communities outside it. They are also

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limited by our geographical situation in a large metropolitan area, and by the events we have lived through in the last decade. And because our programme has to be self-supporting, the resulting constraints reduce our options while calling on our ingenuity.

The needs of women students have always been important to us because most participants (at least 70%) in the whole range of our courses are female. The initial impetus for what could be loosely labelled Women's Studies came in the 1970s from Sheila McMillan, then a lecturer in the Centre. She was involved in the founding of the Auckland branch of the Society for Research on Women and until her retirement at the end of 1978 worked with women's community groups, especially in the pre-school area, to provide parent education which focused on helping women cope with childrearing in the light of educational theory and research.

Reclaiming the Right to Learn: The New Start Programme

The New Start Programme, designed to facilitate access to university study for mature students, began in 1976. These students (over 70% of them female) are offered extensive individualised educational guidance and support, a ten-week course, and a variety of skills development programmes. The Centre uses some of its restricted space as a coffee lounge, providing a comfortable place of their own for adult students to meet, talk and study. Staff in the programme, all of them women who have returned to tertiary study themselves as mature students, have developed a specialised knowledge of and empathy for the problems and needs of women, especially those in mid-life, who are seeking to claim learning rights they were unable to take up earlier.

Much of this work has been documented. The New Start staff have produced a number of videos for use in their own work and by other groups, which focus on the challenges of tertiary study and learning for mature students.[1] The interviews for one of these, *Reclaiming the Right to Learn*, have been transcribed and published in book form.[2] In this book nine women talk frankly about their own lives, the changes university entailed, the difficulties of juggling multiple roles and coping with indifference or hostility from family and friends, and the process of learning

to believe in their own abilities and self-worth. Its publication is due to the initiative and tenacity of Anne Davis, who has been responsible for the programme almost since its inception, and to whose commitment much of its success is due.

The New Start team has established significant links with other institutions and community groups whose aim is to help women develop new aspirations and skills by fostering self-esteem and questioning some women's views that their roles cannot be changed. Over the past two years there has been increasing provision for the special learning needs of Maori and Pacific Island women. There has also been long-standing special provision for the needs of the disabled.

New Start offers students a realistic assessment of their ability to cope with university study, not only through developing study skills but also through lectures and assignments in a variety of fields. The examination and 'graduation' party provide affirmation of success and encouragement to enrol for something further. The association between New Starters and Centre staff does not end at that point: many continue to return for ongoing assurance and support. Some are attracted to further programmes to consider their options once university is over or to change direction during their studies. They offer support in their turn to newer students. Each year during the university graduation ceremonies in May we try to photograph the new starters who have made it through the system, dressed in their academic finery.

'Academic Objectivity'

In 1978 a survey course in Women's Studies was included in the Centre's General Studies programme. By 1980 there were other courses which addressed women's issues from a self-consciously feminist perspective, and a resource collection was begun with the help of the Centre librarian, Rhoda Venables. Some of the Centre's staff believed, however, that a feminist perspective was inappropriate in a university which considered itself committed to 'objective' enquiry and analysis, and overtly feminist programmes were cancelled. A debate between the Centre and the Auckland Women's Studies Association ensued but the policy remained

in place for several years.[3] During this period, though, Judith Elphick, in her role as community education organiser, developed a programme centred on various aspects of women's health such as menopause and aging. These courses aimed to provide women with information to help them make decisions about their own lives, and lecturers provided a useful mainstream medical approach. While there was no feminist analysis and little awareness of cultural difference, the response to the seminars indicated that many women were grateful for knowledge about what was happening to them and to their friends in mid-life.

New Developments 1985 – 1991

Following my appointment as director of the Centre in 1985, and with the assistance of key members of the Women's Studies Association, especially Margot Roth and Claire-Louise McCurdy, a series of fifteen lectures under the broad title *Perspectives on Women Today* were planned for 1986. The first five lectures were published by the Centre under the same title.[4] They addressed such issues as 'What is Women's Studies?', 'Women and History', 'Women and Education', 'Women and the Family', and 'Women and Law'. The second series concentrated on health, which included psychology and spirituality as well as a discussion by Elizabeth Murchie of *Rapuora*, the newly published research report on Maori Women's Health.[5] The third group of lectures focused on Images of Women and on Social Change. Although the format was formal and interaction therefore limited, the series was important for a number of reasons: it provided a forum for some exchange of ideas; it was explicitly feminist in approach and introduced a number of women to information they had not hitherto encountered; the social interaction provided by coffee, biscuits and book buying at the end of most lectures enabled women to make contact with one another and with speakers; it established the Centre as a source of material on Women's Studies issues within the university.

At the same time, and over the next few years, the General Studies programme offered a number of discussion-based courses in literature, psychology, spirituality, experiential art and writing.

These courses studied work produced by women and invited students to respond by talking about and sharing their responses, by exploring their experience through verbal or visual diaries, or through creating new rituals. Later there were courses on feminist theories. The women who attended the classes represented a broad range of ages, attitudes, experience, education and training, and were anxious to explore widely. This meant responding to the experience and ideas of women from different cultural backgrounds, different sexual preferences, and different historical periods. As a teacher in this programme my own ideas expanded as I shared the women's fiction and autobiography. I was enthusiastically reading with a group of able women whose responses, in what often became a collective reading of the texts, enriched my own perceptions immeasurably.

Finding suitable venues for classes where students could sit in a circle or square and be reasonably comfortable was not easy in a university where the predominant teaching mode is the large lecture in tiered theatres. The work of staff in finding appropriate spaces and in moving furniture was often considerable; we also had to counter suspicion of such requirements. The issue of whether classes should be for women only or open to mixed groups also arose. The university prides itself on open access to information and in the few cases where it seemed imperative to hold a restricted class, we needed to apply to the Human Rights Commission for permission to advertise it in this way. In the main, open classes have not been a major issue. The marginalisation of women's issues is apparent in this as in other areas and if the course title mentions women or feminism men rarely attempt to enrol. Male students in our classes have fallen into two categories: those who are sympathetic and tend to observe rather than participate, and those who attempt to dominate the conversation or inform class participants and lecturer alike that they are wrong and need to be enlightened. The second category, though small in numbers, poses problems, the most serious of which is the continuing inhibition of some women participants.

One of the perhaps unexpected results of these informal classes has been the formation of loose groupings of women who continue meeting when the programme of lectures ends. One such group has held regular lunches and discussion for over five years. Some

of the women enrol in a number of consecutive classes; their assertiveness has increased and their view of themselves been enhanced though this was not a deliberate aim of the courses.

The Centre for Continuing Education has taken the view that one important task it can assume is to provide opportunities for celebrating the achievements of women. Partly this is done by giving prominence to and developing a critical appreciation of writing, art and drama, and by encouraging student creativity. Two major weekend events had a more specific focus. The first, a Feminist Film Weekend held over Queen's Birthday in 1988, brought together over a hundred women to learn about, view and discuss women's film-making in New Zealand. A video showing historical film clips was produced by Julie Benjamin for the weekend.[6] The most important feature of the event was the heightened awareness of the achievements and the difficulties faced by women in this important field. Enthusiasm ran high. In 1990, the Centre co-operated with the Heritage Trust to organise a Women's Heritage Day which looked both back and forwards. The morning was devoted to aspects of our herstory, focusing particularly on the women who worked for the suffrage and temperance causes, and on women since the war. The afternoon offered a variety of perspectives on issues facing women today, including a keynote speech by Margaret Wilson, former Labour Party President and Dean-elect of the new Waikato University Law School. Although the format was a pakeha one, as in the film weekend there was a careful attempt to show that our heritage as New Zealand women is a bicultural one. The cutting of a cake, balloons and streamers, the photographic displays and bookstalls all contributed to the mood of celebration and festivity the event generated.

Women's work has also featured strongly in a number of programmes in which New Zealand artists, writers and film-makers have discussed their work with students. Again we tried to ensure that the offering was representative and not monocultural. We have also attempted to raise awareness of herstory by highlighting women of the past, in for example the celebration in 1991 of the work of the medieval abbess, Hildegard of Bingen, writer, seer, artist, scientist, composer, theologian and politician.

Trends in course provision and student enrolment patterns vary. Six years ago courses in psychology, personal skills and

development were in heavy demand. Women's spirituality also attracted large numbers and has retained much of its appeal. More recently, issues concerning women, the economy and the workforce have assumed greater prominence, as have career planning, balancing work and family commitments, and challenging conventional definitions of work. Women's health, and the ethical issues arising from it, such as informed consent, has also been a popular topic.

Determining what will be offered in a programme which changes annually is a delicate task. For a number of years there have been regular annual meetings of an informal committee where those who had taught in the programme previously, and sometimes additional advisors, would evaluate the current year's offering and generate suggestions for the future. Some of these would reflect the enthusiasm of individuals, others would be the result of reflection on needs or trends. Some would arise from requests from students and course members. It is always disappointing when what seem to be important issues fail to attract sufficient enrolments, but like most planners we sometimes discover a mismatch between what we think is important and what proves popular. Here our need to cover costs proves a real difficulty. However, the opportunity for Centre staff to exchange views with such a diverse group has been a valuable experience.

The Centre also values the stimulation provided by the conferences and publications of the New Zealand Women's Studies Association as well as the work of its Auckland committee. The chance to co-operate over the visit of Dale Spender in 1988 provided entertainment and challenge, and we have remained grateful to the Centre for Women's Studies at the University of Waikato for sharing their video records of her speeches, which have proven popular resources.[7]

One of the assets we have developed over the years is a fine collection of library resources in the field of Women's Studies. Our Centre is fortunate in having its own library, available only to our own students and to university staff, and, thanks to the enthusiasm of tutors and of the librarian, our range of material is both comprehensive and current. Since we are not a research library we do not carry archival material or a wide range of periodicals but our collection is a valuable asset to the programme. It is also

well used. It is made much more useful and accessible because of the initiative of the librarian, Mary Ann Crick, in establishing a classified and regularly updated bibliography as a guide to the collection.[8] The latest developments in the programme, particularly the establishment of a Certificate in Women's Studies, would be impossible without these library resources.

The Certificate in Women's Studies

The impetus for the Certificate in Women's Studies came from my own growing awareness that the University of Auckland offered no systematic programme in Women's Studies, although papers on women's issues were offered in some departments. We hoped that a qualification offered through the Centre would enhance rather than inhibit the possibility of developing a full degree programme at the university. In many ways the Centre for Continuing Education was a suitable place for such an innovation since its focus is to provide educational opportunities for adults, and its programme is wide-ranging and eclectic. It has no single disciplinary orientation or emphasis and has extensive networks both inside and outside the university. It already offered qualification courses in other areas — programmes geared to the needs of practitioners in particular fields, blending experience, theory and practice. They were taught by lecturers who saw class interaction as vital.

The development of the course was also influenced by issues arising from the general and non-credit courses we offer and from the success of New Start in helping women realise their abilities. Women's Studies might offer some women the chance to test themselves in tertiary study by exploring areas in which their own experience was a vital component. I believed there were also a number of women in employment who faced gender issues of various kinds and would welcome the opportunity to consider theory and analysis of women's issues in greater depth.

After an exploratory meeting with a representative group of women to test initial support for the concept, the idea was developed by a team of four: Margot Roth, Claire-Louise McCurdy, Claudia Bell and myself. We spent several months clarifying

our own ideas about the purposes, content, teaching styles, and assessment of such a programme. At an early date we established our collective assumptions about the programme. It must be feminist in orientation, genuinely interdisciplinary, coherent and systematic; must be grounded in experience, research and theory; must model feminist values in learning and teaching and be as rigorous and analytical as any other university course. Where possible, it should also incorporate New Zealand material. Certain things followed from these assumptions. Those who taught in the programme would need to be supportive of feminism. Class numbers would need to be restricted, in order to allow for sharing and discussion. We anticipated problems too. As it would be open to all women, regardless of previous educational experience, it might attract a mixed student body: some would have rich personal experience to reflect on but be unused to methods of tertiary study, whereas others might have tertiary qualifications but lack exposure to feminist thinking.

Guidelines were established for the design of the course itself. We agreed that it should include at least two core papers, with strict criteria for content in each paper. There should be the opportunity for some advanced work and for some choice of papers, and some students could have the opportunity for substituting a project in lieu of a single paper. The minimum completion time would be two years, though most students would take longer than this. The course would be taught initially in the evenings, with the possibility of day courses if demand warranted them.

The course proposal which received approval from the Curriculum Committee of the Vice Chancellors' Committee in 1989 was for a six-paper certificate, of which two papers, 'Women and Society' and 'Feminist Theories', would be compulsory for all students. Round this core were set five interdisciplinary papers, from which students would select at least two. These were: 'Women and Health', 'Women and Work', 'Women, Language and Image', 'Women and their Families', and 'Women, Social Policy and Social Change'. At least one paper would be chosen from a third group of papers which were more discipline-based: 'Women and Art', 'Women and Literature', and 'Women and Education'.

It was important to the committee and to other Centre staff that all publicity and arrangements were attractive, user-friendly, and

welcoming. We approached Claudia Pond-Eyley about artwork and were delighted to be able to use her design of two women against a background of Maungakiekie (Mt Eden). Printed in purple, black and white this brochure cover was an important statement in itself.

The first group of students, keen and enthusiastic but a little unsure about what they were about to embark on, met with Claire-Louise McCurdy who took responsibility for the bulk of the teaching during the first year. They soon melded into a fairly cohesive group. Because some students had had a long period away from any form of systematic study, assignment work was planned to allow students to demonstrate and develop a variety of skills useful in tertiary study and to grapple with ideas and attitudes. Others faced difficulties coming to terms with the new information they were amassing or the theories they were encountering. One admitted later that she prepared by enrolling in an anger management course though in the event she found this to have been an unnecessary step. As in many other Women's Studies classes, some members were to share important and sometimes painful aspects of their own experience. The encouragement to read copiously helped them to hold this in balance as something much wider than the personal. Their sharpening awareness of the images they were absorbing through the media and other sources led some students to write in protest against what they saw as offensive advertising or to take other actions that were new to them. At the end of the year their overall response was very positive. They considered that the courses had been empowering, had raised their awareness, and had been a maturing experience.

The relationship between this qualification and degree study remains somewhat uneasy. For those who successfully complete the Certificate with an overall grade of B or higher, the University will award two papers credit towards a B.A. Initially proposals for closer liaison were resisted by many of those teaching papers on women in other disciplines since they felt that the ambiguous status of Continuing Education students and the Centre could further marginalise the status of Women's Studies as a university subject. Some also held the legitimate view that the way forward in Women's Studies is to try to transform the disciplines from within. Since then the university has secured a grant from the Auckland Savings Bank Trust which will fund a Chair in Women's Studies for a period of

three years, after which the salary will be met from internal sources. When the appointment is made and the new professor takes up her position we hope to establish close liaison and possibly more formal links. We shall continue to press for the development of new courses where students study issues from interdisciplinary critical perspectives. Traditional departmental boundaries and promotion structures within the academic world may continue to make this difficult.

Students enrolled in the Certificate, though they span a considerable age range, are younger overall than some of those who attend our non-credit programmes, especially those held during the day. Some of them are already politically aware of women's issues. They have chosen to attend and pay for a course which sets out to examine social structures and institutions from a feminist perspective. In the first year it was offered, over one hundred enrolled. Many of the Certificate students have first-hand experience of employment and childrearing which has already convinced them that the hegemonic ideology of women's inferiority is still a reality, in spite of legal gains in the past twenty years. In this they may differ from their younger sisters who enter university straight from school and who believe that we are in a post-feminist era in which all the battles have been won. Informal surveys of women undergraduates by women staff indicate that many of them would not enrol for any course that advertises itself as feminist: either they do not feel personally disadvantaged or they feel it would inhibit their chances of employment. Nor, perhaps, in the austerity of the nineties, do they feel able to 'indulge' in programmes which enable them to explore their own experience or teach them to want to change social reality. Rather they must learn to conform for success.

Austerity is a reality for our students also and the Centre is unhappily aware that Certificate fees, based on bare costs, are beyond the reach of many women who contemplate attending. We cannot help them by paying our lecturers less than those in other programmes for we are committed to equity employment and refuse to rely on voluntary unpaid contributions to a professional task. (Some of the women who teach in the programme have few other sources of income.) We can advise prospective students of other available assistance such as study and training grants

from women's organisations or from the Department of Social Welfare. The dilemma is compounded by the lack of government encouragement to mature students in general to seek further qualifications unless they are willing to pay. Since we have chosen to work within an institution we must accept some institutional constraints. We are painfully aware, however, that Virginia Woolf's identification of the inequities of Arthur's Education Fund still describes the constraints on many women, both those who are and those who are not the daughters of educated men.[9]

Conclusion

There is no single answer to the question 'What is Women's Studies?' I have tried in this paper to describe some of the ways in which we, in one university Centre for Continuing Education, have tried to think through what we mean by it and what programmes we can offer under its rather wide and generous umbrella. We shall continue to grapple with these issues as we deal with practical programming problems and at the same time attempt to become more aware of our own aims and our assumptions about the nature of knowledge, the learning needs of women (and of men), and the purposes of education. We continue to take seriously feminist challenges to knowledge, challenges to what many of us once accepted without question.

The Centre for Continuing Education is not a Centre for Women's Studies: our responsibilities are to a wider community. We shall continue, however, to work to maintain it as a place where women of all ages and persuasions can feel comfortable. The Centre is embedded in a university that prides itself on both liberalism and rigour, in which the concerns of feminists and others have not always been recognised but which has in recent years begun to concern itself with issues of gender and culture, and to take more seriously the need to provide for students who do not fit easily into traditional patterns of organisation and learning. The Centre is involved with such work through New Start. It tries to provide learning opportunities for women who wish to explore their female heritage in non-threatening ways and to afford such knowledge academic credibility. It provides opportunities

for women to learn how to challenge received notions through developing skills of critical analysis, and through access to theory and research. Finally it is concerned to establish a climate where programme ideas are tested for both rigour and inclusiveness, and where students are valued for their contributions to the creation of the knowledge that is generated by their courses and for their engagement with current and historical ideas and attitudes. For us, then, Women's Studies and feminist views of learning provide us with a critical perspective against which to test our work.

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Noeline Alcorn is Director of the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland. She teaches women's literature and educational administration, and was responsible for establishing the Certificate in Women's Studies. She formerly spent fifteen years working in teacher education.

Notes

1. *Reclaiming the Right to Learn* (1986); *To Learn Something New* (1988); and *The Key to the Door* (1990). These, and other publications from the Centre for Continuing Education are available for purchase from Anne Davis, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland.
2. Anne Davis and Barbara Cairns, *Reclaiming the Right to Learn* (Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland, 1990).
3. The correspondence was published in the *Women's Studies Association (NZ) Newsletter*, 3: 2 & 3 (March & July 1982).
4. *Perspectives on Women Today* (Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland, 1986).
5. Elizabeth Murchie, *Rapuora: Health and Maori Women* (Maori Women's Welfare League, Wellington, 1984).
6. Julie Benjamin is an independent film maker living in Wellington.
7. The Centre Library holds copies of three videos. Details available from the Library.
8. Mary Ann Crick, *Women's Studies Bibliography* (Centre for Continuing Education, University of Auckland, 1991).
9. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (1938; reprint, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1977).

Women's Studies and Mana Wahine Programmes at Waiariki Polytechnic

Women's Studies: Kitchen Sink or Lecture Theatre?

Jill Chrisp

She does not know her beauty
She thinks her brown body has no glory

If she could dance naked under palm trees
and see her image in the river
she would know

But there are no palm trees on the street
and dish water gives back no images

Maya Angelou

In Wednesday's class a woman exclaims passionately: 'Being on the benefit is like being married to Social Welfare—you have to let them know how much money you spend, if you sleep with anyone else, if you want to go to work, whether you can .... I thought I had got rid of that when I split up with my ex!'

That night students are discussing transformational politics and whether the visions of a global feminism have practical applicability.

What is Women's Studies?

Background

In 1984 a group of women in Rotorua undertook a local research project to find out what were the 'Learning Needs of Women in Rotorua' at that time. We were responding to the recognition that only a representatively small group of women in

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this region were involved in formally-delivered tertiary education. They were predominantly white, middle-class and came from two-parent families. From this two-year project the Women's Studies Programme began — initially with temporary, then permanent funding. In 1992 there will be four permanent staff with a number of part-timers.

From early on, critical issues of separate Maori development, biculturalism, and recognition of Maori women's needs were debated, cried over and wrestled with. At the first attempt, in 1986, to run two twelve-hour introductory 'Women in Society' courses — with Maori and Pakeha tutors, and Maori and Pakeha students — we recognised that to try to combine the needs of these two cultural groups was impossible. The compromises needed were too great. The development of a political and social awareness of the contemporary position of women in society from personal experience was difficult when those experiences were worlds apart. It was important for Maori women, especially, to have a chance to talk about their own issues, to develop their own theories and to share their own visions.

What followed was that Mana Wahine — Maori Women's Studies — developed separately. Since 1987 we have run the Mana Wahine Programme with short courses for Maori women, as well as the General Women's Studies Programme with short 'Women and ...' courses. There are times when we come together to share resources and students, and to offer mutual support and accountability, but most of the time we work within our own programmes. Despite this the issues of biculturalism, of power-broking between groups of women, and the recognition and validation of difference are still important components of the programmes we teach and the way we teach them.

The General Women's Studies Programme has a range of courses. First, there is 'Mothers Alone', a 60-hour 'survival and confidence' course for women on the Domestic Purposes Benefit. It begins to introduce an analysis of single mothers' position in society. Ten courses have been run since 1989, involving an average of 22 women in each. Secondly, there are modular courses, usually 20-hour courses on such topics as 'How to Put Down the Put Downs', 'Superwoman Syndrome', 'Food, Fat & Fashion', 'Telling our Stories', 'Mothers and Daughters', 'Skill Training for Women

in Community Work', 'Understanding Homophobia', 'Women and Sexuality', 'Women and Management', 'The Implications of the Treaty of Waitangi for Women', and so on. They are 'women and ...' taster courses which include some background reading and research between classes, and the beginnings of an academic construct of the positions of women in society. The third programme area is the Uni-Tech Certificate in Women's Studies, which will be described later.

