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Editorial: Congruity and Controversy

PHYLLIS HERDA, March 1997

The articles included in this first issue of 1997 reflect the absorbing and varied array of contributions received by the *Women's Studies Journal* editorial collective during 1996. Eluned Summers-Bremner discusses the way in which modern dance is gendered in Aotearoa/New Zealand and how audiences relate to or distance themselves from dance performances. How Maori women are represented in historical texts is examined by Siobhan McKimmey. Vickie Hearnshaw chronicles the life and work of New Zealand photographer Jessie Buckland, who worked in the South Island late last and early this century. Judith Galtry investigates the link between breastfeeding and parental leave in this country. Ettie Rout and issues of professionalism in nursing around the First World War are considered by Jan A. Rodgers. Also included in this issue are two poems which explore a tie between insects and women by Meta Assink. The issue is set off by Alexis Louise Neal's stunning artwork, 'Tāwhiri', which graces the cover.

Paulette Benton's essay, 'Feminist Ethnography: On the Politics of Doing Research on Women' was selected by a committee of the editorial collective as the winner of the Student Essay Competition. Benton, a University of Auckland M.A. student, debates ethical issues of participant observation research in the context of her own employment in the New Zealand cafe and restaurant environment. Her essay is published here. An array of interesting essays were considered by the committee who were impressed with the nature of the entries as well as the enthusiasm of their authors. The competition is open to Stage III undergraduate and first-year graduate students enrolled at a New Zealand university or polytechnic. Entries for the 1998 Student Essay Competition should reach the editorial collective by 31 December 1997.[1]

Reports from participants at the Women's Studies Association Conference held at Massey University, Palmerston North in February 1997 indicate that the diversity and quality of the presentations were outstanding and that the Conference was a great success. Annabel

Cooper's presentation on the intersection of feminism and the sexual abuse debate as depicted in Felicity Goodyear-Smith's *First Do No Harm* and Camille Guy's 'Feminism and Sexual Abuse: Troubled Thoughts on Some New Zealand Issues' is published here. Cooper raises issues in need of public debate.

Responses to the commentary 'The Nineties ... Men in Women's Space' published last year in the *Women's Studies Journal* 12:2 have been divided – like the discussion of the same in the editorial collective and, I understand, the debate and vote in the AGM of the Women's Studies Association Conference. An interesting observation was that the *Journal* has, in fact, already published contributions from males, with the inclusion of a co-authored article, as well as several photographs made by men.[2] The vote at the Association Conference AGM was close (a narrow margin of one vote for the *Journal* to remain 'women's only space'), with the decision to reconsider the issue at the next Association Conference. The present editorial collective will reflect the outcome of the vote at the AGM and continue with our present policy of publishing only the work of women. However, this should not be read as a lack of appreciation of the problematic nature of the debate by the collective, nor an end to the discussion.

NOTES

1 Send entries to: Student Essay Competition, Women's Studies Department, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland.

2 Alice, Lynne, Jeff Home, Sarah Williams and Caroline McCaw, 'Sex Times Technology Equals? Feminist Practices on the Internet', *Women's Studies Journal*, 10:1 (1994) pp. 127-139. See also the comments of Lynne Alice, 'Think Tank: The Nineties...Men in Women's Space', *Feminist Studies in Aotearoa Journal* (FMST), 53, (15 November 1996).

Talking Dancing:
Choreographing the Audience in Some Recent Dance Work in Aotearoa

ELUNED SUMMERS-BREMNER

> The dancer who expresses herself by dance steps understands no other eloquence, even that of gesture.[1] (Mallarmé)
>
> Dancing is talking
> Talking is dancing[2] (Dunn)

DANCE, THE FEMALE BODY, AND DEATH: Western cultural traditions

It is no secret that in Western culture dance is a feminised art form.[3] Traditionally associated in the popular mind with artifice and masquerade, loose morals and the rampant display of unclothed flesh, the feminisation of Western theatre dance is also a product of mid-nineteenth-century classical dance history, in which the female ballet dancer was fetishised as a sign of passion strictly controlled in the culture at large. Susan Foster has documented the way in which industrial capitalism 'supported and enhanced the objectified dancing body and the commodified female dancer' so that ballerinas were pitted 'one ... against another in intensive, objectifying advertising campaigns' and became the focus of viewer criticism.[4] The introduction of the proscenium stage in the mid-seventeenth century marked the onset of a 'pictorial aesthetic' by which the dancing body, and particularly the female body, was increasingly scrutinised in relation to a set of stylised, ideal bodily forms.[5] In Foster's words, 'dance, with its concern for bodily display, its evanescent form, and its resistance to the verbal, distinguished itself as overwhelmingly feminine in nature'.[6]

Dance's 'femininity', then, resides in the way in which its deployment of the body provokes viewer response, including verbal response, while remaining outside the realm of language itself.[7] Feminist film theory, indebted to the insights of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, has made familiar this aesthetic model, in which pleasure is achieved through viewing bodies which function as a

representation of our lack and so confirm us as whole beings, since we project our fears and desires onto them while they do not similarly 'speak back' to us.[8] In carving up the body of the female ballet dancer for viewer consumption and in publicising dancers as sexual commodities the traditions of Western theatre dance satisfy the viewer with masculine-coded pleasures.

The tendency to see Western concert dance as an otherworldly art form and by association as feminised and inarticulate, protects audiences from knowledge of the ways in which their own bodies are implicated in theatrical performance. As Valerie Rimmer observes, also drawing on psychoanalytic notions: 'the performing body acts as a place where the audience fantasises at the level of represented image using it as a type of mirror that allows for the transformation of the everyday'.[9] It is in this context and with the help of psychoanalytic theory that I wish to consider the current practice of 'talking dancing', dancers speaking to the audience in their contemporary performances in Aotearoa. Although by no means new, this practice has emerged recently on numerous occasions, and in this paper I will specifically