What has developed

When we come back to Maya Angelou, to the recognition that some of our students are working at a sheer survival level both physically and emotionally, to discussing Charlotte Bunch and her 'passionate politics', we need to ask *what are the links?* What is it about Women's Studies that embraces these thoughts and experiences? What is the connection between the street, the kitchen sink, morning coffee in the women's space, and discussions about whether postmodernism is post-feminist?[1]

To discuss feminism, to mention 'the word', in a first-up course such as 'Mothers Alone' would instigate a mass exodus, but 85% of these women go on to do other Women's Studies courses where they begin to develop their own theories and analyses of their positions in society.[2]

If students choose to become involved with Women's Studies as a discipline they can now enrol in the Uni-Tech Certificate in Women's Studies. This link with the University of Waikato provides important access for Rotorua students to the degree programmes offered in Hamilton.

For us, however, spending resources and staffing in the provision of this certificate also raises important questions about who we are as a Women's Studies Department. Who are the groups of women we are targeting, and what are their needs? Are we an agent of social change, and if so, what are we trying to change and how? We are conscious of the issues raised by Mary Evans:

> ... at the same time as those of us teaching Women's Studies have been arguing with the more articulate battalions of male chauvinism, we have also been faced with a more

> problematic form of opposition, in the shape of criticism from other feminists who have voiced either misgivings or outright hostility to the mere idea of Women's Studies .... The argument put forward by some feminists suggests that Women's Studies represent either the exploitation or the de-radicalisation (or both) of feminism and the women's movement. By becoming part of what is an elitist, and essentially male system of higher education, it is argued that those who teach ... Women's Studies only serve their own professional interests and those of patriarchy and the male ruling class.[3]

In 1990 we held the national Women's Studies Conference in Rotorua. This conference was attended by 480 women, 210 of whom were Maori. I was incredibly angered, a year before the conference, when a woman who was involved in teaching Women's Studies expressed her concern about the potential lack of academic standard of the papers and workshops that would be presented. Her presumption was that the credibility of Women's Studies rested only in its ability to be an academic discipline and that by involving Maori women in the process and content of the conference, and by holding it in a non-university town, somehow it would be ghetto-ised.

If we accept the aims of the Women's Studies Association (NZ), '... to promote radical social change through the medium of Women's Studies ... [and] acknowledge the Maori people as tangata whenua', then, as students and teachers, we need to analyse seriously the impact of our approach to knowledge and of the visions we create on the structures of the societies (locally *and* globally) of which we are a part.

The discoveries for women of their own subordination and victimisation often produce anger and helplessness. We can recognise our personal and historical connections to this devaluation of our experiences as women, and then move past this recognition. This is not to relinquish the criticisms, but rather to use them to create a vision that can *transcend* the conditions we are opposing. To develop critiques then that are valid for students' realities is imperative. Our role is to bring students to this point and then give them the tools, collectively and individually, to find their points of transcendence. As Josephine Donovon writes:

> The feminist critic is thus on the cutting edge of the dialectic. She must, in a sense, be Janus-headed: engaged in negations that yield transcendences.[4]

For our Women's Studies programmes then, the interaction between differences is paramount. The validation of differing realities as women struggle to eradicate women's oppressions, as we resist the colonising of our minds, as we create new realities, is crucial. Otherwise we *are* in danger of turning Women's Studies into an elite discipline hidden in the corridors of universities, inaccessible to many, and where the research produced bears little relevance to the on-going global struggle.

The Uni-Tech Women's Studies Programme

Since 1989, as well as the courses listed above, University of Waikato distance education papers have been offered through our department, first 'Women in Society', then 'Women in Aotearoa/Interacting with Papatuanuku' and 'Women and Social Change'. In 1990, also in association with Waikato, we ran a pilot course for the Uni-Tech Certificate in Women's Studies: 'Women's Lives', an introductory research paper.

In 1992 students enrolled at Waiariki Polytechnic will have the opportunity to take any of the six 150-hour papers required to complete the Uni-Tech Certificate, which is now offered by the University of Waikato and the polytechnics in this region. They can complete the certificate in one year, or take it part-time. If Maori, they can choose to do four of these with Mana Wahine (see Hinematau McNeill's article).

Two papers offered are compulsory parts of the certificate for Maori and Pakeha students. 'Women in Society' involves an overview of feminist critiques of social and political structures — the feminisms and beyond, looking at current positions of women in Aotearoa with links to a global analysis. 'Women and Culture' provides a critique of the feminisms for indigenous women, specifically for Maori women, and examines the limitations of the dualist arguments based on the interactions of gender only. Through the interaction between these two papers students will find themselves involved in on-going explorations of difference. It

will give them a chance to explore their own experiences, develop their own theories and create their own visions in diversity.

For Pakeha, or Maori students if they choose, the four remaining papers can be made up in a number of ways. The course 'Women, Work and the Economy', piloted in 1991, looks at women's positions in paid, unpaid and voluntary work in New Zealand society and explores the implications of changing government policies for women's contribution to the economy both nationally and globally. 'Women and the Visual Arts' is an exploration of the women's art movement internationally but focusing on New Zealand women, an examination of what women (both Maori and non-Maori) have been and are saying, and a critique of the visibility of women's art (this is still being developed, and is to be offered in the second semester). 'Women's Lives' looks at the position of women in society, and is an introductory paper teaching basic research skills.

Students are also able to credit one paper for 'learning' they have previously undertaken. We have been developing a formula to assess this which we are piloting for examination in March 1992. Students can also do an equivalent of one or two papers in a supervised research project.

Conclusion

The on-going relationships within, and between, courses in Women's Studies, and with Mana Wahine, provide for students not only a fertile ground for the exploration of their ideal of community and who this can be shared with, but also the opportunity to develop discourse with differently identified groups without the suppression or invalidation of differences.

This is an organic process which at any other moment in time may be described differently.

* * *

Jill Chrisp helped to establish Women's Studies at Waiariki Polytechnic, Rotorua, and works full-time as head of that department. She is also involved with Waikato University and polytechnics in

the northern region in the development of a Uni-Tech Certificate in Women's Studies.

Notes

1. Charlotte Bunch, *Passionate Politics* (St. Martins Press, New York, 1987); Linda Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, New York & London, 1990.)
2. Survey of 200 ex-'Mothers Alone' students, (Waiariki Polytechnic, June 1990).
3. Mary Evans, 'In Praise of Theory: The Case for Women's Studies', in Gloria Bowles and Renate Duelli Klein (eds.), *Theories of Women's Studies* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and New York, 1983) pp. 219–228.
4. Quoted in Bowles and Duelli Klein, p. 213.

Women's Studies and Mana Wahine Programmes at Waiariki Polytechnic

The Mana Wahine Uni-Tech Programme

Hinematau McNeill

The invitation to write an article on the Uni-Tech Mana Wahine programme for the *Women's Studies Journal* was accepted with mixed feelings, especially when I realized that the subscribers are predominantly white. On the other hand, I entertained the idea that such a vehicle could be useful for exposing some of the work that is being developed by Maori women, for Maori women in tertiary institutions in this country. But I am mindful of Fanon's caution:

> You will never make colonialism blush for shame by putting our little known treasures under their eyes.[1]

The decision to submit an article precludes any retrospective argument about the wisdom of such a choice, but the anxiety remains.

The Kaupapa

E kore koe e ngaro he kakano i ruia mai i Rangiatea.
You will never die, the seed planted in Rangiatea.

This whakatauki is the inspiration for Mana Wahine. It retains the promise that the essence of being Maori will never be lost. For Maori women, it calls us to reclaim the dignity of Maori women; the Mana Wahine of our ancestors. The process of discovery is by no means an easy one, because it forces Maori women to confront the indignity of the colonial experience that has culminated in the oppression of Maori women, and, with European patriarchal ideology, has manipulated the traditional power relations between the sexes. The challenge of Mana Wahine is to confront the

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realities of oppression, without compromising the wonder of being Maori women. The contradiction is not easily resolved, and will perhaps become a central theme in developing an indigenous theoretical stance.[2]

The Mana Wahine Programme

Mana Wahine includes four papers which contribute towards the Uni-Tech Certificate: they deal with language, traditional art and craft, tribal research, and contemporary issues for Maori women. A native speaker, Rawiri Te Whare from Waikato, teaches the language paper. The traditional art and craft component focuses on mahi raranga (weaving). Tina Wirihana, who is renowned for her work in this art, teaches this course, and I teach the courses on tribal research and contemporary issues.

For the students of the Mana Wahine 1991 programme, the reclamation of Mana Wahine opened up problems in discourse, the most obvious being the romantic past/evil present dialectic, which is a natural outcome of analysing the colonial experience. The struggle in grappling with the issues was exacerbated by the difficulties imposed by the literature — or lack of it. Because, firstly, the suppression of the Maori language last century made all of the material available in Maori inaccessible to most of the students; and secondly, the early ethnographic material was written by European men which, as well as the Eurocentric bias, excluded 'Women's Worlds'.

Despite the difficulties, there are some very good sources, mainly biographical studies of Maori women, which are not only inspirational, but provide excellent resources for literacy support. Furthermore, the paucity of material forced the students to explore their own tribal resources, reinforcing the need to accentuate tribal differences. At the same time, the students had to acquire competent research skills, fast!

In 1992, we will offer a university paper under Mana Wahine: 'Women and Culture', which I shall teach. This paper will deal with comparative theoretical issues. It will critique western feminist theory and begin to explore some of the newer theoretical trends that are being developed by Women of Colour.

The 1991 Mana Wahine programme at Waiariki Polytechnic was experimental. It enabled all of the women involved to explore the range of possibilities contained in offering a tertiary programme with university status, whilst at the same time retaining the essence, the spirit, of being Maori.

The obvious contradictions and the seemingly insurmountable problems in this type of project finally came together in spurious harmony—if such a thing is possible! The weaving component linked the students to the women ancestors who devised and developed the techniques. This link, timeless and tangible, realized the central objective of the programme.

But there was also a need to ensure that the women were equipped to deal with further university study. I was careful to make no academic compromises which could have justified the criticism that the programme did not meet the usual university standards. In retrospect, I suspect I was more demanding of the students than I would have been in a normal university setting. Despite that or because of it, Maori women, many of whom had left school before the legal leaving age, produced outstanding work of the highest calibre that also showed their understanding of difficult, sophisticated material.

The enduring personal relationships, the whanau that emerged as a result of the course, did not happen in isolation. The spirituality, the essential part of Maori existence, is fostered by Te Kura Maori (the Maori Department at Waiariki). Men and women, Kaumatua, teachers and other students at the Kura, provided a safe environment for the women to explore and ultimately reclaim Mana Wahine.

* * *

Hinematau McNeill is from Tapuika of Te Arawa. She has an MA(Hons) from the University of Auckland, and has taught at Waiariki Polytechnic for four years.

Notes

1. F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, New York, 1968).
2. L. Mani, 'Multiple Mediations: Feminist Scholarships in the Age of Multinational Reception' *Inscriptions*, 5 (1989) pp.1-25.

Women's Studies in Asia: A Report on the UNESCO Seminar on the Development of Women's Studies in Asia and the Pacific

(Centre for Women's Studies, University of Adelaide, April 1991)

Jenny Neale

A UNESCO seminar held in Adelaide in April 1991 provided the opportunity for a number of women from Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand to discuss issues for teaching and research in Women's Studies.[1] Here I report on the position of Women's Studies in the six Asian countries from which background papers were presented at the seminar. The participants from Asian countries were Professor Mioko Fujieda from Japan, Dr Amara Pongsapich from Thailand, Professor Amaryllis Torres from the Philippines, Ms Siti Rohani Yahya from Malaysia and Dr Fareeha Zafar from Pakistan. Dr Suma Chitnis, from India, was unable to attend because of illness. Koto Kanno, then Unesco Assistant Programme Specialist for the Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, and Professor Tahera Aftab, Director of the Centre of Excellence for Women's Studies, University of Karachi, Pakistan, also attended. The following summary draws on the papers presented by these contributors.[2]

Women's Studies emerged as a distinct area of study in the late 1960s in Western nations, particularly in the United States. It was gradually introduced to Asian academia, often through women academics who had spent time in the West, or through women's personal networks. One of the major issues for Women's Studies in Asia has been relevance. As Soon Young Yoon observed in 1983:

> In Asian Women's Studies Programmes perhaps the greatest problem is in discovering how to make the basic assumption

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> of Women's Studies relevant to Asian culture. For example, it is clear to most Asian women that the radical lesbian issue and abortion are secondary concerns just as arranged marriages and sex-segregation are of less concern to Western women.[3]

Koto Kanno, the Unesco official, pointed out:

> It is perhaps in the mid-80s when the concept of 'Women in Development' (WID) was developed that Women's Studies programmes have really found relevance in the Asian socio-cultural context.[4]

A number of the participants reported that the United Nations Decade for Women and International Women's Year in 1975 acted as catalysts for many of the Third World countries. Women's activities were considered in forward planning, research on women was initiated, and their status and role were considered. In Thailand, many activities related to women were promoted in International Women's Year. Interest in Women's Studies in Malaysia is a result of the women's movement and dates from the seventies. In Pakistan impetus came from the decade for women and by the end of that decade 'women' as an area of research had become acceptable, while in India, the end of the decade report acted as the catalyst.

The rate of progress since the seventies has varied greatly throughout Asia, particularly with regard to the establishment of Women's Studies as a legitimate field of study. In Malaysia interest in establishing Women's Studies programmes is seen to be a useful way of advancing current interdisciplinary programmes which include Women's Studies-related courses. In Thailand initiatives are currently being taken to establish Women's Studies centres or programmes in a number of universities. In many cases this is an attempt to incorporate gender issues into the social science subjects already being taught. In Pakistan, the acceptance of Women's Studies as a new discipline seems inevitable, but the extent to which courses on issues in areas related to Women's Studies are incorporated in the existing social sciences is less clear. Under the government of Benazir Bhutto, it was decided to develop five centres for Women's Studies. There have been problems with implementation, however, and the first course to be taught in Women's Studies from one of these centres was not

due to begin until the end of 1991. In India, despite the support offered to universities by the University Grants Committee and other bodies, 'the most striking feature ... is that much more work is being done [in Women's Studies] outside [the universities] than in'. The universities appear 'less dynamic with only three or four doing well and creatively' while the majority are still 'groping' for a definite identity and place.[5] In universities where an interdisciplinary approach is fostered, rather than disciplinary-based teaching, Women's Studies has been more successful. The previous division between academics and activists slowed down the pace of growth of Women's Studies in the universities, but now, greater interaction between the two groups has begun to change that.

Mioko Fujieda spoke about Women's Studies in Japan, where it was created primarily as a means of eliminating discrimination against women. Although Japan is regarded as a developed nation, effort is needed to secure a greater participation of women in higher education on equal terms with men. At both primary and secondary levels of education sexism is prevalent and all forms of discrimination against women are still left largely unchallenged. There is very little classroom teaching from the perspective of Women's Studies at these levels. Less than 25% of tertiary institutions offer any Women's Studies courses and then usually only one or two per institution. As the Japanese Ministry of Education has not given official recognition to Women's Studies as an independent area of study, any courses offered are only available at undergraduate level. Knowledge-providing (information-giving or consciousness-raising without any further analysis) predominates as a method of teaching, because the majority of students have no prior exposure to gender issues. Feminist perspectives inform only about one-third of all courses available, and the rest are the 'add women and stir' variety. Nearly half of Women's Studies courses are taught by men, with the result that issues of feminist consciousness are not raised. The present state of Women's Studies in Japan reflects the position of women in Japanese society. Sexual division of labour is barely recognised as a major source of discrimination against women, rather gender stereotyping is taken for granted. Even now women are subject to the three obediences: first to their fathers, then to their husbands

and finally to their sons. In such a society it is very difficult for Women's Studies to progress.

Amaryllis Torres indicated that Women's Studies 'came into its own' in the Philippines during the latter half of the eighties. The number of tertiary institutes offering courses rose from 'a handful to over twenty nationwide'. Courses now offered include certificate courses (informal education) as well as subjects integrated into undergraduate courses. In 1988–89 the first graduate programme, an MA in Women and Development, was offered by the College of Social Work and Community Development at the University of the Philippines.

Involvement of both academics and activists has been important in the establishment of Women's Studies as a discipline in Asia. There is a more pronounced division between the two groups in some countries than in others, however. In the Philippines the Women's Research Collective fosters regular and continuing dialogue between women activists and women academics. In 1981, the Indian Association for Women's Studies was formed to facilitate interaction between scholars, institutions and organisations engaged in teaching and research pertaining to women. The establishment of the National Commission on Women's Affairs (NCWA) in Thailand has considerably strengthened women's activities, and its future lies in its capacity to co-ordinate and co-operate with other organisations working for and with women.

One of the major concerns of a developing Women's Studies in Asia is the need to develop Asian feminist theories. According to Fareeha Zafar, the majority of problems related to research in Pakistan arise from the non-availability of baseline data and a weak theoretical framework. Siti Yahya, from Malaysia, also pointed out the need to develop a theoretical basis for research and methodologies appropriate to the study of women in the Third World. She saw the need for a theoretical analysis taking variables such as ethnicity, sex and class into account, because of their special relevance to the Malaysian situation. Women's Studies must be sensitive to regional needs and aspirations. In the Third World it must situate itself in relation to particular social, economic, political and cultural contexts.

Amaryllis Torres, expanding on the shift away from older First World feminist theories, argued that:

> Feminism in the Philippines and the rest of the Third World draws its meaning from the specific historical experiences of the women in these nations which are linked to a previous history of colonialism and continue to be influenced by global strategies fermented by the capitalist hegemony. Feminist theory in this setting therefore is appropriately defined to mean a body of postulates which seeks to interpret women's oppression as it is engendered by the new international division of labour, by society, social class and men. These theories therefore should also be firmly based in the concrete realities of the lives of the majority of disadvantaged women (the grassroots) who are most affected by the force of discrimination.[6]

The need for a Third World Women's Studies theoretical base is a general and continuing concern. Fareeha Zafar pointed out that in Pakistan, research and studies on women are currently undertaken both in and out of the formal education sector. In the universities, social sciences have been very active in the area but most lack a feminist perspective or theoretical base. A further problem concerns dissemination of research findings, since most of the research pertinent to Women's Studies is concentrated in autonomous and semi-autonomous non-teaching institutions without access to a natural audience for Women's Studies. This difficulty is compounded by the situation of the universities, which are 'caught in a web of bureaucratic control, ideological strangulation, student unrest, violence and an education system that has virtually collapsed'.[7]

In India, Malaysia, and Thailand, women and development is the major focus for research in Women's Studies. According to Suma Chitnis, an important feature in India is the extensive interest in topics associated with Women's Studies on the part of women who are neither academic nor feminist. In a country where nearly two-thirds of the population is illiterate, there is a recognition that development is intrinsically linked to the advancement of women.

Siti Yahya indicated that women in development is also seen as an important research area in Malaysia. Current research on women in Malaysia attempts to define Women's Studies to suit the specific needs of Malaysian society. At the same time the focus needs to remain on the interests and issues pertaining to

women in Malaysia. The growing literature on women's issues tends to be mainly descriptive and empirical, however, lacking the analysis necessary for action. A lack of co-ordination results both in unnecessary overlap and significant omissions, which have implications for policy.

Research is largely influenced by national development policy trends in Thailand too, according to Amara Pongsapich. The role and development of women outside the family did not become the focus of research until the late 1970s, however, and development activities carried out by both governmental and non-governmental agencies still need to be linked with Women's Studies research and training programmes at universities to strengthen further initiatives.

The development of Women's Studies in Asia is part of a more general move toward the advancement of women in the region. International Women's Year, the Decade for Women, and country status reports often provided the necessary catalyst for Asian countries to look at the position of women both in the home and the wider community. There is still some hesitation in a number of countries in accepting Women's Studies as a discipline in its own right. Where there is acceptance, it may not include a feminist framework for analysis. As Women's Studies has grown, it has become clear that it is now time to develop theories of Asian Women's Studies which incorporate Asian areas of concern. Research has found a focus in women in development and now needs an Asian Women's Studies theoretical base, and social policy orientation and analysis, to maximise its effectiveness. The inclusion of all women (academics, activists and those at grassroots levels) in the wider debate on women's issues is seen to be one of the major goals of Women's Studies in the region—supplying networking, training and an audience for the dissemination of research. Although there are differences between New Zealand and Asian concerns, such as the issue of literacy for women, there are also many issues in common, such as women's unpaid work, where Women's Studies in New Zealand and Asia can work together, sharing information and strategies, and can co-operate in research. Australia has established much stronger links with Asia and besides the initiatives already suggested, a distinctive role for New Zealand Women's Studies could be in

providing links with the Pacific, across the Tasman, and on to Asia.

* * *

Jenny Neale is a senior lecturer in social science research and is a member of the Women's Studies Board of Studies at Victoria University.

Notes

1. The paper I presented on Women's Studies in New Zealand was reproduced in the *Women's Studies Association Newsletter*, 12:1 (June 1991), and the Australian paper will be reproduced at a later date.
2. Papers presented by these contributors were: Suma Chitnis, 'Women's Studies in India'; Mioko Fujieda, 'An Overview of Women's Studies in Japan' (also published in *Women in a Changing Society: the Japanese Scene* (Bangkok, UNESCO, 1990)); and 'Womens Studies: Tools for Change'; Koto Kanno, 'Unesco's Programme Related to Women and the Development of Women's Studies in Asia and the Pacific'; Amara Pongsapich, 'Women's Studies and Development Issues inThailand'; Amaryllis Tiglao Torres, 'Developing Feminist Theory from Women's Realities: The Case of the Philippines'; Siti Rohani Yahya, 'Major Issues Arising from the Present Status of Women's Studies in Malaysia'; Fareeha Zafar, 'Major Issues Arising from the Present Status of Women's Studies in Pakistan'. Subsequent accounts of specific countries in this report refer to these papers.
3. Soon Young Yoon, 'Women's Studies, Is it Relevant?', in *Samya Shakti: A Journal of Women's Studies* (Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi) 1:1 (1983).
4. Koto Kanno, ibid.
5. Suma Chitnis, ibid.
6. Amaryllis Torres, ibid.
7. Fareeha Zafar, ibid.

Women in the Beehive

Anna Smith

What follows is an edited version of an address given at Otago University on 19 September 1990 to mark International Suffrage Day. The 'Frontline' programme referred to examined the change in leadership of the Labour Party, soon to lose the 1990 General Election. The image of the beehive represents not only party politics, but also refers to a seminar by Jacques Derrida on the question of Women's Studies entitled 'Women in the Beehive'.[1]

Watching Helen Clarke on the recent 'Frontline' programme which looked at Mike Moore's 'bloodless coup', I was interested to see how adamant she was that the Party came before Geoffrey Palmer. And I was also intrigued at the way the rest of Caucus (represented by Richard Prebble) appeared to need her backing before they could be sure of the success of a new prime minister.

I want to talk today about women and power — about our relationship to political and institutional power firstly, but also in a more general way about our relationship to the community and our wider engagement in cultural production.

It has been said that as much as women don't put into question the nature of the beehives or institutions in which they find themselves, they run the risk of becoming just another set of drones or worker bees. In other words, there is the express anxiety that if women fail to insist on their specificity, they may lose all their distinctiveness — their cutting edge. What I want to ask today is when is that distinctiveness important, when do we need to insist on 'women' in examining the question of power and engagement, and when does gender become a burden? When does the unique materiality of women's experience overwhelm other equally vital collective or universal values?

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In an interview not very long ago I was discussing the question of women in New Zealand I admired, and before I could elaborate, the interviewer himself supplied me with two role models he considered appropriate: Helen Clarke and Ruth Richardson. I remember feeling irritated that he should imagine these were the kind of women I wanted to identify with. But at the same time I was also aware that my response had been typical, and had to do with many women's anxieties about being contaminated by power. John Berger argues in *Ways of Seeing* that we have learnt to look at ourselves through male eyes—we have 'swallowed' the ideal image of woman that men desire, and then turned this gaze on our own bodies. In the same way, I think, it is true to say that there is a narrative we have internalised about women holding power, especially political power.

Look at the way the media have represented women politicians, for example: Ruth Richardson with gigantic shoulderpads so that she resembles an American football star; Helen Clarke as the emasculating power behind Geoffrey Palmer. An episode of 'The New Statesman' featured a prime minister suspiciously like Margaret Thatcher wearing a face pack and crushing nuts with her bare hands in front of a terrified junior (and male) member of the House. Clarke and Richardson have recently had their images cleaned up and feminized to make them more palatable to the general public, but all the same, that they continue to be represented as women whose femininity is profoundly compromised ought to suggest a licensed and *shared* contempt for women in places of public authority.

Some of the anxieties of the early suffrage movements were related to precisely this question. Ada Wells in Rachel McAlpine's *Farewell Speech* adds up all the terms of abuse for women who fought for the vote: 'Unwomanly, unsexed, immodest, indelicate fanatics, sluts, blue-stockings, shrieking sisters, coarse, vulgar, hysterical, busybodies and freaks'.[2] In McAlpine's fictional reconstruction of the struggle for female suffrage in New Zealand, Ada became frustrated because her idol Kate Sheppard was bowed down by the desire to be the restrained darling of the moment, always wanting to be found 'sound and sweet and wise'. According to McAlpine, even Kate seemed unable to relinquish a notion of femininity as tranquil, self-controlled, and morally beyond the grubbiness of politics.

From a different perspective, David Mitchell's often hostile biography of Christabel Pankhurst written in 1977 and entitled *Queen Christabel* presented her as autocratic, ruthless, neurotic — a witch, even, because as a woman it was unnatural for her to be so charismatically powerful.[3] The early suffragists he saw as threatening, unnatural creatures: 'ferocious spinsters' and 'long-suffering wives who relished a vicarious revenge'. Pankhurst may not have been moved by similar criticisms, but many women were, and still are.

Regrettably, these prohibitions have been internalised, so that even if we can easily reject their grossest forms today as completely outmoded, more subtle variations still govern the way we assess our performance as women and our desirability: not just to men, but to ourselves.

But where have these anxieties come from? Why are they still so persistent? Perhaps the man who did more than most to institutionalise the notion of a proper sphere for women was Sigmund Freud. It is not my task here today to give you a full and just assessment of psychoanalysis and its effects, rather I wish to look briefly at what feminists consider to be one of Freud's most notorious essays. In 'The Psychology of Women' Freud sets out the developmental stages for healthy womanhood.[4] 'The little girl', he writes, 'is as a rule less aggressive, less defiant, and less self-sufficient; she seems to have a greater need for affection to be shown her, and therefore to be more dependent and docile.'

Freud was notorious for contradicting himself, and in the same essay he observes that individual cases which he came across in fact altered the general power of this description, and that when girls played, for instance, they seemed just as aggressive as boys. Even so, despite his coy wavering about female identity (was it biology, or social convention?) and despite the obvious fascination the essay has for students of textuality, the overwhelming impression we have when we read it is of a patriarchal complacency: a healthy disposition for women involves an acceptance of their future tasks as wives and mothers. The psychosexual identity Freud recommends for women then, is one that is compatible with their passive role in the 'sexual function'. But more important for us is Freud's definition of what he called the *masculinity complex.*

The masculinity complex was the result of his attempt to explain why a specific kind of female sexuality evolves out of an

original bisexuality but deviates from the 'feminine' norm. Freud hypothesised that the girl refuses to accept an anatomy different from her brother or father, 'and in an outburst of defiance, exaggerates still further the masculinity which she has displayed hitherto'. She deliberately chooses to avoid the development of the onset of passivity. Because Freud had assumed that a greater degree of activity is usually characteristic of the male, where females showed this behaviour, they had therefore become unfeminine. And what was the mechanism that caused little girls to stray from the straight and narrow? It was *resentment* or *envy*. Masculinity (aggression) in women is therefore the result of massive disappointment which turns into a regression to an earlier stage of development. Before the Oedipal phase, boys and girls were still more or less the same in terms of energy investments and Freud, interestingly, subsumes this stage under the accommodating term, 'masculinity'. (The little girl was once a 'little man'.)

These ideas are distasteful but aren't they also quaint, even antiquated? And therefore irrelevant? On the contrary, despite the fact that Freud has been discredited in many circles, I suspect that this particular appreciation of the differences between male and female behaviour still persists, both in institutions and in popular culture. We probably don't speak of penis envy any more, especially when 'we' stands for Anglo-American feminists, but the proscriptions against aggressive and publicly powerful women have become part of the narrative our culture has constructed about women. They have equally become part of the way we look at ourselves. The collective reasoning would go something like this: men are aggressive; politics is an exercise of aggression; therefore politicians (or those holding positions of authority generally) are men. Richard Prebble said as much on 'Frontline', except that he tied politics to ambition rather than aggression.

I want now to turn to a contemporary theorist and a woman: Julia Kristeva.[5] Kristeva is a Freudian psychoanalyst, but in her work she tries to speak from a woman's position. Many of her occasional essays confront the question of female subjectivity and power. Because she is a Freudian she seems to be 'daddy's girl' when she argues that women have a different relationship to culture and society than do men, but because she herself wants to take account

of her own female specificity, she develops strategies that privilege feminine experience at the same time. Even when her reasoning is at its most tortuous, something in the choice of language still illuminates women's experience in an interesting way.

After her first child (a son) was born, Kristeva produced a meditation on pregnancy and childbirth entitled 'Stabat Mater'. Here she names women 'crucified beings' because of the way we inhabit bodies which have been designed to bear children. So we find ourselves split between on the one hand the heavy, solid pedestal of pelvis and thighs and on the other, the arms, neck, head, face, calves, and feet which are lively and always in motion, trying to make up for what she calls 'the immutability of the central tree'. This is fanciful language, but what she is trying to show is the kind of border position in culture that women inhabit. Our feeling of involvement in our bodies does matter: we are implicated in the structure and demands of our anatomy whether we decide to have children or not, and a detachment from the body is a lot harder to achieve for a woman than a man. I think these remarks are especially relevant for women who are currently mothers of dependent children: it is then that an active involvement in society becomes more difficult. 'Stabat Mater' is also, however, making wider claims: namely that women's em-bodiedness makes them exiles to the public world of corporate power, perhaps even to the production of culture itself. Their sexual specificity, their *difference*, marks them out as strangers.

Kristeva goes on to talk about feminism. At different times in her life and work, she has been enthusiastic about feminism, and at others highly critical about it. In the essay 'Women's Time', she sees that women's marginalised place in the social contract has led today to an equally isolating response: the rejection of men, love, and children. She suggests that since they have been denied legitimate access to the public world, women have become social casualties. Her anxiety, though, is that the feminist response will lead to violence. (Kristeva was writing in the middle seventies when the feminist movement had taken on a more militant cast, and when women began deliberately choosing not to have children.)

But what is of more interest to us here is that she calls feminists 'virile castrating shock troops' who can be more terrifying than men in power, because unlike men they don't have the same

respect for the Law. Where did she get this idea from? Is it just because she accepted, along with Freud, that women aren't as governed by the Superego as men? And so have less tender consciences? Or is this merely a version of the old idea that there's something unnatural about a woman who channels her aggression into politics?

A more telling criticism which she levels at feminists is that they have taken on the very forms of patriarchal power that they claim to be fighting. They haven't been able to disentangle themselves from the same rage 'with which the dominant order originally victimized them'. Kristeva sees this identification with the very power structures previously thought to be oppressive as leading to two different kinds of action. Either the state or the system ends by congratulating itself and crediting women's victories and energies to its own account (and so we now have the Ministry of Women's Affairs), *or* feminists erect a counter-power which mirrors the system it rejects.

Now of course Kristeva's analysis is Manichean when the alternatives for feminist activity are represented in such mutually oppositional ways. There are other less self-defeating alternatives possible for women who see themselves as activists. Yet Kristeva is deeply ambivalent about their potential power, recognising the many ways in which feminism has brought about genuine change, but fearful that a revolution of women will ultimately prove self-destructive: 'what an unbelievable force for subversion in the modern world [women are]! And, at the same time, what playing with fire!' Reading this I am conscious of just how little ground is left for women who want justice, equality, and respect for their work and in their lives.

Feminists usually find it easy to dismiss Kristeva as a conservative analyst who is obsessed with phallic women and feminized men, but she's not the only woman to have used these apparently conventional images of femininity and masculinity. Let's look at the work of a controversial woman writer who is brilliant, witty, eccentric: Angela Carter, a visitor to Otago earlier this year. In *The Passion of New Eve*, American society is collapsing and a group of women led by Mother have banded together to contest the anarchy and eventually take control.[6] Mother has a beard and is six and a half feet tall with a great row of nipples across her chest.

The women capture a Don Juan about town, Evelyn, and castrate him. He is renamed 'Eve' and when he has recovered sufficiently from his sex-change, Mother plans to impregnate him with his own sperm. Phallocentrism will be no more: clearly there will be no need for Adam.

Now Carter is too canny to believe that women and power don't go together. Here we find her playing with power, gender identity and female pleasure. Yet at the same time we see how difficult it is for her work to avoid doing anything other than affirming the cultural stereotypes that surround power and sexual desire. However amusing we may find this fantasy, Carter, like Kristeva, is writing out of an acknowledgement of the power of women's desire for revenge. The threat of castration is still for many writers the ultimate expression of a powerful woman. Mother's operating theatre is a murky abbatoir (Mother, by the way, is a former plastic surgeon who has herself undergone massive hormone therapy), and Evelyn lies under local anaesthetic while she lops off his genitals with one blow and throws them to her daughter Sophia who casually slips them into her pocket. The sacred aura of masculinity has been stripped away in this disrespectful scene, but female opposition to phallic power is still expressed in the same old terms. Which surely confirms Freud's argument that women are always envious and when given the opportunity, become 'phallic' themselves.

Women who take on overt forms of power or contest it inevitably run up against this internal logic. The *cost* of politics, or any institutionalised position of authority, is a playing with fire — it does burn. As we know, however, in exercising power women can become as oppressive as men, just as those vulnerable to the powerful include men as well as women. In fact often it seems to me that the question of power in all its complexities is a more pertinent and timely one than that of gender *per se*, although historically, patriarchal forms of authority have been by far the most visible. Either way, women often find themselves viewing institutions from the edges, assessing the likely loss of other more nebulous values that a visibly public role will entail. Coping with legalised aggression, experiencing the alienating and inflexible effects of the Law, and confronting our own internalisations about the proper place for women can be scarring experiences, a painful

struggle against the grain like the tearing of flesh. These costs form the inevitable backdrop against which all those women who have ever struggled to change reality act.

Of course, today women holding visible positions of power in the community are admired, indeed envied by other women, but the price is still too high for most. It is almost as if we deliberately draw a line between the 'head and shoulders' women and the rest of us. We insist to them that 'You can't have both: we'll look up to you, but don't expect us to recognise that your emotional needs are the same as ours. You're not the same breed of woman any more.' So at the very time when women achieve public recognition they are sent into exile.

In part, this lecture today is to remember the kind of sacrifices women who fought for equality had to make, as well as their achievements. The images of the culture of their time always placed them as exiles, in permanent diaspora. When they chose to depart from the traditional conventions, they ran the risk of being censured in just such a way as we have seen. Yet how could they be smooth well-run machines with no human needs or fragilities? Their lives, in fact, were often torn by contradictions. Kate Sheppard fell in love with a patriarchal William Lovell-Smith; Ada Wells had a passion for caring for underprivileged children, and idolised St Bede, but had problems loving her own daughter. Mary Wollstonecraft insisted on the value of rationality in her work, but her private life was quite the reverse, and she comes across to the reader as someone who was intensely emotional, even unstable. Often such contradictions were the result of a social discourse that assumed power and public office to be largely masculine activities, an assumption that required women's tacit support through their willingness to add redemptive values from outside the structures of power.

These, then are the kinds of barriers that women encounter on their way from the kitchen to the corporation — or wherever they seek authority or positions of influence themselves. But while it is imperative to spend time counting the costs of public involvement today we equally need to be encouraged to maintain a vision that believes in justice for all. The history of women's rights has shown us that preserving and enlarging those rights depends on persistent agitation. So much of what all of us —

feminists or not — take for granted has been achieved through such struggles.

So what has been achieved, and what do we take for granted? Universal suffrage, the right of women (especially married women) to own property, birth control and family planning centres, a greater access to abortion, day care centres, in principle commitments to employment and pay equity — these are some of the achievements won by and for women, even if not all women are yet able to take full advantage of them.[7] We take for granted also the provision of refuges and rape crisis centres, alternative health and contraceptive advice, self-defence courses: a whole network of services and literature that has been built on the shoulders of other women.

Continuing to demand access to the means of representation in culture and politics and continuing to insist on a voice or voices in history are activities that I suspect will never become redundant. I cannot see the 'patriarchy', like the state to which it is related, ever withering away. Current figures at Otago, for instance, tell us that less than twenty percent of academic staff are women; at the end of this year we lose our only woman professor. At Massey one in every eleven men is a professor, but one in every forty-four women; one third of all their departments have no women teachers at all. A recent survey conducted by students of Auckland University showed that women were still concentrated predominantly in traditional subject areas.[8] To what extent complete equality is practicable, even desirable here, is open to question, but if we accept the current state of affairs, we surrender at the same time opportunities for change.

For women at university then, there is a continuing need for research and analysis: of the past and of different narratives that can make sense of it, and of contemporary society. We need to be engaged in appraising each other's work so that it is sharp and rich in the connections it is able to make between different facets of society. The field for local research is broad, and interesting material is beginning to be published on New Zealand's gendered culture and the construction of masculinity and femininity; on new strategies of representation in literature and the arts; on women in management, the experience of Maori women in the economy, pay and employment equity;

and the marginalising effects of corporatisation and economic restructuring.

When Stephanie Dowrick spoke about writing and publishing at the Women's Book Festival she talked about 'femocracy', and how the corporatisation of society had begun to offer a new life style to a few talented and ambitious women. Promoted to top managerial positions in large corporations, women could experience a financially rewarding and materially satisfying way of life. But the message from colleagues and friends at the top if they manage to survive the fierce competition and enjoy a lift from the inevitable sexuality of power, is 'don't kick against the pricks' — the system, just as Kristeva observed, credits women's energies to its own account. Apart from a few superficial adjustments to their language, it's business for corporations as usual.

Whether women figure as marginalised individuals or wear a corporate suit every day to work, there is no area of their status in society that our research can afford to be indifferent to. All of these projects endorsing women's specificity must be maintained, since they belong to that struggle I have called transforming the Beehive.

But the second thing I want to encourage, quite distinct from activity or even research, is that we stop, that we cease actively striving for a time and withdraw. Part of this withdrawal for me involves asking questions about where 'we' are going. In what direction is specificity taking women? What are the *effects* of working for what we call 'equality'?

From the outset we can acknowledge that my use of the word 'we' is problematic here in New Zealand, and of course elsewhere. More than ever before it has become difficult to maintain collective values. A diversity of cultures, all anxious to assert their differences, together with a profound sense of economic and social dislocation, has ensured that community goals and vision are almost lost. Our nationalistic language clings to the forms of unity, but its power, its authoritative voice, is hollowed out. What is visible instead are two apparently contradictory features: on the one hand, sharpened by the current recession, a massive loss of heart and energy; on the other an exuberance at what seems to be an endlessly seductive proliferation of images. I do not know if we live in an apocalyptic age any more today than a previous age did, but I do

feel that *post-modernity* has had enormous effects on all cultures, including our own. We experience rupture and discontinuity; the information revolution has literally exploded the choices many people can make about aspects of their life style and identity. As subjects, female or male, we have become caught up and swept along by competing discourses. The simultaneous experience of choice and control brought about by a revolution in information is truly overwhelming.

In the old days our mothers could become 'Mrs (or Miss) New Zealand', 'Cook of the Year' and later, 'Businesswoman of the Year'. Becoming female, for the majority of women, was crowned by efforts such as these. Over the last two decades things have changed radically, and not least in the kinds of public images women are both constructing for themselves and *being constructed by*. There is now a whole inventory of images thrown up by popular culture which we can look to: Starhawk, Madonna, Kathy Acker, Jane Fonda, Grace Jones, Elle McPherson, Dale Spender, Cath Tizard, Kiri Te Kanawa, for instance, each offer their own kind of persuasive charm. In the field of representation New Zealand artists like Debra Bustin, Jenny Dolezel, Julia Morrison, Marilyn Webb, and Robin White present vastly different imaginative worlds that construct and transform the viewer as much as they enlighten her.

Postmodernism then has to do with the fragmentation of a singlar identity. It can be exhilarating, yet it has its difficulties. The media as we know are controlled by a few powerful corporations with a vested interest in dissemination for the sake of profit. Popular culture is marketable, its endlessly generated commodities all have a commercial value. It therefore makes sound economic sense to maintain a steady stream of goods and images for an infinite range of public and private tastes. The 'individual' becomes the site for competing and continually changing desires which cut us into bits and pieces or open us to an aimless drifting without any sense of inner cohesion. As Yeats once wrote, 'Things fall apart, the centre does not hold'. Along with an economic recession which has redrawn the lines between rich and poor in this country, the person subjected to these ambivalent features of postmodernity experiences a kind of solipsism. By this I mean that the fragmentation of identity has given rise to a loss of a stable

sense of self. Alternatively, we could use the terms 'facelessness' or 'a sense of inertia'.

Paradoxically, narcissistic disorders rather than failure to resolve the Oedipus complex are what therapists are increasingly treating today, since one of the instinctive reponses to a barrage of images is to turn inwards and to refuse or trivialise all forms of social encounter. Lyotard and Baudrillard, who write on postmodernism, refer to the subject as a monad, which even when in love affirms an aseptic, self-pleasuring body. I suspect that this resistance to intimacy lies behind Andrea Dworkin's text *Intercourse*, in which she describes the outcome of the sexual act as something 'unspeakably, grotesquely visceral' that 'ends when the skin comes back into being as a boundary'.[9] But how can sex be any more than a ritualistic exchange of fluids when we have shored up our boundaries against invasion by an other?[10]

All social and political movements are affected by these cultural narratives, including feminism. To the extent that anxiety and indifference become part of the collective response to multiple subject positions, they will inhabit feminism. 'Women's emancipation' is a discourse, and it too is commodified, circulating among its users, but owned by none. As many different women freely identify themselves as 'feminists', as it becomes co-opted by media stars, publishing houses, and the political machine, there comes the recognition that whatever the 'true' discourse of feminism may be, it can't be controlled any more. What is the lowest common denominator which feminists should insist on to separate those who are genuine from those who are not? Where are the lines of exclusion to be drawn? What thoughts are not permitted for feminists?

Madonna, for instance, clearly exercises power and seems to get what she wants. Is she a feminist then? Who is to decide? There is a sense in which the word 'feminism' has become corrupt. Because one can no longer set up gatekeepers who will keep the speech about women's liberation 'pure', women have responded either with disillusionment, or with an entrenched kind of mistrust. Oppositional politics is to my mind one of these forms of habitual mistrust, where the oppressors and powerful are always seen to be men, and where women always play the roles of helpless victims.

Schopenhauer once wrote of how the common mass of people lived existence as if surrounded by the smells of a perfume

shop — so engendered were they by its environment that they were unable to recognise its distinctive beauty. In the same way, habit has frozen our speech patterns. Our hopes and hostilities are deeply conventional. Perhaps one of the most marked affects of culture today is the fear that we may not be able to control the stories we tell to make sense of ourselves. 'Losing control' can be a freeing (and habit-breaking) experience, but its threat can also encourage us to take comfort in habitual ways of understanding the world.

So I feel that we need new narratives: a new discourse of love, for instance. We need people to dream dreams and visions and re-imagine the planet, the land, and relationships between people. And here I'm not talking about the kinds of fantasies purchased for a certain price (what age has made wish fulfilment for the hopeful buyer so affordable?) but about an imaginative work that can't yet be quantified. We need rather to see new possibilities for relationships between parents and children, and between ourselves and those people we love. The Cold War in Europe has apparently ended, and no matter how dubious we feel about an orchestrated peace, there seems to be a chance for speech between the superpowers to coalesce into something more constructive. Can we as different sexes learn to trust one another and re-imagine a future accommodating enough for our differences and those many things we have in common?

The language of feminism sometimes gives the impression that it has arrived at a cul-de-sac, an unproductive impasse. It's not just women who want peace — so do men. But we have locked ourselves into oppositional practices which make disengaging almost unthinkable. Italian novelist Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* is a collection of images of cities that exist only in the imagination. One of the dreams describes a city made entirely from rope suspended over a chasm. Here is the dreamer speaking:

> Now I will tell you how Octavia, the spiderweb city is made. There is a precipice between two steep mountains: the city is over the void, bound to the two crests with ropes and chains and catwalks. You walk on the little wooden ties, careful not to set your foot in the open spaces, or you cling to the hempen strands. Below there is nothing for hundreds and hundreds of feet: a few clouds glide past, farther down you can glimpse the chasm's bed.

> This is the foundation of the city: a net which serves as passage and support. All the rest, instead of rising up, is hung below: rope-ladders, hammocks, houses made like sacks, clothes-hangers, terraces like gondolas, skins of water, gas jets, spits, baskets on strings, dumb-waiters, showers, trapezes and rings for children's games, cable-cars, chandeliers, pots with trailing plants.
>
> Suspended over the abyss, the life of Octavia's inhabitants is less certain than in other cities. They know the net will last only so long.[11]

This image of the rope city's precarious existence is like dialogue between the sexes — established over a chasm, but capable of enormous inventiveness. Is it possible to construct a creative language from one to another like that? A language that recognises life as well as death?

I feel that the only way to press beyond our habitual stand-off is to imagine a regenerative love between the sexes as a genuine possibility. Talking about love almost takes the form of a disavowal for feminism. Loving goes on all the time, but we don't permit ourselves to speak about it publicly. We can speak freely about sex, hatred, justice, even oppressive relationships, but never about love. And by 'love' I mean agape love, which ought to be the precondition for erotic love, and not its antithesis. Agape is not the sort of love that tries to master the other through the exercise of power, but the kind of love that gives its object a space of its own, a love that leaves you hungry for more. It indulges in forgiveness and trust, but above all is transformative. Most importantly it comprehends a love of difference; difference *within* a subject, and difference *between* subjects. For if we cannot love the difference or 'otherness' within ourselves, we cannot love an other (person). Under its threatening influence we allow our own sense of identity to be shaken and pierced: love breaks through a fortress mentality and renews bodies and speech.

This calls for something deep and internal: a sort of searching and meditative reflection that the West traditionally has shunned, to its cost. Despite the fact that postmodern theory is generally critical of overvaluing the activities of dreaming, imagining and thinking, I suggest that these are precisely the kinds of things we should be more engaged in, until there arises from our work

the explicit acknowledgement of the worth of dreaming as a community. In this country we can re-acknowledge the writing of novelists like Keri Hulme and Patricia Grace, whose work contains individual dreamers who dream so that the community may have new vision and energy.

As women who are engaged in different ways in relation to feminism, we need to do the same, and become exiles for a time from family, country, and whatever social or political group we associate with, in order to rethink and re-imagine a collective life. Would it be possible for a while to transfer that sense of difference and exile we have in relation to conventional power structures to the service of an imaginative quest that would seek to displace some of our habitual patterns of thought? Perhaps it may be possible to become exiles from the ordinariness of speech which, whether we recognise it or not, works to shut down difference and reproduce stand-offs.

What future are we making for ourselves? What shape does it have? By way of illustration I would like to refer to a painting by Klee called 'Angelus Novus' (The New Angel) discussed by the German critic Walter Benjamin.[12] In the painting we see an angel looking as though she is about to move away from something which her gaze is fixed on. Her eyes are staring, her mouth is open, her wings are spread. Benjamin describes how he views the Angel of History:

> This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where *we* perceive a chain of events, *he* sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistably propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. *This* storm is what we call progress.

Benjamin's reading of this as the way history is, is 'true', but not exhaustive. It expresses faith in the angel, but despairs that history or women and men will ever get it right. An alternative way to read the placement of the angel, however, would be to assert a faith that

what we are making, speaking, or writing can be something other than chaos. Benjamin's interpretation ignores creative effort. It lacks faith in the performative power of language to change the course of history. Bound as we are by our own immanence, our actions, desires, and projects often appear to us as meaningless and futile, or as the product of forces we cannot control. Looking back we may be seized with despair at this recognition and conclude with Benjamin that history is indeed a growing pile of debris. But if, on the other hand, we were to explicitly acknowledge the extent to which our speech and so our sense of direction is constantly open to transformation and renewal, the angel's vision could be redeemed. While still being in the position of viewing the present from the future — that is, in retrospect — this new angel, along with us, could assert the future meaning and worth of what the present confines to formlessness and chaos.

For speech and acts contain a formative power. Indeed as a nation, as a movement (or movements), as a group of women and men, we are continuously making and colluding in our own future. What shape will our discourse and activities take? What will be the effect of our choices, our investments, our dreams and visions?

Speech act theory talks about utterances of speech called 'performatives'. A performative occurs when for instance, someone says 'I now pronounce you husband and wife', and the statement becomes reality. The new identity of husband and wife cannot be assumed until those creative, life-giving words are spoken. If we were to imagine that all of our speech had this powerfully constitutive quality — to create life, to call something new into being — we could also begin to sense the important constructive nature of gatherings like this, together with the need for new ways of speaking about the way we find ourselves in the world right now. We have come together to remember and to celebrate something — the history of women's suffrage. Yet permitting this history of women's struggle for representation to reaffirm the same old man/woman confrontation is ultimately petrifying. Not until there is a conjunction of memory and its *dislocation* is tradition modified and the future-in-the-present able to break free.

In conclusion then, I have affirmed the need for women's difference: practical, empirically measurable goals will never disappear from feminism. At the same time though, there must

be moments when sexual difference, however oppressive and painful its history, is erased, and when the divisiveness of gender can be put aside in the interests of constructing something new. Such a collaboration across the gender divide will have the effect, temporarily, of erasing difference. For only when these two motions are operating in relation to each other can we claim to be women who are 'liberated'.

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Anna Smith teaches Women's Studies and English at the University of Otago. She is currently completing a doctorate on Julia Kristeva and the female intellectual.

Notes

1. 'Women in the Beehive: A Seminar with Jacques Derrida', in Alice Jardine and Paul Smith (eds.), *Men in Feminism* (Methuen, New York, 1987) pp. 189–203.
2. Rachel McAlpine, *Farewell Speech* (Penguin, Auckland, 1990) p. 89.
3. See Elizabeth Sarah's 'Christabel Pankhurst: Reclaiming her Power', in Dale Spender (ed.), *Feminist Theorists: Three Centuries of Women's Intellectual Traditions* (The Women's Press, London, 1983) pp. 256–284.
4. In Ernst Jones (ed.), *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (The Hogarth Press, London, 1949) pp. 144–174.
5. The sources I have used in this text are drawn largely from Toril Moi (ed.), *The Kristeva Reader* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1986), especially the essays 'Stabat Mater' (pp. 160–186), and 'Women's Time' (pp. 187–213).
6. Angela Carter, *The Passion of New Eve*, (Virago, London, 1982).
7. Since this lecture was delivered, some of these gains have been lost.
8. Stephanie Knight and Belinda Hitchman, *Women at University: The Report on the Position of Women Students at the Unversity of Auckland* (Auckland University Students' Association, Auckland, October 1988) p. 13.
9. Andrea Dworkin, *Intercourse* (Arrow Books, London, 1987) pp. 24, 25.
10. I am indebted here to a path-breaking essay by V. M. Grace, 'Theorizing Rape and Sexual Violence', a paper presented at the New Zealand Psychological Society Conference, University of

Auckland, August 1989, especially to some of the ideas expressed on pp. 6–7.

11. Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (Picador, London, 1979) p. 61.
12. Benjamin's reading of 'Angelus Novus' was quoted by German feminist Sigrid Weigel in a paper delivered to the University of Canterbury in 1989. See 'Body and Image Space' (Benjamin) — Problems and Representability of a Female 'Dialectic of Enlightenment' in *The Three Canterbury Lectures by Sigrid Weigel — September, 1989* (Feminist Studies, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, 1990).

Income Adequacy for Older Women: Why Government and Private Provision are Both Failing and Some Possible Improvements

Prue Hyman

Introduction

Government policies with major impacts on the living standards of the elderly have changed frequently in recent years. This applies not only to the tax-funded pension, but also to the treatment of tax savings prior to retirement and of other income during retirement, and to health and other services. The uncertainty about future policy leads to feelings of insecurity which can be almost as serious a problem as actual income inadequacy.[1] Women are a large majority among the elderly, with less opportunity on average to save for their retirement years. As a group, they are therefore particularly affected by these problems. However, in old age as at other times, gender interacts with a number of variables including ethnicity, class, educational opportunities, and sexual orientation. These factors and the extent of family responsibilities affect the amounts and levels of paid work undertaken during an individual woman's working-age years, and her ability to have saved independently or jointly with a partner for retirement. Overall, women now comprise about 43% of the labour force, but only 35% of those employed full time. 35% of women work part time, but only 11% of men. It should be noted, too, that retirement is a misnomer for many women, as their unpaid and caring work will usually continue and may even increase.

This article looks briefly at women's economic position in old age, critiques the (proposed and cancelled) July 1991 and the

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October 1991 changes to policy in the tax-funded pension and related areas, and discusses some underlying issues. It suggests further changes and identifies major priorities to secure as equitable an outcome for older women as is possible, taking account of economic realities.

The economic position of older women

In 1990 women in New Zealand constituted 55.8% of the over-60 age group, and 66.4% of the over-80s. Life expectancy at birth, based on 1985/7 life tables, is 77.1 for women, against 71.1 for men, but only 72 and 67 respectively for Maori. Women in New Zealand reaching 60 can expect to live another 21.4 years, (18.3 for Maori women), and men 17.2 (15.2 Maori). 74.7% of men over 60 are currently married, but only 46.6% of women. The greater longevity of women and the propensity for men to marry women somewhat younger than themselves results in far more women than men having a period of widowhood. The vast majority of older people, 92.5% of those over 60, remain able to live in private residences, but this decreases to 63.5% of those over 85. Women are much more likely to live alone, with 51.8% of those aged 75 to 79, compared with 21.1% of men, in that category.[2]

Therefore, managing alone is to a much greater extent a woman's situation than a man's. Further, women's average incomes in old age, as at other ages, are less than men's, although the gap narrows as the state-funded pension becomes a significant proportion of income. This narrowing of the gap is due to a sharp reduction in the average income for men over 70 compared with earlier ages, rather than a large increase in average female incomes, although female median income (50% have less than this figure, and 50% more) does rise very slightly beyond age 70. This may be due partly to the direct receipt by some women of survivor benefits from occupational and private pensions, when the whole of the base pension would have been paid to the member of the scheme while alive.

Median income for all men over 15 was $15,119 at the 1986 Census. For those aged 60–64, median income was $12,173, at 65–69 $8,502, and at 70–74 $7,692, with little change for higher

ages. Median incomes for women of similar ages were $7,545 (50% of the male figure) for 15 plus, $7,125 (59%) 60–64, $7,087 (83%) for 65–69 and $7,145 (93%) for 70–74. Higher incomes, however, are still mainly the prerogative of men, with 14.5% of men over 60 having incomes over $20,000 in 1986, against 3.8% of women.[3]

In 1987/8 65.5% of the average income of $12,860 in single-person households with the occupant over 60 came from national superannuation, with 9.6% from paid work and 16.1% from investments. For households consisting of a couple without children and with the woman over 60, the corresponding proportions were 59.0%, 18.0%, and 15.1%, of a total income of $23,930.[4] These contrasting proportions largely reflect differences in age, gender and labour force participation. The averages can give a misleading impression, with the few wealthy having a substantial effect on the average. About two thirds of those receiving the state pension have no other income, and women form a large majority of this group.

The median incomes given above and a recent survey of older New Zealanders both confirm that incomes fall sharply in old age. In fact about half of those surveyed felt that their standard of living, not just their income, had fallen compared with pre-retirement years.[5] The two are not identical, since work-related and possibly other expenses will have fallen, with fully-paid-off home ownership rates highest among the over-60s. Despite this fall, only 23% of respondents considered their standard of living to be inadequate.

This raises the question of how policy makers and researchers can reasonably judge adequacy of income. The criteria of relative income levels and standards of living have been used in setting benefits and judging poverty in the last few decades. Those relying on the welfare system could expect to increase their standards of living in line with general income growth while the economy was expanding. However, economic stagnation, the backlash against high government revenue and expenditure, and the revival of the concept of the welfare state as only a safety-net has meant that, among policy makers at least, the less generous 'absolute needs' approach has been revived. This involves attempting to assess the minimum income needed by households of different structures to live at a basic level. It has been used to argue that there is, even now, further room to cut benefits and pensions.[6]

Poverty among the elderly was substantially reduced by the National Superannuation scheme, which was at a higher level than previous state tax-funded systems. The married couple rate was originally set at 80% of post-tax average ordinary time earnings, although this relativity has now been cut. Families with children currently experience poverty to a greater extent than the elderly, family assistance payments having fallen sharply relative to superannuation. However, if the current reaction against these trends reduces the level of superannuation any further, poverty among the elderly would re-emerge, with women particularly affected.

Government policies

(a) Tax-funded pensions (National Superannuation/ Guaranteed Retirement Income)

The major rationale for the July 1991 Budget changes to tax-funded pensions was the need to make substantial savings in government expenditure. Existing provisions were deemed fiscally unsustainable in the light of the ageing of the population and the economic situation. Movement towards private provision for retirement was therefore to be encouraged. Full treatment of the demographic and fiscal arguments are beyond the scope of this article. However, it should be said that all these claims are open to challenge.

In any case the elderly, like the whole population, have to consume actual goods and services largely out of current production (durable goods like housing and cars are a partial exception). Exhorting private provision through saving for retirement, if successful, will result in greater *claims* on current output by the elderly, but only if the past saving has resulted in productive investment and higher output will those claims be able fully to be met. Inflation may otherwise reduce the amount of goods and services they can buy. Those currently in paid work provide the goods and services for those elsewhere in the life cycle. Each cohort benefits from intergenerational transfer and provides for others at different life stages.[7] It should also be recalled that many of

the old, especially women, are still providing for others through unpaid caring work.

Nevertheless, the fiscal arguments held sufficient sway in July 1991 for severe cuts to the state pension system to be announced. The main features were (i) the rapid increase in age of eligibility from 60 to 65, (ii) the freezing of the level of payment until 1993, (iii) the draconian toughening of the outside income test which abates the payment, with a transfer from an Inland Revenue-operated surcharge to a Department of Social Welfare-administered income test, (iv) the movement from an individual to a joint spousal/de facto unit of assessment where relevant for this income test, and (v) introduction of a universal element of half the maximum superannuation payment at age 70, a slight offsetting move to the other four. The outcry produced by the severity of these changes, together with a realisation of their non-workability, resulted in a partial retreat from the third and fourth of these features, with some savings by also removing the fifth.

The current surcharge is set at 20 cents on each dollar of other income (or half the income in the case of approved superannuation schemes) above about $6,000 each for a married couple and $7,200 for a single person. This was to be tightened so that abatement started when outside income reached only $4,160 for a married couple or a single person and proceeded much more rapidly. Instead of a 48 or 53% effective marginal tax rate (28% on lower and 33% on higher incomes, added to the 20% surcharge) the rate would have become 93% in many cases. Full withdrawal of the state pension currently occurs at about $71,000 other income for a married couple and $43,300 for a single person. This would have been reduced to $23,700 and $16,200 respectively. Abatement at such a high rate makes pointless the previous saving which is being exhorted, with virtually no benefit for couples between $4,000 and $16,000 other income. Inevitably, as Treasury later admitted, avoidance would be widespread, particularly in the absence of an assets test. Those with some savings outside an approved scheme would be harder hit, as all, rather than half, the resulting income is abated. Women are less favourably placed to save significant amounts, particularly in such schemes.

The October 1991 decisions, effective from 1 April 1992, fall between these two extremes. The surcharge is increased by 5 cents

to 25 cents on outside income, with the exempt income still at the low figure of $4,160 for single people, but increased to $3,120 each for married couples. This implies that married couples lose all their state pension if they have outside income between them above $54,800, and single people are similarly affected from $35,802.[8] The government claims that about 75% of the elderly will be unaffected by the change in surcharge regime, since for most, outside income is zero or below the new exempt figure, while a few already lose all their pension due to very high income.

From the point of view of older women, the abatement issue has probably received rather more attention than it deserves relative to other changes. The surcharge even at the slightly higher rate involves a not unreasonable degree of targeting, and continued Inland Revenue administration should result in less of a sense of stigma than would be perceived with Social Welfare means-testing of state pensions. The increased surcharge, the higher age of eligibility (but see the qualifications below) and the withdrawal of the part universal pension, which benefited only the most well-off, might be regarded as the least harmful options if savings have to be made. A large proportion of women have zero or very low levels of outside income, so of greater importance to them and for minimum standards of living is the maintenance of the pension *level*. The freeze until 1993 implies, of course, a cut in real terms, although the low current rates of inflation make this less serious than it would have been in past years. Nevertheless the $10 to $15 per week by which the pension would have increased if indexed to the Consumer Price Index may be of critical importance at the margin for those on lower incomes.

In the medium term an increase in the age of eligibility to 65 may be a reasonable measure. If combined with the elimination of age discrimination, including the abolition of compulsory retirement ages, it has merit, although it must be recognised that those in physically demanding jobs may need and wish to retire at an earlier age than 65. Women who have returned to the full-time labour force after periods in unpaid and/or part-time work may still be at the peak of their powers and energy at 60, and the opportunity to continue to use the experience of this age group will be particularly desirable as the youth cohort entering the labour force diminishes. However, the rapid increase in age of eligibility to 65 is very serious

for those forced to or planning to retire at 60 or unable to find a job. There is little lead time to make extra savings, even if this was possible, for those in their late 50s. Again this is particularly serious for women since they still have lower labour force participation rates than men in their 60s and are in some cases forced to retire at a lower age.

The government has recognised that interim measures may be needed for this group. A payment which is less demeaning to collect and more generous in financial terms than the unemployment benefit may be introduced. However, given that any such provision would reduce the savings from the rapid increase in age of eligibility, a more gradual raising of the age might have been as efficient and more equitable. Another factor which casts doubt on giving qualified approval to a gradual raising of the age of entitlement is the lower life expectancy of Maori, noted earlier, which implies lesser receipt of pensions. Since Maori men and women are overrepresented among those unemployed, the importance of the interim arrangements is highlighted.

Legislation against discrimination in employment on the grounds of age is an essential accompaniment to the raising of the age of eligibility, even though compliance will inevitably be incomplete. The measure should include the outlawing of compulsory retirement ages. The Minister of Justice has foreshadowed such legislation, but it is possible that retirement ages in existing contracts will be exempt.

The most welcome climb-down in the October changes, from a feminist perspective, is the return to the individual unit for receipt of pension and abatement purposes. This partial retreat from the core family unit[9] towards individual entitlement avoids the problems of total loss of pension by a non-working spouse of a working partner. This would have affected younger wives of retired men particularly, deterring them from paid work. Further, an independent income, sometimes for the first time, was regarded as of great importance by many older women in a recent Ministry of Women's Affairs consultation.

Of considerable importance is the perspective underlying the tax-funded pension scheme. The view is common that a state retirement pension is different in kind from that of other benefits in the social welfare system. Whether argued in terms

of recognition of past and/or present contributions to society, the lack of alternatives for many of the elderly, or the fact that it is permanent, in that there will be no return to the paid labour force, entitlement to a pension is frequently viewed as more of an unconditional right than is the case with other benefits. This position is sometimes argued in terms of past tax payments, which is invalid in a pay-as-you-go system, but the feeling that a reasonable standard of living from the basic state pension is a matter of just desserts is a strong one, which polls show is shared by most of the non-elderly.[10] Nevertheless, the July Budget gave strong signals that the government was attempting to shift the perspective of the state role in retirement income towards a safety-net only approach, which was their clear perspective on the other elements of the welfare state.[11] The October announcement can be seen as a slight and welcome retreat from this.

The changes to take effect from April 1992 may still only be of an interim nature. The government intention to make fiscal savings in this area and expect a much greater proportion of retirement income to arise from individual savings has been dented rather than reversed. Thus the Ad Hoc Cabinet/Caucus Committee on Private Provision for Retirement, supplemented by a task force, has a brief to consider the full range of issues related to private superannuation schemes (discussed later in this paper), together with their interface with state-funded schemes, and the macro-economic implications of increased savings. The broad principles for its work are encouragement of greater financial self-reliance of retired people, and the promotion of inter-generational equity, economic efficiency in resource allocation, and fiscal sustainability. Gender issues are mentioned nowhere in its terms of reference.

The Labour Government in 1988–89 considered and consulted on a number of options, including a social insurance system and a compulsory state-run contribution scheme with a private contracting-out option, before deciding instead to make more minor changes to the existing tax-funded, pay-as-you-go-scheme.[12] Both the first two options mentioned involve compulsory contributions from taxpayers during their working life. Social insurance can involve either earnings-related or flat-rate payouts, with a tax-financed top-up for those whose contributions had not entitled them to a minimum-level pension. Contribution schemes are

similar to employment-based or personal private schemes, with benefit levels dependent on contribution records. If participation in such a scheme was made compulsory, contributions of about 15% of income would be needed for 40 years by those on average earnings to yield a similar level of pension as national superannuation currently provides.[13] A top-up for those whose paid work experience was too little to accumulate adequate contributions for a minimum-level pension would still be necessary. The implications of contributory schemes for women are discussed below.

(b) Other forms of superannuation/saving for retirement

The major form of saving for retirement in New Zealand is through the purchase of owner-occupied housing. The home ownership rate of the over-60 population is high (73% unmortgaged, for over 65s), although less so for women living on their own. Data on other forms of savings is limited, but membership of formal retirement savings schemes, including those organised by employers, is low by international standards. Government Actuary data indicates that in 1987 only 23% of those in employment contributed to occupational schemes, with private and personal scheme membership raising this level to 36%, or 24% of the working-age population.[14] Predictably, the groups most likely to contribute to superannuation or mutual funds were professional and managerial, with nearly half of these occupations making such payments in 1988/9 at an average rate of $31 and $44 per week respectively. Over a third of those in the clerical, sales and service groups also made contributions, but at a much lower average level.[15]

Information by gender is limited, but only 24% of women made contributions as against 30% of men. The contribution rates are in more striking contrast. Men averaged payments of $28 per week, over four times the female rate.[16] Hence women's accumulations in, and income from, such schemes are much lower than men's, while average male payouts are themselves modest in all but a few schemes, such as the Government Superannuation Fund.

These sharp differences are hardly surprising, given a number of economic and social factors, including the relative earnings structures of men and women and the effects of the rules of

many of the schemes. Firstly, higher income earners, with men overrepresented, both can afford to contribute more and have better access to occupational schemes. Secondly, socialisation and past experience has provided an expectation, decreasing but still significant, that a combination of state and partner provision will ensure an adequate income in old age for many women. The existence of spousal benefits in many schemes is one valid factor in this expectation.

Thirdly, a labour-force participation pattern with gaps and periods in part-time work is not conducive to membership in, and the receipt of substantial benefits from, such schemes. Many schemes are open only to certain groups of employees, with part-time workers often excluded, and/or minimum periods of service before workers are eligible to join. The rules of most schemes give disproportionately more benefits, relative to the level of contributions, to employees with long service. Typically, employers make contributions matching those of their employees in occupational schemes, but on withdrawal these contributions may not be fully available. The vesting rules, which govern availability to the employee of the employer contribution on withdrawal, frequently require long service before full vesting, with an increasing proportion available as service increases. New Zealand has no legal requirements with respect to vesting, so the average period required is longer than in most other countries. A 15- to 20-year continuous period of service is common in many older schemes, with 10 to 15 years' service more frequent in newer schemes.[17] This implies that those with lower years of service, frequently women, cross-subsidise those with higher years of service, mainly men. Women who leave the paid workforce for full-time child care are in most cases required to cash in their superannuation rights, and may also need to do so for family expenses. However, if they do not have access to full vesting they obtain only partial benefit, as well as losing later pension potential and having to start again on re-entry to the labour force.

Contributory schemes therefore have features which make them less attractive on average to women, so that they are both relatively disadvantaged as members and underrepresented. This would be the case to a lesser extent if the past, albeit slow, narrowing of labour force participation and earnings differences between

women and men accelerated. However this requires, for example, greater sharing of child care and active policies towards equal employment opportunity and pay equity, which are unlikely at present.

Some features of contributory schemes could be improved, even given the current different labour force profiles of women and men. These changes are desirable, but politically unlikely to be introduced with respect to voluntary schemes. However, if payment into a contributory scheme was to become compulsory, it would be essential for equity for women that the state scheme and any qualifiying private schemes should have to satisfy certain gender-neutral criteria. Such compulsion is a possible outcome of the current review, although the finance minister has recently reiterated the difficulties she sees with either incentives or compulsion towards saving through superannuation schemes. Despite National having suggested in their 1990 election manifesto that they might reintroduce tax deductions for superannuation savings, the general government preference has been for a 'level playing field' in the savings area, to avoid distortions. Increases in superannuation resulting from tax deductions could simply constitute a shift from other forms of saving, and if genuinely producing an increase in saving, might further contract the economy.[18] Tax incentives also disproportionately favour those on higher incomes, with women underrepresented.

A report on gender-neutral superannuation commissioned by the Ministry of Women's Affairs outlined the maximum periods of service for full vesting in a number of countries. Among them were two years' membership or five years' employment in Canada, two years' pensionable service in the U.K., and five years' employment in the U.S.A. The report mentioned that full vesting below ten years was not well received by New Zealand employers consulted, on the grounds of expense and the staff retention aspect of superannuation provision. It put forward a sample scheme design 'intended to strike a balance between desirable design features, employer acceptance and legislative restriction'.[19] This included no vesting until two years of service, with vesting of employer contributions at 20% after two years' membership, increasing by 10% per year with full vesting after 10 years. In the context of compulsory membership of a scheme, at least, there is a strong

argument, which was made by the New Zealand Educational Institute to the authors of that report, that vesting should be full and immediate. If employers were unwilling to comply, a state-run scheme should become predominant.

If the total or major emphasis of contributory schemes is to provide an adequate income on retirement, the vesting provisions lose importance relative to preservation and portability of scheme benefits. If withdrawal is not permitted until retirement (or a particular age), vesting becomes irrelevant, and preservation of benefits from previous service automatic. In that case, to avoid the complications and administrative costs of small amounts in several schemes, total portability between schemes is desirable, and the logic points to a single state scheme. If withdrawal was still allowed, the vesting arguments made above apply. If full vesting did not become mandatory, the ability to 'recapture' previous service and benefits on return to work with the same employer, or preferably any employer, would be of importance to women.

No scheme design alone, however, can give women benefits equal to those of men so long as they have lower average service and earnings. One approach to the first issue, adopted in some countries with social insurance or other forms of compulsory contributory schemes, is that of tax-funded credits being paid to the individual contributor's account during periods of unpaid caring work. If a compulsory scheme was adopted, this approach would reduce the need for top-up payments at retirement. Both credits and top-ups are financed from taxation, but credits have the important advantage of recognising unpaid caring work as real work and avoiding any stigma which is felt to apply, however unfairly, to top-ups.

A further difficulty which women face in providing adequately for their retirement arises from their greater average longevity. Since pensions will have to be paid out to women for a longer period on average, pure actuarially-based schemes may charge women more for the same annual income. An increasing proportion of occupational and private schemes are of the defined-contribution type discussed earlier, and most give lump-sum benefits. If these lump sums are used to purchase an annuity, women will receive less annual income from the same lump sum than men of the same age. Indicative figures of the order of

magnitude involved, based on Australian calculations, show that similar contributions might yield a pension of 50% of final salary for a man, but only 41% for a woman.[20]

Insurance and superannuation are exempt from the Human Rights Act prohibition on gender discrimination, provided that differences are based on actuarial data. Ironically, discrimination on the ground of race in this area is prohibited, despite the fact that in the annuity area (though the reverse applies to life insurance) Maori should, on actuarial grounds, receive higher pensions for the same lump sum than Pakeha due to lower longevity. A large number of factors other than gender and ethnicity affect longevity and these are not normally considered in pension scheme provisions. Averaging risk is a basic insurance principle. While there is a case for basing premiums on identifiable risk categories where individual behaviour increases risk, this does not apply to gender differences. Thus there is a strong case for removing the exemption in the Human Rights Act. The Human Rights Commission's own review of its legislation suggested further study of this area, and a number of countries, including the United States, Australia and Europe are moving towards outlawing use of gender-based actuarial tables.

One type of scheme which does not discriminate against women on an actuarial basis is the defined-benefit type. The payout here is based on years of contribution and finishing salary, in some cases an average over the last few years of service. The Government Superannuation Fund, which is closing to new members in July 1992, is the largest of such schemes. While it has this actuarial advantage for women, and also has the rare feature of pensions increasing with the rate of inflation, there are considerable problems which accounted for the low female membership noted earlier. Withdrawal benefits are particularly poor, with the main advantages going to long service. Nevertheless, any replacement offered by public sector employers has to be a fully-funded defined-contribution scheme of which the disadvantages to women have been enumerated earlier.

One area of importance to women, touched on earlier, is that of survivor (spouse) benefits in superannuation schemes. These are provided automatically in a majority of schemes, usually at 50% of the member's pension.[21] In the longer term the logic

of the argument for economic independence for women and individual units of assessment is that these should be phased out. The saving through reducing the cost of payouts could be used for increasing the pension or reducing contributions. An alternative non-discriminatory but more expensive option is to provide for a nominated survivor, presumably with limits on the length of payout. However, in the short to medium term, with women having less access to individual income, spousal benefits are defensible and necessary.

Another problem for some older women is that their standard of living may be reduced through the costs of long-term care for their spouse. The criteria attaching to the rest home subsidy are based on the income and assets of both partners. Thus these assets may be used up on paying for long-term residential care, leaving the surviving spouse with only the basic pension, and the possibility of having to sell the family home and move out. Different forms of residential care are subject to different rules, and the subsidy is currently under review. Standardisation on the least liberal rules would exacerbate a serious problem.

Conclusion

The Ministry of Women's Affairs prepared a paper for the Prime Minister's Conference on Superannuation in April, suggesting individual entitlement to a targeted tax-funded pension set at an adequate level, with a more generous targeting regime than applies to other social welfare benefits. This was argued to be the best option, bearing in mind the problems for women of defined-contribution schemes discussed earlier in this paper. Thus a compulsory contribution scheme was rejected. To this point the October (but not the July) announcements largely fit the Ministry views, which are well based, although further changes arising from the current review may not do so. However, the Ministry also argued for a more gradual increase in the age of entitlement than that decided by Government and stressed the importance of an accompanying comprehensive package of services and income supplements on the basis of need. The adequacy of such services

in the face of expenditure cuts and changes in the health system is open to considerable doubt.

Unfortunately, further changes and erosion in the state provision of income transfers and services seem likely. Against the arguments for considerable community responsibility for an adequate and secure standard of living in old age, current economic orthodoxy and the rhetoric of individual responsibility hold sway among the decision-makers. In those circumstances it is only responsible to advise those who can make individual provision for their own future to do so. However, the debates on demographic and fiscal sustainability disguise the fact that the majority of the elderly are women with little income beyond the basic pension and with a long and often ongoing involvement in unpaid caring work. As this will change only slowly, it is essential to continue to argue the case for adequate basic tax-funded support. Otherwise the situation will continue in which 'every generation (of women) falls back into dependency and relying on daughters/family for care — so trapping them in the same way'.[22]

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Prue Hyman is a Reader in Economics at Victoria University, recently returned from two years' secondment as an economic analyst at the Ministry of Women's Affairs. She teaches a third-year undergraduate course on gender and the economy. She is a member of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women and of the Social Science Research Advisory Committee of the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology.

Notes

1. See Age Concern, *Equals and Allies? The Status of Older Women in New Zealand* (Ministry of Women's Affairs, Wellington, 1991).
2. The demographic data in this section are from New Zealand Department of Statistics, *Elderly Population of New Zealand* (Department of Statistics, Wellington, 1990); and New Zealand Ministry of Senior Citizens, *Senior Citizens in New Zealand — 1st Post Election Briefing* (Wellington, 1990).
3. NZ Department of Statistics, *Elderly Population*, table 16, p. 36.

4. Income Distribution Group, New Zealand Planning Council, *Who Gets What? The Distribution of Income and Wealth in New Zealand* (New Zealand Planning Council, Wellington, 1990) p. 120.
5. Age Concern, *The 1990 Age Concern/National Mutual Study on the Lifestyle and Well Being of New Zealand Over 60s, Undertaken by Colman Brunton Research* (Age Concern, Wellington, 1990).
6. See Infometrics Business Services Limited, *Mitigating Misery: A Preliminary Assessment of New Zealanders' Capacity to Absorb Cuts in Real Income* (Infometrics, Wellington, 1991).
7. A historian, David Thomson, has recently argued that policy changes imply that the generation born between 1920 and 1945 have been much greater beneficiaries from intergenerational transfers than those born earlier or later. However, his argument pays little attention to gender and ethnic differences. Many women now between 46 and 71 have experienced and will experience poverty. See David Thomson, *Selfish Generations? The Ageing of New Zealand's Welfare State* (Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1991).
8. Complexities mean that figures in this section are illustrative only. The division of outside income between partners, part of it coming from approved schemes, changes in circumstances during a year, living alone or otherwise as a single person all affect the outcome, and space does not permit giving the detailed assumptions underlying the figures.
9. See Susan St John, 'The Core Family Unit: The Implications of the 1991 Budget for Women', *Women's Studies Journal*, 7:2 (1991) pp. 1–13.
10. See, for example, the Royal Commission Attitudes and Values survey report in the Report of the Royal Commission on Social Policy, *AJHR*, 1988, H2, *The April Report*, vol. 1, especially tables 38 to 40, pp. 495–97.
11. Hon. Jenny Shipley, *Social Assistance — Welfare that Works: A Statement of Government Policy on Social Assistance* (Government Budget Document, Wellington, 1991).
12. See Department of Social Welfare, *Income Security for the Elderly: A Discussion Paper* (Wellington, 1988).
13. ibid., p. 20.
14. See Susan St John and Toni Ashton, *Private Pensions in New Zealand — Country Report for the OECD* (Victoria University of Wellington Institute of Policy Studies, Wellington, 1990) p. 4.
15. ibid., p. 17.
16. ibid.

17. Bonnie Seals and Christine Ormrod, *Gender-Neutral Superannuation* (Ministry of Women's Affairs and State Services Commission, Wellington, 1991).
18. Minister of Finance, quoted in the *Dominion*, 4 December, 1991.
19. Seals and Ormrod, p. 13.
20. Marion Bywater, *Income Security for Older Women* (Ministry of Women's Affairs, Wellington, 1989) p. 14.
21. St John and Ashton, p. 28.
22. National Council of Women, North Shore branch, quoted in Age Concern, *Equals and Allies?*

'Beautiful Things Are Going On Out There': Aroha Rereti-Crofts Talks About the Maori Women's Welfare League in the 1990s

What follows is based on a transcript of an interview done in 1990 with Aroha Hohepera Rereti-Crofts of Ngai Tahu, the current President of the Maori Women's Welfare League. She was speaking to Angela Wallace in Otautahi/Christchurch. The transcript was edited by Rosemary Du Plessis.

Background

I was born and bred in Tuahiwi — both my mother and father were Ngai Tahu. I grew up in a family of eight and was educated at Te Waipounamu Maori Girls' College. I was there for two years, a sickly child. They suspected that I had tuberculosis and I was taken into the sanatorium up in Cashmere where I spent 18 months of my life.

I completed my secondary school as an adult student in the late 1970s. Then I went to Teachers' College and trained for three years in the Primary Division. From Teachers College I went to Wainoni Primary School where I spent five years. I then decided that I had had enough of teaching. I felt that it was time that I was more involved in the Maori community. There were so many things going on that I was missing out on — activities, excitement, changes, decisions. While anything I had to offer in the way of decisions may not always meet with agreement, at least I would have had a say in those decision-making areas.

Maori Women's Welfare League: the years of involvement

I joined the Maori Women's Welfare League in 1968. I very quickly learned all about the League. I became the Otautahi/Christchurch

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Branch's secretary within about two years of joining which probably set me up very well to make contacts in the community on our behalf. I then moved to vice president, and then to president of the Branch. I then assisted the area rep for Te Waipounamu for a year, maybe two years, then I became area representative for Te Waipounamu, representing our area on the National Executive of the League. I spent three years on the Executive. I then came off the Executive, retiring as area rep.

This was when I was studying. I felt that I had served the community and now it was my turn. I needed to spend more time to study for University Entrance. At that time I was also secretary of Otautahi Maori community and an honorary welfare officer for Maori Affairs, advising people in what was then called the magistrates court, something akin to a duty solicitor. I was there when the duty solicitor scheme started. Occasionally I had to speak on behalf of clients, but it was all voluntary. Although I was there to advise Maori, it really didn't matter who came for the advice. If some non-Maori came they got free advice too.

I became the national 2nd vice president of the League in 1984 and in May 1990 I became national president of the League, which is a three-year term. The major things I have been involved in at the branch level are Maoritanga courses and craft courses and other local activities. At the national level I have been a delegate, part of the National Council of the League and involved in national projects decided on by the Council.

As national president of the Maori Women's Welfare League I am a member of National Te Kohanga Reo Trust and I am also on the Maori Education Foundation and attend those hui. I have also been appointed to the Quest/Rapuora Board. This fits in well with the League's concerns about young people and employment. I have had to nominate an Executive member in my stead.

Very soon after becoming president I stated to our women that my intention was to visit every branch in the country—to meet every member of the Maori Women's Welfare League. While I realise I can't do the whole country in one year, I intend to do it in my three-year term. I'm very interested in what our people are actually doing out there in the community.

And there are some beautiful things going on out there, some wonderful things that society wouldn't even dream are

going on. I'm talking about health activities, Whare Rapuora, a Maori Women's Welfare League initiative. There are a lot of League initiatives. There are courses in weaving, sewing, catering, hospitality, tourism. There are just so many things that our people are involved in.

The other thing are our branches overseas. My intention is to visit those branches, especially Perth and London. They have been going for some years, but I think that it's time they had a visit from their national president.

I've visited Melbourne and I'm due to go back in November to talk to our people over there. There are a lot of Maori overseas. I'm probably going to Adelaide later on in the year, or next year. Maori women there are very keen to get going in Australia, and not only Maori, pakeha women too — Australian women.

When I'm home I try to catch up on what's going on locally in my own branch. Things like the Healthy Life Style group or any hui that's going on. If I'm home then I want to go to those hui just to hear what our community is doing, because I don't want to neglect local issues. If I've got the opportunity to be home, I'll be part of those and that's great.

In Otautahi/Christchurch I'm on the Criminal Justice Advisory Council. It's our job to educate ourselves so that we can liaise between the community and the Justice Department and prison system. To be able to do that we have had to study prisons — actually go in and see what's going on in the prisons. We have gone in to study the education of the inmates, and there are some brains in those prisons. It is just so tragic. It's a shame that their brains weren't used for the other side of the fence, rather than that side of the fence. We talk with community groups to suss out their needs in relation to inmates. Our brief is the rehabilitation of inmates. I have since resigned through over-commitment as national president.

Another committee that I was involved in was the MacMillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies. Since becoming president I'm not able to be at every meeting, as most of my time now is spent in Wellington, at the office. Not only in the Maori Women's Welfare League office, but in meetings with Ministers of the Crown and at conferences.

Most of my time is now spent in Wellington and travelling throughout the country. I believe it's my task to support all our branches by being there, so not only am I touring the areas, but also I want to be there at their regionals.

The president of the League needs to be there up front, lobbying for our projects, our organisation, for our people. That's the reason why I'm in Wellington a lot, because that's where all the lobbying goes on. That's where the contact is made.

Current projects: health and positive parenting

At the moment we are focusing on health. We have already decided to have smoke-free meetings. It's being done at branch level. We've never ever smoked while the National Council meeting has been in session. Even at National Executive level there is no smoking. All our meetings are smoke-free. We also have our house in Wellington which is a smoke-free area. So one of our projects is concentrating on the cessation of smoking.

This is part of working towards a healthy life style, guarding against the cardiovascular disease to which our people are prone together with cancer and asthma — all those respiratory diseases. So we work on the Healthy Life Style project, using netball as a vehicle. We are encouraging Maori women, young Maori women and girls to play netball, to compete for a place in the Maori Women's Welfare League netball teams.

We have five grades, under-16s, under-18s, under-21s, Premiers, which is open grade, and Golden Oldies. We invite our Maori women to come in and trial for the top teams in their areas. People may say that's separatism. We're saying it's not separatism. No-one else can address the health issues of the Maori, but the Maori. No-one else is doing it, so we bring in these people to trial for the teams.

We have five teams from Te Waipounamu for those grades, one in each grade and we take them to National Maori Women's Welfare League Netball Tournament. That is in Auckland this year at Labour weekend. There was a wonderful thought to have it in Kaitaia or somewhere in Taitokerau, but finances dictated that it

had to be in Auckland. This year, 1991, the smoke-free tournament is in Te Awamutu.

We deliberately avoid any conflict of dates with the New Zealand Netball Association because we have been accused of taking away players from them or separatism, or stupid things like that. That's why we have moved the tournament till later in the year when all the netball has finished throughout the country.

We have had the opportunity to take teams overseas. The winning teams of the previous tournament in Rotorua went to Rarotonga, Samoa and Fiji. And this year we took two teams to Hawaii where we have a branch, a League branch. In fact we have got branches, not only in Hawaii but in Perth, Australia and also in London, there's one in Adelaide and I believe there's one also in Brisbane.

Not only are we using netball, Healthy Life Style is also focusing on enjoying life. In our own local area we have sought to try out indoor sports. A lot of our people haven't tried indoor sports so we have tried ten-pin bowling, indoor cricket and indoor tennis. The next one might be badminton or table tennis. Our people have had a lot of fun trying out these indoor sports. In the summer we will have things like softball and family days, hui and that sort of thing.

The other project that we are getting under way is the positive parenting courses. We are looking at targeting fifteen- and sixteen-year-olds. We want to focus in on the young people before they become parents and give them some experience of parenting. That could be things like basic cooking, basic sewing, anger management, budgeting, looking after their bodies, child care and family care. They're going to be the parents of tomorrow and going to be rearing our generations to come.

We have a few courses set up already in other parts of the country. In Otautahi/Christchurch we are grateful to be supported by the Canterbury R.E.A.C., who have responded very well to our call that we want to set up positive parenting courses.

We've only just begun setting up the positive parenting courses. We probably have about four, maybe six courses going throughout the country, and we've got something like 200 branches, so obviously there's need for more. It's a matter of training our women to develop a proposal, set out a budget, get funding for the

course and run it. They have also had to learn how to set up job descriptions for their tutors and for the administrators. They have also had to be part of interview panels. This is all part of education for our League women. They have also had to learn how to do wages, time sheets — everything that goes with running a course. Our women are learning these things rapidly because we feel the need to get these courses done.

I would think that those two major things will be projects into the future. Our Healthy Life Style project has the backing of the Health Department and the National Heart Foundation. These people are right there supporting us. We also have the support of the Hillary Commission.

The positive parenting, under R.E.A.C., is looking at further education, further training and ideally, employment. And that's what R.E.A.C.'s all about, employment of people, so we're trying to address that in our positive parenting classes. We are addressing health issues of the Maori in both the positive parenting and the Healthy Life Style projects.

Iwi membership and League membership

The Maori Women's Welfare League cuts across tribal boundaries — in the League we belong to one whanau, the whole League is a whanau. But, while we are League members, we are also very loyal to our iwi. We wouldn't have it any other way. A League member walks two paths, she walks alongside her iwi, as she always has done and always will do. She also walks with the organisation as a member of the League.

The League isn't negative about our iwi because we are iwi. When iwi authorities are finally put in place, it will, of course, be the women who will do the work for the iwi in the same way that we've done it for the last 39 years. I don't believe that we, as an organisation, would be more important than iwi. We as an organisation would be just as important as iwi because of us being iwi people, because of us working for our iwi, therefore when all this devolutionary process has come about we shall be working with our iwi. For us there is no conflict between working for our iwi and working for the League.

The national network isn't tribal. We all belong to various tribes and Te Waipounamu is a case in point. The branches of Te Waipounamu — something like 18 branches — they are not all Ngai Tahu. In fact they are not all Maori either. We promote fellowship of women of all races, so any woman is entitled to be a member of Maori Women's Welfare League. I invite intermediate students, high school students, varsity students, academics, those with doctorates, degrees, career women, household executives, young mothers with babies, girls and middle aged women and kuia.

Maori Women's Welfare League is an organisation for women. I believe that every Maori woman should be in the League. And if we're talking partnership, as the Treaty of Waitangi states, every pakeha woman should be in the League too, or should be encouraged to come in with us. Every woman, as far as I am concerned, is welcome to join us. The League needs them because our communities need the League. They're going to need the League a lot more than what has been happening in the past.

A vision for the future

My vision for the future is that every Maori woman would be in the League and every non-Maori woman would also be in the the League. I also look to a time when the drug scene and the pornographic filth which is in the country has been eliminated. I recently viewed some pornographic videos with a censoring group. I was invited to go because they needed a Maori opinion. In fact, I was taken there under false pretences, they didn't dare say why they needed me to go. They just asked if we could go and view some videos. It wasn't until we were in the car and on our way out that the woman explained that 'we couldn't tell you until we were on the way. You can refuse to do it and I'll take you back. But we are desperate for Maori opinion on these videos'. We went to somewhere in the Hutt. I told those people that I was very sad that they have to do that as their job. Because what we saw on those videos was filth. Racism, sexism — just plain filth.

The tragic thing is that our men are watching those things. My opinion is that there should be a match put to the lot. I don't

know how it's going to happen, but I think that there's not enough policing of the videos which come into the country. But the censor group said, that, while they can control what's going out on the market, they can't control what's being brought in under mail orders, that's where most of the stuff is coming in.

The Maori Women's Welfare League in the next decade

The League is very much part of the Treaty of Waitangi and there is no way that we could function, or we would want to function, without the backing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

In the next decade the Maori Women's Welfare League is going to be right out there in the community in the same way as they have been since 1951 when the League began, but more so. As national president when I'm on tour, speaking to media or whoever, I'm continually inviting women to join the League because the League sees that the workload in the community is extending so rapidly.

This is because of devolution from the Ministry of Maori Affairs. When the work of Maori Affairs is devolved to the community, who picks it up? The women. And who are the women? The Maori Women's Welfare League.

I'm talking to school students, intermediate and high school students who come and join the League. We need the young people because we have a drug scene out there. We need assistance from young people who can be role models, encouraging other young people not to get into the drug scene, or alternatively, to give it up. They need to show them that there is a better way of life than pill-popping and all the things they're involved in — the drug scene and smoking.

We need people to help us convince our people to give up smoking, to control the intake of alcohol, control of their diet, work on good nutrition, all those things because the statistics show that it's Maori who are at the bottom of the barrel in health. So the League has to address those issues, and that's what we're doing.

So how do I see the League in the next decade? Working for justice for our people, rendering humane service whenever possible — it's one of the major aims of our constitution and we will go on doing it.

Book Reviews

The Book of New Zealand Women/Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa
Charlotte Macdonald, Merimeri Penfold, Bridget Williams (eds.)
Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1991. $45.00

The Book of New Zealand Women/Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa is a remarkable collection which brings together the life-stories of over three hundred women. It is at once an invaluable reference book and an engrossing and extremely readable account of the achievements, joys, tragedies and hardships which have shaped the lives of the women of this land. Some two hundred contributors have drawn on a wide variety of sources and methods to painstakingly research and bring to life the stories of an enormous range of women. Many of the well-known personalities of New Zealand history are here, alongside those known only by name and those who have hitherto escaped the historical record altogether. There are those whose lives, in the public arena at least, have left numerous traces, and others who have survived only in the memories of their descendants. Some tell their own stories, while others, who have left but a few bare fragments, are dependent on the skill and imagination of their biographers. Each is 'worth' a full biography in her own right, and doubtless from this beginning many of these will follow, but space is limited in such a collection, and it is to the credit of the contributors and the editors that although the individual stories have been kept brief they offer more to the reader than the scant accounts typical of dictionary entries.

The most striking thing about the book is the variety of ways in which these women have lived their lives. Indeed, if the women recorded here can be seen as representative, then I would suggest that, contrary to the optimism of the introduction, the

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task of 'constructing a comprehensive narrative account' of New Zealand women has been made considerably more difficult by the publication of this book. Certainly there are patterns running through many of the lives, but the sheer range of the realities of lived experience make any generalisations about women's lives hazardous. In some cases, the only common ground is that they were born female. (About eighty of these women never married, for example.) However, there is a sense of change over time — in the social expectations of daughters and wives, and in changes in the meaning ascribed to 'Woman'. Some of the most interesting changes have been the specifically New Zealand transformations as Maori and Pakeha encountered one another in this Pacific land. These patterns of continuity and change would, I think, have been better illuminated had the entries been arranged chronologically rather than alphabetically. What is clearly shown by this collection is that alongside the broader divisions of class and race, variables such as marital status, sexual orientation, numbers of children and countless other differences of personality, circumstance, talent and fortune are all factors which must be considered in the shaping of a life.

Biography is essentially the art of selection. To transform a life into words, the biographer must choose which facts to note, which apt stories to relate or significant details to seize upon. It is a notoriously difficult thing to do well. Where there are documented facts and dates to record and genealogies to recount, the task of assembling a framework is relatively straightforward, but such data does not add up to a life. So much that is important can slip by unnoticed. As one contributor, sensing this difficulty, put it:

> In the next fifteen years Elizabeth gave birth to ten more children — so few words for so much gestation, labour and plain hard work, or so much joy. (p. 180)

Obviously the sorts of biographies which can be written are ultimately dependent on the nature of the available sources, and the approach and interpretation of the biographer. Although most of the contributors, despite the limitations of space and sources, have succeeded in breathing life into their subjects and have provided sufficient material to enable the reader's imagination to fill the silences, those entries where oral sources have been

used are particularly effective. Perhaps it is that memory, as it moves through chains of association, merging the significant event with the minute detail, approximates more closely to the mix of visible and hidden, public and private which constitutes a life. Where illustrations have been used, another dimension has been added, and this is valuable in spite of the effect of freezing a particular image in time. The choice of one or two of the photographs is odd, however. Why, for example, depict someone playing Sylvia Ashton-Warner in a film rather than a likeness of the woman herself? Where appropriate, the entries have been well documented and the lists of sources given will be particularly useful for research and further reading. Personally, I found the practice of indicating sources by paragraph number rather than by enumerated endnotes inefficient and distracting.

For the editors of a collection such as this the problem of selection is doubled. Not only do individual entries have to be edited, but decisions must be made as to who will be included. While fully acknowledging the enormous difficulties and agonising decisions such a task involves, I feel that there are some problems with the choices that have been made, or rather with some of the omissions. In the introduction the editors state that 'we did not set out to compile a collection of New Zealand's "famous women" '. The problem is that the book does include almost all of the very well-known women of New Zealand history, and it is the 'almost' which is irritating. Learmonth Dalrymple is a case in point. In order to pre-empt such criticism, her absence, along with that of Emily Siedeberg, is mentioned in the introduction, but that is not sufficient explanation, in my view, for the absence of one of the key figures of New Zealand women's history, to whom several of the women in the book owe much. The absence would not be so glaring were it not for the fact that in spite of the inclusion of many 'unknown' women, the collection does include most of the 'names', including those whose place in the record is firmly established. This is not to say that any of those included should have been omitted, and, as the editors point out, all readers will have their own ideas about who should have been here, but surely Margaret Sievwright and Ada Wells as well as Dalrymple should be here, alongside their peers. In part the difficulty lies in the attempt to combine two distinct kinds of historical approach by

mixing biographies of 'notable' women with accounts of the way in which 'ordinary' women have lived. The editors state that they aimed for 'as broad a sweep as possible', but the majority of the women included are in some way extraordinary. While this makes for varied and interesting reading, I don't think that the entries can be seen as a representative sample of New Zealand women. The chronological spread of the book is also very uneven. Once again, sources are clearly a problem, but the presence of very few women from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the fact that just over one third of all entries were born in the three decades from 1870 – 1900, does tend to add to the impression that this is predominantly a book of New Zealand women from the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries.

These few points are in no way intended to detract from the fact that this is a superbly produced, timely, fascinating and informative collection. It is a tribute to the people of New Zealand — to those women whose lives have been told and to those who have done the telling — which will be treasured now and by future generations. That such a high quality book has been produced at a retail price which makes it accessible to many is no small achievement and a further cause to celebrate the publication of this unique collection.

Bridget Waldron, History, University of Otago
December 1991

Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa/The Book of New Zealand Women
Charlotte Macdonald, Merimeri Penfold, Bridget Williams (eds.)
Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1991. $45.00

'Where have all the Dames gone? Long time passing.'

The 1992 New Years Honours list came out as usual with its commendations for New Zealand men — but few for our New Zealand women.

'Where have all the Dames gone? Gone to graveyards everywhere — when will we ever learn?'

With a few exceptions our women go to their graves, to Hawaiki, unheralded, seemingly unrecognised, although fondly and affectionately, but nevertheless privately, remembered as the wife

and/or mother of such and such and so and so. Yet their lives have amounted to so much more; the whole gamut of human and emotional scenarios are often portrayed.

With the exception of a few existing slim volumes, dealing with women in New Zealand, there has been no authoritative account of New Zealand women published, no visible celebration of their lives, nothing of substance — until now.

My first impression of the book was that such a publication was long, long, overdue. However, ***A*** *Book of New Zealand Women*, rather than ***The*** *Book of New Zealand Women*, might have been a more appropriate title, one which is less likely to preclude further collections of herstory in the future. This latter reservation aside, this collection of biographies, comprehensive and extensive as it is, affords the reader powerful and compelling accounts of our sisters from the past. From the humble to the powerful, the infamous to the famous, their herstories are here; Madame extraordinaire, Flora Robson, rubs shoulders with the now legendary Katherine Mansfield, whilst Minnie Dean, the only woman to be hanged in New Zealand for her crimes, finds herself in company with a reformer of the penal code, Mabel Howard.

Ko Kui Ma Te Kaupapa contains 'taonga' — *precious treasures*, 'taonga tuku iho' — *a treasure trove of inheritance.* It seeks to display the cultural richness and diversity of experience of the women of Aotearoa, woven into one fabric; the warp and weft of New Zealand society.

All Maori women inherit their mana and leadership qualities directly from their tribe. They are born of the land, this land, this soil. They are tangata whenua, descendants of the first settlers of this country. The inclusion of 'wahine toa' — *women of power and strength*, such as Mere Rikiriki, the prophetess, Iriaka Ratana, the first Maori woman Member of Parliament, and Te Puea Herangi, the great Waikato leader and the accounts of the other Maori women gives rise to a further issue for discussion: the integration of the herstory of Maori and Pakeha women in the same volume.

The choice to include both in one volume is questionable. It is a decision which the editors clearly had some apprehension about:

> The stories of Maori women are an essential part of the book. The histories of these women need to be recorded if the true national character of New Zealand is to be portrayed. (p. viii)

Rather a grudging acknowledgment, I thought. Who, I wonder, are they trying to convince? Given the mana of their co-editor, Merimeri Penfold, and her researchers, why was it necessary to state the obvious? The inclusion of the stories of Maori women guaranteed the book 'the true national character of New Zealand'. Their exclusion would have been difficult to explain, and perhaps Maori women didn't warrant consideration for a second volume of their own. As I write, I can hear the background mutterings of 'social separatism' and the protestations from others. I recognise that all New Zealand women, past and present, are the backbone of this, our country, Aotearoa; that even its very name was bestowed upon it by a woman, a Maori woman, Hine-te-aparangi, a wife of the explorer Kupe. However, apart from the 'domestic' role they have in common, the pioneering traits and trials of Pakeha women adjusting to and settling in a new country are vastly different from the process of colonisation that Maori women were forced to undergo as they attempted to survive in their land, with fewer commodities and less status than their Pakeha sisters. These differences do not just indicate widely differing experiences, but dualities of experience. While it is acknowledged that it was difficult for Pakeha women to adapt to new ways, they did not have the experience of being overrun and subordinated in their own land by another culture as did their Maori sisters. To quote a rather bad analogy:

> Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did — but backwards and on high heels.

Cultural considerations, or misgivings, aside, this book is a gift, a 'taonga', eclipsing other reference books of the past. It provides insights and comparisons conveniently under one cover and it is indexed in a sensible and helpful form. Teachers and students alike, of Women's Studies, Sociology, Anthropology and Maori Studies, and other disciplines, will find it a valuable text. New Zealanders, men and women, wanting to remember and revel in the memories of their kuia, their mothers and grandmothers, and in New Zealand women generally, will delight in it.

It is a collective effort by many women — contributors, researchers and editors — which both reclaims our sisters' pasts and

installs them in a volume of significance, thus according them their rightful recognition.

Ko taau rourou ko taaku rourou
Ka kii te kete.

It is only through the sharing of our efforts
that we can together achieve our goal.

Waerete Norman, Maori Studies, University of Auckland
January 1991

Mana Wahine Maori
Ngahuia Te Awekotuku
New Women's Press, Auckland, 1991. $24.95

As the preamble on the cover states, *Mana Wahine Maori* records the pivotal moments of a committed activist and searching thinker. Like her tribal mentor Makereti, Dr Te Awekotuku demonstrates the extraordinary determination of a remarkable individual, and as she proclaims of herself, a tribally identified Maori lesbian.[1] Moments of sometimes disparate but thoughtful prose span almost two decades of writings, observations and transcribed speeches. Pretension has no place in this frank collection. The title *Mana Wahine Maori*, even without the marvellous cover painting by Kura Te Waru-Rewiri, is irresistible and lures one into its enticing subject matter with curiosity. Ideas are conveyed in a provocative challenging manner inviting us to consider the issues from a different perspective. The writing is readily understood. Women's lifetimes from the mythical to the contemporary are portrayed. Stories and herstories unfold before you and you can not help but marvel.

Dr Te Awekotuku is no stranger to firsts—she was the first Maori woman to be awarded her doctorate from a New Zealand university. She is an accomplished fiction and non-fiction writer and has contributed, in a variety of ways, to Maori, feminist and homosexual issues.

Women come to life in magnificent array, representing their professions, the 'pou' of their respective districts, becoming models for our time and for the future. They stride across the pages

of Dr Te Awekotuku's book with purpose and direction, dignity and strength, humility and candour. Entrepreneurs, storytellers, teachers, lovers and many others are there for the reader's eyes. Her presence and theirs are woven into our consciousness with great passion and fervour: a 'harmony of textures, colours and tones'. Transcript snippets from speeches reveal poignant moments and arresting insights.

Mana Wahine Maori is certainly a book worthy of purchase and it adds to the small but growing collection of material written by Maori women and indeed by Maori scholars. Its value to Women's Studies, Maori Studies and to the general reading public, is that it focuses on many of the issues of concern that challenge long-held Maori views, for example, women's liberation and its place in the Maori world. Dr Te Awekotuku is careful not to overgeneralise, but there are lessons and questions that can also be asked of all tribes. Her writing leaves the field open for thoughts and interpretations from other tribal outlooks and orientations. *Mana Wahine Maori* is but one window through which we can view a particular female, or indeed Maori, reality.

Prior to this, books with a strong Maori women content have had specific areas of concentration: there is Horsfield and Evans' book *Maori Women in the Economy*; Binney and Chapman's *Nga Morehu* offers interesting case studies of well known Maori women from the Ringatu faith; Salmond's *Amiria* and King's *Te Puea* extend these case studies to full length ethnobiographies. *Broadsheet* has been, and continues to be, an excellent forum for Maori women's issues. But more often than not, as Irwin's *Maori Women: An Annotated Bibliography* shows us, much of the time essays, articles, comment and reports are part of a larger publication, be it book, journal, thesis, magazine or newspaper. The serious student of Women's Studies who wants to explore Maori women's circumstances must be prepared to utilise her research skills to extract written information from many sources which will be diverse and not immediately obvious. The publication of *Mana Wahine Maori* is a step towards rectifying this situation.

One should be careful not to confuse critique with derisive ridicule when viewing the tribal countenance presented in these pages: it would be easy for some readers to assume the latter position. It appears, to this writer at least, that the challenges Dr Te

Awekotuku lays before the feet of her Maori world are not attempts to 'threaten the very fabric itself', but to allow it to respond to those challenges with pride, dignity and strength and to stand capably on its own feet under critical appraisal. It is from the women of the Maori world portrayed in her book that Dr Te Awekotuku has gained some of her own strength of purpose and position. Who can help but be inspired by Makereti and Dr Ngapare Hopa, who showed her how it was possible to occupy the halls of academia and retain, not necessarily forsake, her Maori world.

From the line-up of proverbs utilised by the books 'orator' there is one that strikes a chord: 'Ma wai e kawe taku kauae ki tawhiti?' 'Who will carry my chin to a faraway place?' Loosely interpreted it could mean, 'Who will tell my story afar?' The reply to this is that there needs to be more writings of a similar nature from the pens of other Maori women, for the more there are the more complete the view is of Maori women's positions, tribal or otherwise, their own or those of their kui. There is something in this book for everyone. I look forward to further contributions in non-fiction literature from Dr Te Awekotuku.

Note

1. Te Arawa, Tuhoe, and Waikato.

Toroa Pohatu, of Ngati Apa. Maori Studies, University of Otago
December 1991

Sex and Secrets: Crimes Involving Australian Women Since 1880
Judith A. Allen
Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990. approx. $45.00

In 1968 Frances Heidensohn commented that the issue of female deviancy could best be seen as 'an obscure and largely ignored area of human behaviour'.[1] Since then substantial efforts have been made by various sociologists, criminologists and historians to rectify this situation. The neglect of female crime has, however, been sadly evident in the quality of theorising on women's offending, and Judith Allen's book is welcome as one of several recent books which attempts to advance our understanding in this area.[2]

Sex and Secrets is concerned with Australian women's involvement in crime, not only as offenders but also as victims. The book covers the period from 1880 to the present day, and is structured chronologically into four main sections.

The first of these covers the period 1880–1899, and focuses on women's involvement in prostitution, infanticide and abortion as a means of resolving the problems and difficulties they faced at that time. With regard to prostitution, Allen points out that being a prostitute was not in itself illegal, yet most arrests of women were nevertheless related to prostitution and resulted in their appearance before the courts charged with drunkenness, vagrancy, or being idle and disorderly. Such offences accounted for 83% of all police charges and summonses against women during this period. However, nearly two-thirds of all those charged were aged between thirty and seventy, suggesting, if the records are accepted at face value, that most women working as prostitutes were older women. However, one of Allen's principal contentions, and one which I, as a criminologist, strongly agree with, is that official statistics on crime cannot be taken wholly at face value. As she suggests:

> the illicit practices that are not policed, or under-policed or erratically policed, are at least as historically significant as those criminalities which are most policed. (p. 9)

Therefore, it is likely that large numbers of younger women were in fact working as prostitutes, even though they seldom appear in the criminal records, indeed other information on the period suggests that this was the case. Younger women were able to attract more clients and command higher fees, and could also seek modes of work other than 'freelancing' on the streets. By contrast, older women tended to work where they were more visible and, when apprehended, found it harder to pay fines. They were therefore much more vulnerable to police scrutiny, a pattern evident also in nineteenth-century New Zealand where particular older 'rowdy' women became trapped in a virtually relentless cycle of poverty, prostitution, and imprisonment.[3]

The second period studied covers the years 1900–1919. Here Allen notes that, following the success in obtaining women's

suffrage, various feminist campaigns were mounted against those laws and procedures seen as contributing to women's degradation.

Concern was expressed at the emergence of the 'new' woman at this time, and criminal cases involving women were often interpreted as being indicative of the increasing depravity, violence and sensuality of the 'fair sex'. Although Allen does not make the comparison, such remarks are curiously reminiscent of those made by Freda Adler, Rita Simon and others with regard to the 'emancipated' female offenders of the 1970s,[4] and to the thesis put forward then that an increase in female violent offending represented the darker side of women's liberation. A 1913 case cited by Allen is instructive here—a rural woman cut her own throat and that of her youngest infant because she could see no escape from her violent husband. This woman's response was indeed violent, but when one examines the context in which offences such as this often occur, it suggests, as Allen points out, that focusing on the 'new' woman seems rather less appropriate than examining the behaviour and attitudes of the 'old' man.

Of concern at this time also was the fact that the birth-rate was declining, a trend which pro-natalist religious fundamentalists and 'child-savers' blamed on the selfishness and wickedness of women. The control of fertility by abortion became more marked during this period, leading Dr McKay to claim in 1903 that:

> next to the withdrawal of the male organ, it is absolutely the chief cause of the decline in the birth-rate. (p. 97)

Most abortions were performed successfully, but on occasions where they were 'botched' abortion could result in the death of the woman and charges being laid. Compared with midwives, doctors had resources and status which tended to keep them out of court in such cases, and accused men experienced higher rates of magisterial dismissal than did women.

Allen also points out that, apart from abortion, all methods of birth control available at this time required at least some degree of masculine co-operation. However, this does not mean, as many historians of birth control have suggested, that trends in this area are most appropriately interpreted as signifying *co-operation* between men and women. Rather, she contends, the degree of *conflict* of interest that could be evident in negotiations around

birth control needs to be acknowledged, and women's choice of abortion understood as often arising from a *lack* of co-operation by men.

The years 1920–1939 constitute the third major period of study, and one of the principal aspects examined here concerns the behaviour of the 'heroes at home'—soldiers returned from the war. Ex-servicemen were over-represented among inter-war defendants charged with killing women, but Allen notes that such men typically met with relative leniency from the courts. Support for women as complainants against male violence declined, partly, she suggests, because:

> Freedom in the domestic zone had always been one of the spoils of war; and the inter-war home could resemble conceded, even conquered territory. (p. 155)

Public space could also be dangerous for women and girls, but again sexual offending by men resulted in less severe punishments than previously. Instead increasing attention was turned to the provocative behaviour of females, and defence counsels increasingly challenged the presumption of innocence in girls. Allen clearly indicates here the ways in which attempts were made to demonstrate the flirtatiousness of nine and ten-year old girls, with some cases even involving the cross-examination of medical witnesses in an effort to suggest that the physical evidence of assault presented may have been attributable to the girl's own self-abuse. This was also the era when the perception of the rapist changed from the 1880s view of relatively sane, normal men who deserved censure for not controlling their 'animal' instincts to one which suggested instead that such men should rather be viewed as feeble-minded, psychopathic and mentally ill, deserving pity rather than judgment.

In the final section, Allen turns her attention to the years from 1940 onwards. This, she argues, has been the era of disclosures. Traditional secrecy in such areas as abortion and prostitution has been replaced by increasing official scrutiny and transformations in the organisation and provision of both services. However, the current move from secrecy to disclosure should not be interpreted as necessarily signifying greater enlightenment or liberalisation

in attitudes. Instead, Allen asserts, it should be noted that such disclosure coincides with increased regulation and surveillance:

> Women's bodies are at the centre of both prostitution and abortion, subject to the gaze, use or control of others who are predominantly men. (p. 215)

Such 'gaze, use or control' is also evident in the ways in which women have become peculiarly vulnerable to sexual violence from men, both known and strangers. Whereas the classic feminist rape text of this period (Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will*) maintained that rape should be understood primarily as an act of violence,[5] Allen's arguments seem more consistent with Catharine MacKinnon's later insistence on the need to acknowledge the sexual component of *all* violence.[6]

In her conclusion, Allen says she has deconstructed 'the monolith "crime"', separating out those crimes relevant to the relations between the sexes and relocating them within the social history of men's and women's experiences. To a large extent I would agree that this is where the major contribution of *Sex and Secrets* lies. The categories 'crime' and 'criminality' are umbrella terms, labels applied to specific practices and individuals in ways which often obscure the gendered nature of behaviour and responses to it. It is precisely this process of 'gender-neutral abstraction' which contributes to keeping the history of the sexes secret.

The way in which Allen's analysis of the material draws the connections between sex and violence makes it patently clear—sex slayings do not involve people killing people, they involve men killing women:

> Bodies of violated, mutilated, strangled men murdered by women are not found. Women do not hold gun-point sieges in their family homes, raping, battering then mutilating their husbands in the bedroom, before giving themselves up to the police who surround the house. . . . The blonde sixteen-year-old found buried in the shallow grave in the sandhills at beaches in any December is a woman. Her killer is a man. (p. 252)

At this point, it would have been useful if Allen could have linked some of her analysis with those of other feminist commentators

in this area. Jane Caputi's *The Age of Sex Crime*, for instance, would have been directly relevant here, given her central focus on the gendered nature of serial killings and her exposé of the ways in which sex is kept secret in this regard.[7] This is one of the weaknesses of Allen's work, for although her references suggest some familiarity with other relevant literature, she draws very few connections between her work and that of other contemporary scholars in these areas. While she does not claim to be a criminologist, her subject matter inevitably demands that her analysis be, to some extent, located in the context of current feminist criminological theory. The book would be stronger if such links had been made.

Allen's particular merits would seem to lie in her ability to research and present older historical material, and her treatment of the period from 1940 onwards seems to lack both the depth and breadth of her earlier sections. Although she does examine the issues of abortion, prostitution, rape and domestic violence in the contemporary setting, these seem to be handled in a more general manner and to lack the detail of her other accounts. Moreover, her omission of any discussion on recent disclosures in the area of child sexual abuse astounded me. This must be recognised as one of the most significant areas where previously 'secret sex' has now been uncovered and exposed, and it seems strange indeed that this issue was not given greater acknowledgment.

I was struck by other omissions also. Allen obviously has particular interests in the areas of abortion and prostitution, and more attention is given to these topics throughout the book than any other. What seemed to be lacking, however, was the establishing of the context within which such secrecy flourished. More analysis of attitudes towards sexuality in general, and women's sexuality in particular, would have been useful in providing a backdrop to her work. Also, if Allen is concerned to examine, as she says, illegal practices in relation to other options and alternatives, why is there no discussion of lesbianism as an option for women? To discuss the history of sexual relations without mentioning homosexuality or lesbianism, and any ways in which they have been associated with 'illicit practices', only serves to keep yet another area of sex 'secret'.

In some ways Allen's use of the word 'sex' is a little misleading at times. She writes in her introduction:

> Sex has been of central cultural significance in modern Australian history. Men and women have lived very different lives despite the common characteristics conferred by class, race, ethnicity, region, age and religion ... Sex counts. (p. 1)

However, much of what she is describing is perhaps more aptly entitled 'gender', and since a large part of her analysis concerns the gendered nature of sexual offending, it is probably advisable to keep these terms separate.

One further point is that, although sub-titled 'Crimes involving *Australian* women', virtually all of the primary source data used refers to women in New South Wales, and the question of the extent to which their experiences are similar to the experiences of women in other Australian states is never fully addressed.

Despite these criticisms, I consider *Sex and Secrets* to be an important book and one which helps to clarify and shed light on many previously 'secret' or obscured realities. It has been well-researched and referenced, and uses a rich variety of source materials to complement official statistics on crime. However, this is not only a book for those interested in illegal practices, for much of Allen's analysis is insightful in its treatment of broader issues concerning sexuality and power in our society. Elements of both conflict and co-operation characterise our recent social history, and the material presented here helps us to appreciate more clearly the complex processes involved in negotiations between the sexes. As such it also helps us to understand the outcomes when negotiations break down. Judith Allen has provided us not only with a window into the past, but also, in showing us how continual shifts and transformations occur in social relations, she has given us a kaleidoscope of the future.

Notes

1. Frances Heidensohn, 'The Deviance of Women', *British Journal of Sociology*, 19:2 (1968) p. 160.
2. For example, Loraine Gelsthorpe and Allison Morris (eds.), *Feminist Perspectives in Criminology* (Open University Press, Milton Keynes,

1990); and Regina Graycar (ed.), *Dissenting Opinions: Feminist Explorations in Law and Society* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1990).

3. Jan Robinson, 'Canterbury's Rowdy Women: Whores, Madonnas and Female Criminality', *Women's Studies Journal*, 1:1 (1984) pp. 6–25.
4. Freda Adler, *Sisters in Crime: The Rise of the New Female Criminal* (McGraw Hill, New York, 1975); and Rita James Simon, *Women and Crime* (D. C. Heath and Co., Lexington, Massachusetts, 1975).
5. Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1976).
6. Catharine MacKinnon, *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1987).
7. Jane Caputi, *The Age of Sex Crime* (Women's Press, London, 1987).

Jan Jordan, Criminology, Victoria University of Wellington
November 1991

Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View
Julie Glamuzina and Alison J. Laurie
New Women's Press, Auckland, 1991. $24.95

On 22 June 1954 in Christchurch, Juliet Hulme and Pauline Parker killed Honora Parker, Pauline's mother. They were aged fifteen and sixteen. The accounts of what came to be known as the Parker-Hulme case are now a part of New Zealand criminal history. The case has been called, at various times, the worst crime of the century and one of the strangest cases in New Zealand criminal history, and these media constructions have become etched on our collective lesbian identities.

This case has refused to go away. Since 1954 it has continued to re-emerge in places as diverse as crime writer Charles Franklin's *The World's Worst Murders* (which included Jack the Ripper and other mass murderers) and the bar of the Ramada Inn in Christchurch where Glamuzina and Laurie found newspaper clippings about the case preserved behind varnish in 1987.

Some lesbians have wanted the Parker-Hulme case to be left alone, and have questioned what could be achieved by opening up the discussion about it yet again. This book is not the only focus for this discussion, since the Court Theatre in Christchurch has staged *Daughters of Heaven*, a play based on the case in 1991.

Alison Laurie and Julie Glamuzina acknowledge the opposition to their book in their introduction: for me, the reasons why some want it forgotten are the reasons why it should not be, and why this account is important. I don't think I will be able to say the same thing about the play, but it doesn't purport to be a lesbian view (although it is reportedly non-judgmental, and it would be churlish of me to launch into a critique of how liberal humanist approaches merely provide a new form of oppression for lesbians).

Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View is an important account precisely because it is a lesbian account, a perspective which can still cause concern amongst some critics. Graeme Lay, for example, ends his review in *North and South* with the statement that 'this book sheds little new light on a case which remains one of the strangest in our criminal history. The best that can be said about *Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View* is that the reader can have no doubts whatsoever about the persuasion of its authors'.[1]

I'm pleased that there is no doubt, because how this case was handled by all concerned has had an impact on the lives of lesbians in New Zealand. Whether or not Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme were or were not lesbians is not the issue here. Indeed, Glamuzina and Laurie discuss the difficulties of imposing our contemporary definitions of what it is to be lesbian on two young women living in Christchurch in 1954. But while contemporary feminist theorists can identify how lesbianism is socially constructed, there remains a prurient interest in what lesbianism entails within the wider public sphere, if letters to the editor questioning whether Juliet and Pauline were lesbians and whether they still are today are any indication. Was it a phase they were going through ...? Again Graeme Lay says of Laurie and Glamuzina that: 'They do not even establish that the girls' relationship *was* a lesbian one, yet this is the very fulcrum on which the rest of the book balances' and 'as every parent knows, teenagers frequently form intense relationships with people of the same gender, and these are rarely homosexual'.[2]. In a letter to the *Listener*, A. Taylor claims that 'lesbianism is not a couple of adolescent girls having a crush on each other'.[3]

The 'very fulcrum on which the book balances' is not whether or not they were *actually* lesbian (although I believe, as the authors do, that they were); the issue is that they were portrayed as being so, and this was associated with being either evil or insane.[4] The

latter was the claim of the psychiatrist Reginald Medlicott, who provided a psychiatric evaluation for Juliet's defense and therefore also for Pauline. He considered that Juliet and Pauline suffered from 'paranoia of the exalted type in the setting of a simultaneous *folie a deux*'. Although this defense was rejected at the time of the trial Medlicott still continued to hold to his view in publications as recent as 1979. The finding from the trial was, in fact, that they were 'bad' not 'mad' and they were sentenced to detention at the discretion of the Minister of Justice. Today in 1991 they are still seen as 'bad' by some correspondents like A. Taylor who, writing in the *Listener*, suggests that:

> it was one of the worst New Zealand homicides of its time and had nothing to do with the fantasies of a couple of adolescent lesbians. They were *simply teenage delinquents* who didn't give a damn about anyone but themselves (my emphasis).[5]

This dichotomy of either 'madness' or 'badness' has been linked with lesbianism in New Zealand from this time on, and has had repercussions for all of us. More recently the labels of 'mad' or 'bad' have been central to the ideology of the New Christian Right as is witnessed by the emergence of groups such as Exodus and Right for Life which claim to 'cure' homosexuals (thus assuming that we are sick). But they suggest that this 'curing' will be difficult to achieve because the homosexual 'essence' will always be present somewhere within us and must be fought against continually. What is important now, as it was then, is that if the situation is defined as lesbian, then the consequences will be closely linked to this definition and therefore 'real' to those who are defined, either by themselves or by others, as lesbian.

In order to examine how the varying definitions of the situation were made in the Parker-Hulme case, Glamuzina and Laurie describe the historical and social context in which this murder occurred. They carefully show the Christchurch of the time, the situation of the two families, the trial, the imprisonment and the media amplification of the case. Following this they provide an analysis of why this murder could occur at this particular time and in this particular social context. Throughout their discussion the lives of Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme are portrayed in a much more complete way than in previous accounts.

The authors have been criticised in other media reviews for not attempting to contact either Hulme or Parker for their version of the situation. Glamuzina and Laurie discuss how they considered the ethics of writing about the case without interviewing the two women. Their views obviously changed over the period and in the end they decided not to intrude on the new identities that these women have assumed. They write:

> who were we to say which was the best solution to the question of whether or not to contact Juliet Hulme and Pauline Parker? We argued with each other and with ourselves about it, each of us changing our minds several times during the process. In the end we decided to do what we felt was best. We decided to limit our project to considering what happened at the time and not intrude into the new identities of Pauline Parker and Juliet Hulme in the present. We hope they will, sometime, write their own accounts.

Reading this book reminded me of what I was afraid of before I came 'out' publicly as a lesbian — the fact that to be lesbian was either to be deviant (bad) or sick (mad). For lesbians who are still 'hidden' the way that this case has kept emerging in a sensationalised way over the years is a reminder of these 'bad' and 'mad' labels and the way in which these labels continue to control women. I have found this demonstrated in my own research which is concerned with lesbianism and religion. The words of one lesbian highlight the impact of this case:

> I can remember as a child, the Parker-Hulme case, the two women who were lesbians that killed the other girl's mother, one of the girls' mother up in Victoria Park .... It was a big thing in 1954. I was only 10 years old then. I can remember that being a terrible thing, they were lesbians .... But Mum's brought it up several times, three or four times since I've been an adult. Through some article in the paper and I cringe every time she mentions it because of what they did, of what happened'.
>
> A: How does she normally bring it up?
>
> Only because she has read it in the *Women's Weekly* or the newspaper. She's brought it up because it has been there right in front of her, and her comments have been, you know, what a terrible thing, and she's been aghast about it. That they were lesbians! So that word 'lesbian' in the context of

> these people who were murderers ... possibly my feeling of the word 'lesbian' has come from that. (From the text of an interview conducted by Allison Kirkman.)

Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View makes compelling reading. It has found an audience and is already provoking discussion within lesbian communities. It will also demonstrate to our friends, our parents, our colleagues, and our students how the way this particular case was represented in the media has continued to influence our lives. Finally, it provides an opportunity for us to reflect on how much societal attitudes towards lesbians specifically, and women in general, have changed from the Christchurch of 1954 and how much they have remained the same.

Notes

1. Graeme Lay, 'Murder Most Mysterious', *North and South*, (November 1991) p. 121. See also Amanda Cropp 'A deadly scandal that rocked Christchurch society', *The Dominion Sunday Times* (October 20, 1991) p. 11; and Jim Tully, 'A Christchurch scandal revisited', *The Dominion Sunday Times* (October 27, 1991) p. 23.
2. Lay, p. 121.
3. A. Taylor, 'Parker-Hulme Murder' letter to the Editor, *Listener* (September 9, 1991) p. 9.
4. A. E. J. Fitchett, 'Parker-Hulme Murder', letter to the Editor, *Listener* (October 21, 1991) p. 14.
5. Taylor, p. 9.

Allison Kirkman, Sociology and Social Work, Victoria University of Wellington
October 1991

Working Girls: Women in the Sex Industry Talk to Jan Jordan
Jan Jordan
Penguin, Auckland, 1991. $29.95

Since the mid 1970s prostitution has attracted the attention of feminist sociologists, criminologists and historians. As a marginalised group prostitutes have been seen as epitomizing female exploitation and, furthermore, as the essential 'other' of that most enduring of stereotypes: the madonna/whore duality. Feminist

historians have occasionally been guilty of perpetuating this stereotype: examples of this can be found in work on Australian convict women by Anne Summers and Miriam Dixson.[1] Writers such as Portia Robinson, in Australia, have suggested that an uncritical acceptance of the madonna/whore paradigm by commentators has led to a tendency to oversimplify the diversity of experience among women who have breached society's legal or moral codes.[2]

Working Girls, Jan Jordan's study of New Zealand sex workers, provides ample evidence that women who work as prostitutes do not form a homogeneous group. The book consists of transcribed interviews conducted by Jordan with seventeen sex workers. Jordan's commentary is mainly confined to a short introduction and conclusion. The interviewed women discuss their family backgrounds and their educational and work experiences, and explain what drew them to prostitution. They also talk about their experiences as sex workers and the effect of their work upon their personal lives. The diversity shown by these women, in terms of socio-economic and ethnic origins, education, and attitudes to their work, negates the simplistic stereotypes often associated with prostitution.

Feminists have argued that prostitution exploits women on a number of levels. Women are forced into prostitution because patriarchal structures ensure that women remain economically subordinate, with their life choices necessarily limited. Furthermore, the act of selling one's body is seen by feminists as the ultimate form of objectification.

However, while many of the women stated that the prospect of earning large sums of money drew them to prostitution, not all of the women were forced into sex work by financial necessity. Furthermore, judging by the accounts in *Working Girls*, pimps are relatively rare in the New Zealand sex industry. Sex workers here are therefore less likely to be directly exploited by males than are their counterparts overseas.

Exceptions to this can be found in massage or rap parlours. Many of the women relate stories of parlour owners who expect workers to provide them with free sex, and one woman spoke of owners who supply women with drugs in order to increase the worker's dependence on prostitution and on the parlour

itself. Moreover, some of the women describe relationships with husbands or partners which can only be described as exploitative.

Jordan seems reluctant to draw a conclusion on the question of exploitation and argues that some of the women felt they were exploiting their clients. Yet as one of the women, 'Sarah', remarked, 'You see yourself as exploiting *them* more than them exploiting you. You have to see them that way, or you couldn't do it otherwise' (p. 32). Sarah's comment suggests that the working girl's view of the customer as an object of exploitation may be no more than a comforting illusion.

In her introduction, Jordan states that the idea that all prostitutes 'crave drugs' forms part of the societal stereotype associated with sex workers. Jordan argues that the link between drugs and prostitution is strong for some women but not for others. Very few of the women featured in *Working Girls* sought work as prostitutes in order to finance a drug habit. Nevertheless, almost half of the women interviewed mentioned that they used drugs, and many of the women commented that drug abuse was widespread in the sex industry.

Modern commentators often argue that prostitutes are frequently victims of childhood sexual abuse. In her conclusion, Jordan agrees that sexual abuse is common among sex workers, but she maintains that, since sexual abuse in childhood is widespread in our society, and the majority of abused women do not become prostitutes early childhood abuse cannot be regarded as a common factor in women's decision to enter the sex industry. This contention sheds little light, however, on the correlation between sexual abuse and prostitution which is apparent in *Working Girls*.

Despite the existence of recurring elements (such as early sexual abuse and later drug use) in many of the women's accounts, the women display a wide range of perceptions and attitudes to their work. Although some of the women describe their feelings for their clients and their role as sex workers in very negative terms, others do not. 'Julia' states that she feels love for her clients, and her account suggests that she enjoys her work. 'Victoria' sees herself as a counsellor or therapist and believes that she offers a valuable and necessary service. 'Hillary' remarks that 'Essentially you're there as a service industry. It doesn't matter whether you're a waitress or

a prostitute or a typist — you're still doing things for other people' (p. 112).

The view that prostitution should be regarded as an occupational choice rather than a pejorative moral designation underlies many of the women's stories and is reinforced by Jordan in her conclusion. *Working Girls* shows that sex work incorporates a number of specializations which offer distinct work experiences. A sex worker's experiences may range from working on the streets, to working in a parlour, to working as an escort or being maintained as a mistress by a sugar daddy. These variations encompass a multitude of advantages and disadvantages, and each has its own code of conduct and its own subculture. Moreover, as Jordan points out in her conclusion, sex workers move freely across this range of work opportunities.

Yet many of the women in Jordan's study found it difficult to move into other kinds of paid employment. Not only is the income derived from prostitution 'addictive', but the enormous stigma associated with sex work ensures that women have trouble presenting a satisfactory work history to prospective employers. Some of the women with children expressed great sadness that the stigma attached to their work had affected their children. 'Tracey Lee' remarked that 'You have to live with the stigma. Very few young women can cope with society looking down on them' (p. 225).

Some of the women suggested that the attitude of feminists to sex work is also informed by this stigma. 'Hillary' remarked that, despite the fact that feminists were trying to change social barriers and people's perceptions of women, they still adopted 'this good girl/bad girl policy when it comes to their cousins, the prostitutes'. 'Hillary' argued that sex workers, as a group, are among those most in need of the support that feminists can offer. In her conclusion, Jordan points out that sex workers are not the only women who barter their femininity for economic gain in the work place, since 'women's structural powerlessness' ensures that it is difficult for women to avoid using their sexuality as a means of redressing the power balance. In this context, *Working Girls* challenges feminists to reassess their views on prostitution and women working in the sex industry.

It was clearly Jordan's intention to allow the women to speak for themselves in *Working Girls*. To this end the book is almost entirely constituted of the women's stories, and the analysis presented in the conclusion is brief. Jordan's observations are extremely pertinent and provide a valuable counterpoint to the women's stories. I felt that the concluding chapter could have been extended to allow a greater depth of discussion. While many of the individual accounts in *Working Girls* are memorable, the reader is left with an imprecise overall impression of women's experiences in the sex industry. A more lengthy concluding chapter might have drawn these disparate impressions more sharply into focus and could have amplified rather than distracted from the voices of the 'working girls'.

Nonetheless, Jordan has facilitated an unprecedented insight into the lives of New Zealand sex workers. The diversity among the women who speak in this book provides a telling refutation of the binary madonna/whore paradigm and may serve to promote a wider understanding of the reasons why women enter and continue to work in the sex industry. As such, *Working Girls* will be of interest to those involved in the general field of women's studies and will also provide valuable source material for research into women's criminology and prostitution.

Notes

1. Miriam Dixson, *The Real Matilda: Women and Identity in Australia, 1788 to the Present* (rev. ed., Penguin, Ringwood, Victoria, 1984); Anne Summers, *Dammed Whores and God's Police: The Colonization of Women in Australia* (Penguin, Ringwood, Victoria, 1975).
2. Portia Robinson, *The Hatch and Brood of Time: a study of the first generation of native-born white Australians* (Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985). See also Charlotte Macdonald, 'Crime and Punishment in New Zealand, 1840–1913: A Gendered History', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 23:1 (1989), pp. 5–21; and Jan Robinson, 'The Oldest Profession', in Shelagh Cox (ed.), *Public and Private Worlds: Women in Contemporary New Zealand* (Allen and Unwin, Wellington, 1986) pp. 177–92.

Shayleen Thompson, History, University of Auckland
October 1991

The Menopause Industry: A Guide to Medicine's 'Discovery' of the Mid-life Woman
Sandra Coney
Penguin, Auckland, 1991. $29.95

In *The Menopause Industry*, Sandra Coney gives us a comprehensive account of the medical view of menopause. She outlines how menopause has moved, over the past thirty years, from a natural life event, virtually ignored by the medical profession, to a condition that forms the basis of a huge pharmaceutical and diagnostic industry. As a consequence, women are encouraged to think of menopause in terms of preventable and treatable diseases.

I wanted to read this book because I am interested in the medicalisation of pregnancy and childbirth — the first area of women's health that medicine discovered. Although my menopause is not imminent, the book made me re-evaluate my own images of menopausal and post-menopausal women. Despite finding Coney's discussion of the politics of menopause depressing, I was able to feel more positive about myself as a woman who will enter mid-life in the future.

The Menopause Industry is divided into five parts. Coney begins with an outline of the general politics of health which affect mid-life women. She discusses some interesting issues, for example, the 'illusion of choice', when the choices are pre-given, when the information women receive is limited, and when aging in women carries such negative connotations. She also points out how a concern with 'preventative health' leads to the preoccupation with potential ill-health. In Chapter 2, Coney gives a social profile of mid-life women. Who are they? And what are they like? To help answer these questions she draws on statistical data, media images, and how women themselves feel about menopause and aging.

In the second and third parts of the book, Coney examines the history and politics of the most common form of treatment for menopause, hormone replacement therapy (HRT), and considers the way in which osteoporosis has come to the fore as a major disease facing women. By highlighting these two critical areas, Coney is able to show how menopause has been provided with a new construction.

The fourth part of the book covers the pros and cons of HRT in the form of a detailed appraisal of the available medical literature. She questions its findings in terms of the effectiveness of HRT in delivering what is promised, and in terms of the risks it carries for women using it. This information is offered as the basis on which women make their own decisions. However, in 'Mostly good news about hormones', she comes out strongly against the long term use of HRT and shows that the research is inconclusive about its efficiency in alleviating the problematic effects of menopause.

The final section of *The Menopause Industry* covers the screening programmes for breast and cervical cancer. Coney focuses on the New Zealand context while also reviewing international medical literature on screening programmes. These two chapters are brief, and I found them somewhat frightening. Again Coney's approach is to provide women with the information that is available, to help them understand the medical diagnosis and treatment of these cancers, and to enable them to make their own decisions. She does not cover the treatment for advanced breast and cervical cancer, but then her interest is in how those aspects of menopause and aging, which could just as easily be seen in terms of wellness, have become indicators of disease in the medical discourse.

Coney ends the book with a call for women to become more aware of the power interests that surround the 'menopause industry', so that we can resist it, both individually and collectively.

Throughout *The Menopause Industry*, Coney uses a combination of different kinds of analyses. She explores how language, images and the system of medical knowledge shapes the meanings we give to menopause. She shows how these are constructed and used by the commercial and professional interests in medicine, and how they arise out of, and reinforce, gender relations in our society. To test the claims and the effects on women's lives of the menopause industry, Coney uses empirical evidence, both statistical and personal accounts. She seeks to write, not from the position of the 'studier', but of the 'studied' who need access to medical research in order to empower themselves.

I found Coney's writing style lively and engaging. Like *The Unfortunate Experiment*, *The Menopause Industry* took on for me, at times, the quality of a mystery story, as she unravelled the threads that lead to the medicalisation of menopause.

Unlike other books that are critical of the medicalisation of menopause, *The Menopause Industry* is not a self-help book in the traditional sense of promoting alternative therapies to keep women looking and feeling younger (although she does include a useful review of the medical research into the lifestyle factors such as exercise, diet, weight and smoking). Instead Coney's main concern is with the complex reality of the experiences of mid-life women in which the menopause industry plays a critical role. She shows how the decisions women face about their health are difficult because medicine offers both potential benefits and potential harm.

I found this book very useful for making comparisons between the processes which surrounded the medicalisation of childbirth and those which have given rise to the medicalisation of menopause. It indicates how the politics of health has changed in the course of this century. The locus of control has shifted from an alliance between professional medical interests and the state, to an alliance of world-wide commercial and professional interests. I highly recommend *The Menopause Industry* to all women who want to make informed decisions on mid-life health issues and to women and men who are involved in health politics. I also think this book has a very important place on university courses in feminist studies and health.

Rea Dallenbach, Sociology, University of Canterbury
January 1992

Disputed Ground: Robin Hyde, Journalist
Introduced and selected by Gillian Boddy and Jacqueline Matthews
Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1991. $34.95

Annie Dillard tells a story about a student who asked a writer:

> 'Do you think I could be a writer?'
> 'Well,' the writer said, 'I don't know .... Do you like sentences?'[1]

Iris Wilkinson liked sentences. Reading this selection of her journalism, I stopped often to read 'the good bits' aloud. 'Novitia', 'Taffy' (on *Truth's* Women's Page), 'Margot' (for the *Wanganui Chronicle*), 'the lady editor', and 'Robin Hyde' all turned a

good phrase, despite the huge range of their subject-matter. She grumbled privately at writing about fashion, but that didn't stop her enjoying writing:

> Scarves are sensational. You can do with them just anything. They're like a vain man or a bit of plasticine. When you're tired of them one way, you give them a twist and there they are, altogether different [...] You can even roll them up tightly and use them as a narrow belt. I daresay they might be used for strangulation. (p. 96)

When she expressed her impatience directly, on other topics, the prose was snappy:

> I suppose the Plunket movement will be indignantly advanced as an exemplification of what the New Zealand woman has done and can do, but to me, full-grown people are quite as interesting as their offspring, and I cannot see the point of a well-groomed infant population if its conditions are going to fall asunder the moment it reaches adolescence. (p. 191)

Even John Mulgan, who found much to criticise, acknowledged the quality of much of *Journalese*, the book Hyde professed to despise: 'a lot of cheapjacks and crudity', he wrote, but 'with poetry coming out of it all the time' (p. 99). The selection in *Disputed Ground*, perhaps more than her fiction, may make us see Hyde as a writer more than she was anything else. It's not all great, but there's a powerful sense that language was her medium, and that she moved in it like a bird in flight.

Despite the fact that Hyde spent much of her working life trying to struggle off the 'ladies' pages, *Disputed Ground* contains pieces on many subjects. There are eyebrows, mud-packs, and backless bathing costumes, but there are also articles on women's unemployment in the 1930s, New Zealand's newspaper history (from *Journalese*), faith-healers and other quacks, communists, 'New Zealand authoresses', prescription drugs, the evictions from Orakei, unmarried mothers, and, of course, the war in China: much more than one review can do justice to.

In part this collection is welcome for the disruption of our idea of what we would sometimes, I think, like Hyde to be. She seems so often to be a woman-ahead-of-her-time, already in the 1930s a socialist feminist in the sense that we now understand that term.

She *was* that in many respects, and this book, especially in the articles on unemployment, Orakei and China, shows how startling her analyses could be. But her politics, as Jacquie Matthews points out, are not so easy to pin down. Reading this collection, it seemed to me that we cannot ignore the fact that she was also *of* her time, produced, admittedly less than most, by contemporary ideals of femininity and, if uneasily, engaged in their production too.

The book contains two introductory essays. The first, by Gillian Boddy, is biographical, and the second, by Jacqueline Matthews, is a critical introduction to the journalism. There are points where the essays overlap, which I found occasionally irritating, but some of this repetition I suspect was unavoidable. Although the two essays make for a slightly cumbersome structure it does, on the whole, work. The biographical essay might seem oddly placed in a selection of journalism: in this case, it's not. It matters, reading Hyde's article on veronal, that she was taking it herself; that when she wrote about unmarried motherhood, her own experience of it was so anguished. It matters, reading the wit, the trivia and the passion, that it all poured out of a woman whose best refuge was a mental hospital and who killed herself at thirty-three. Gillian Boddy writes with warmth and sympathy, offering us a Hyde who was an intense mixture of courage and fearfulness, of brave actions and the painful endurance of their consequences, who, in making a self in an environment that simply wasn't expecting her, almost inevitably became a casualty. ('That's our Iris', said an acquaintance, hearing that she had disappeared in the war zone in China.) Both Boddy and Matthews have a good eye for an anecdote, making their selections from letters as good as their selection of the journalism. Hyde's desire to change the world, and her ironic view of that desire, are nicely caught in the following, for example:

> In another attempt to reform the world a little later [Hyde] suggested to Ron Holloway and Aroha Hardcastle that they should lead a procession down Queen Street 'rending our garments, beating our breasts, and crying "Yerps! Yerps! Yerps!". That being our view as a whole of the modern world and its peoples ... we tried it out walking up by Grafton cemetery'. (pp. 57–8)

Jacquie Matthews' essay contextualises Hyde's journalism in a way that greatly enriches our readings of it. Opening with the objections of *Mirror* editor Otto Williams that her articles on the war in China are insufficiently sexational ('You are also inclined to overlook the fact that you are a woman travelling among thousands of men and there must be hundreds of intimate touches, both pleasant and unpleasant, which would be of interest to readers'), it lays bare the exigencies of working in and living by journalism, especially for a woman. There is a glimpse here of a local version of what Sylvia Lawson and Naomi Wolf have written about, in their different ways: of newspapers as vast, deeply self-contradictory texts, their relations to their readership and to their own copy profoundly compromised by their relations to their owners and their advertisers.[2] The woman journalist had little freedom of movement. Hyde wrote that there were 'only two things wrong with the women journalists in this country ... they are underpaid ... [and] they aren't given enough scope' (p. 189). The usefulness of Matthews' essay lies in part in the way it shows that although Hyde did write widely, especially towards the end of her career, her ability to do so was a hard-won privilege. One of the strengths of the collection is that it provides a view of a remarkable career while also showing all that struggle. 'With rare audacity,' wrote John A. Lee in an obituary for her, 'she limped out into the midst of the war in China ...'. That 'rare audacity' characterised her life and her career.

Notes

1. Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life* (Harper & Row, New York, 1989) p. 70.
2. Sylvia Lawson, *The Archibald Paradox* (1983; rpt. Penguin, Melbourne, 1987); Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (Chatto & Windus, London, 1990).

Annabel Cooper, Dunedin
January 1992

Other Books Received

Gill Ellis and Jenny Wheeler, *Women Managers: Success on Our Own Terms* (Penguin, Auckland, 1991). $29.95.

Sol Encel and Dorothy Campbell, *Out of the Doll's House — Women in the Public Sphere* (Longman Chesire, Melbourne, 1991). $44.95.

Jane Mills, *Womanwords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Patriarchal Society* (Longman, Harlow, U.K., 1989). $64.95.

Beryl Fletcher, *The Word Burners* (Daphne Brassell Associates, Wellington, 1991). $19.95.

Marion McLeod, *Doreen Blumhardt: Teacher and Potter* (Daphne Brassell Associates, Wellington, 1991). $21.95.

Women's Studies in New Zealand: A List of Current Research

Compiled by Bronwyn Dalley

The list of current research is a new and ongoing feature of the *Women's Studies Journal*. We believe that a register of women's expertise and fields of interest will be a valuable resource for researchers interested in establishing links with others working in similar areas in their own or other disciplines whether inside or outside academic institutions. The list is compiled on an as-received basis and is open to anyone engaged in feminist research. New or revised entries are welcome and should be sent to Bronwyn Dalley, History Department, University of Otago, Box 56, Dunedin.

Armstrong, Nicola Sociology Department, Massey University, Palmerston North. My current research interests focus on feminist theory and research, women's paid and unpaid labour, outwork, the New Zealand state, the treatment and screening of cervical cancer, and youth policy.

Barratt, Alexandra English Department, Waikato University, Hamilton. Women's texts in Middle English; medieval women mystics; renaissance women's texts in English; feminist literary history; women and translation.

Barwell, Ismay Philosophy Department, Victoria University, Wellington. I am interested in any area of feminist theory, but especially aesthetics, literary theory, epistemology, and the intersection between feminism and postmodernism.

Bouterey, Susan Asian Languages Department, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Research interests focus on modern Japanese writers, in particular post-war Japanese women writers. Currently working on a PhD which will analyze various

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imagery and dream symbolism in the writing of Tsushima Yuko (1947–). Also completing an English translation of her award winning collection of short stories *Hikari no Ryoburn* (Sphere of Light).

Cheyne, Christine Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, Palmerston North. Examining the impacts of social policy on women, a feminist theory of the state, and public sector restructuring.

Cooper, Annabel 121 Stafford St, Dunedin. Feminist literary and cultural criticism. Women's autobiography and biography: I have recently edited the autobiography of Mary Isabella Lee. Critiques, especially feminist, of representations of war in New Zealand and Australia.

Dalley, Bronwyn History Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. Research interests include women's crime and punishment in the nineteenth century, principally women's imprisonment, women's participation in violent crime, 'kleptomania', and representations of female offenders.

Dalziel, Raewyn History Department, University of Auckland. Current research examines aspects of women's history in nineteenth-century New Zealand, particularly women and politics, especially political organisations, and women, marriage and reproduction.

D'Cruz, Doreen English Department, Massey University, Palmerston North. Women's sexuality in fiction; representations of mother-daughter relationships; representations of female madness; psychoanalytic approaches to women's writing.

Devere, Heather Political Studies Department, University of Auckland. I am writing a doctorate on the attitudes of groups of women to specific political issues current during the term of the Fourth Labour Government. These issues include abortion, the death penalty, censorship, corporal punishment, homosexual law reform and nuclear weapons. I am interested in seeing how their attitudes on each issue relate to their attitudes on other issues, and the relationship between

these attitudes and the subject's partisanship, identification with feminism and socio-economic background.

Duder, Karen History Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. Interests include the interaction of gender and ideology, with particular reference to the cults of domesticity and respectability, the history of domestic service in New Zealand, the history of the family and the internal structures of families, and women's oral history.

Duke, Elizabeth Classics Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. Women in the Greek and Roman world, particularly women in religion.

Else, Anne Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington. Currently editor of a forthcoming history of women's organizations in New Zealand—Nga Roopu Wāhine O te Motu.

Herda, Phyllis History Department, Victoria University, Wellington. My research interests concentrate, geographically, in Western Polynesia. Generally I am interested in how the past is culturally constructed and the place of oral tradition in that construction. I am also committed to a study of gender relations and women's history in the area and, in particular, to the connections between the island groups.

Hill, Linda Labour Studies Unit, University of Auckland. Interested in socialist feminist theory, the connections between patriarchy, capitalism and racism, feminist research methodology and women's paid and unpaid work. Also interested in the global gender division of labour, the effects on women of (un)development, and 'New Times'. Currently researching unions organizing the female dominated occupations, such as nursing, cleaning and clerical work, in the context of current economic and labour relations changes—an arena for New Zealand feminist struggle.

Holmes, Janet Department of Linguistics, Victoria University, Wellington. Aspects of language, including language and

gender, sociolinguistics, social dialectology, and language maintenance and shift.

Ip, Man-Ying Department of Asian Languages and Literature, University of Auckland. Currently examining the role of Chinese women in the New Zealand Chinese community.

Irwin, Kathie Education Department, Victoria University, Wellington. Research focuses on education and Maori women, particularly women, education and academia, Maori education and multicultural education, Maori women and Maori Women's Studies, and theories of Maori feminisms.

Johnson, Jane English Department, Dunedin College of Education. I am currently involved in writing up a dissertation for a graduate diploma on 'The History of the Otago Family Planning Association'. Particular focus will be given to the most influential founding member, Phyllis Turner. I have also been involved in researching gender/teacher interaction at a large Dunedin secondary co-educational school in 1989.

Jones, Alison Education Department, University of Auckland. Research focuses on postmodernism and feminist research in education, the implications of postmodern feminism, and the politics of accessibility in writing research.

Jordan, Jan Institute of Criminology, Victoria University, Wellington. Women's involvement in the New Zealand sex industry; women as offenders and victims of crime.

Kerr, Elizabeth Jane Design Studies, Consumer Sciences Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. Current reading: contemporary form and philosophy of postmodern architecture and design. Research activity: occupying philosophical positions, as deriving from European poststructuralist thought and the evolving women's movement in life, literature and architecture.

Kirkman, Allison Department of Sociology and Social Work, Victoria University, Wellington. My research interests are centred

around the use of feminist sociological theories and methodologies. The substantive area I am working in includes lesbian identity and experience, women and religion, and women and deviance.

Labrum, Bronwyn History Department, Victoria University, Wellington. Women's history and the history of gender in Aotearoa/New Zealand, specifically in the areas of suffrage and the history of feminism, and the social history of health. I am beginning a PhD on the Pakeha family in twentieth-century New Zealand.

Langston, Marian School of Physical Education, University of Otago, Dunedin. My research interest is women's bodies and how we experience them, or live in or through them. I am particularly interested in active bodies rather than in passive bodies, that is, the way we live our bodies rather than how others see us. Current research is concerned with the physical experience of pregnancy and what it is like to be pregnant. It involves unstructured interviews with women during and after their pregnancies with the aim of both collecting these experiences and empowering the women themselves by sharing my knowledge as a mother and academic. A sideline at this stage is how elite sportswomen experience their bodies.

Lapsley, Hilary Centre for Women's Studies, Waikato University, Hamilton. Mentoring in women's lives; battered women and domestic protection.

Lewis, Ngaire Management Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. My PhD is a critique of Western logocentricism employing feminist epistemology with specific reference to empiricism. Poststructuralism is my guiding perspective from which I address the problems of attempting to develop alternative frameworks for both theory and practice.

Macdonald, Charlotte History Department, Victoria University, Wellington. Research interests include the history of women in New Zealand/Aotearoa in general, the history of women's

sport, recreation and leisure, and domestic servants and domestic service in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

Malthus, Jane Clothing, Consumer and Applied Sciences, University of Otago, Dunedin. My major research interest is women's dress in nineteenth-century New Zealand, specifically how European women adapted their clothing to the conditions they found and the impact of the European presence on Maori women's dress. I am also involved in research on the size and shape of New Zealanders, especially in relation to garment sizing.

Matthews, Kay Morris Centre for Women's Studies, Waikato University, Hamilton. Feminist history; feminist biography; New Zealand Women's Studies Curriculum Development.

McKenzie-Davidson, Margaret Consumer Studies Department, Faculty of Consumer and Applied Sciences, University of Otago, Dunedin. Research interests include deferred motherhood, work/family linkages and barriers, social policy and the family, and feminist social work.

Munford, Robyn Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University, Palmerston North. Currently involved in researching women's experiences of caregiving, especially as these relate to the issue of disability, and examining current policies in Aotearoa for people with disabilities. Also researching the changes in social serice delivery in Aotearoa, with a particular focus on education and training opportunities for women.

Nolan, Melanie Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington. I am a feminist labour historian with a particular interest in women and work in the twentieth century. My PhD was on the feminisation of white collar work in Australia and I am revising chapters for publication. I am currently working on two articles on women and work in New Zealand and I am also researching a book on women, subsistence and the New Zealand welfare state in the twentieth century.

Nunn, Pamela Gerrish School of Fine Arts, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Nineteenth-century female artists, including works by British women in this country; Frances Hodgkins (1869–1947); images of race/representation of race.

Pringle, Judith Department of Management Studies and Labour Relations, University of Auckland, Auckland. My research interests focus on feminist critiques of management and organisational theory, women in organisations, women managers, women's life path development, diversity in organisations, and organisational culture.

Scott Melton, Vivienne Feminist Studies, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, and Women's Studies, University of Otago, Dunedin. My current research is on the practice of heterosexual cohabitation in New Zealand. I am also interested in postmodern feminist theories of power and subjectivity, feminist theories of the state, and public policy particularly in the areas of education, welfare and health.

Shepheard, Carole School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland. Currently involved in 'Mainstreaming Women's Art?'—Is this the place to be?, art practice by women, art and politics, and women's visual diaries.

Simpson, Adrienne P.O. Box 28-074, Wellington 5. My research centres on women in the performing arts. I am interested in music and theatre in nineteenth-century New Zealand, where women were able to make a particular mark. I have just finished a number of oral history interviews with New Zealand women who have become international opera singers.

Vodanovich, Ivanica Department of Sociology, University of Auckland. Third World development and the place of women's programmes; women, fundamentalism and social change; women's magazines in New Zealand—the construction of a genre.

Waldron, Bridget History Department, University of Otago, Dunedin. Currently researching the response to feminism in New Zealand, c. 1880–1920. Focus includes the representation of feminists, with particular emphasis on stereotyping.

Walton, Val Higher Education Development Centre, University of Otago, Dunedin. Currently involved in research on women's health and very interested in research methodologies.

Wittman, Livia Z. Feminist Studies, University of Canterbury, Christchurch. My research centres on feminist literary criticism and feminist theory.

Yeatman, Anna Centre for Women's Studies, Waikato University, Hamilton. Feminist theory; state and public policy; globalisation and restructuring; reconstructing the public sphere and the polity.

Information for Authors

The *Women's Studies Journal* welcomes contributions from a wide range of feminist positions and disciplinary backgrounds. It has a primary, but not exclusive, focus on women's studies in New Zealand. We encourage papers which address women's experience, explore gender as a category of analysis and further feminist theory and debate.

All manuscripts will be sent out for anonymous reviewing with the aim of providing the author with feedback and constructive suggestions.

Enquiries about the *Journal* and contributions only should be sent to:

Women's Studies Journal
Women's Studies
Department of English
University of Otago
P.O. Box 56
Dunedin

Please send two double-spaced copies, with generous margins. A separate title page should include the title and the author's name and address. Since contributions will not be returned authors should retain a copy of their work. A style sheet is available on request.

Women's Studies Association (NZ) (Inc.)

The 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 (GST incl.).

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.

WHAT IS WOMEN'S STUDIES?

Contributions by Kay Morris Matthews, Anna Yeatman, Jenny Neale, Noeline Alcorn, Jill Chrisp, Hinematau McNeill, and Jacquie Matthews. Prue Hyman: Income Adequacy for Older Women; Anna Smith: Women in the Beehive.

Interviews with Aroha Hohepera Rereti-Croft.
Listing of Current Research; Reviews of Recent Books.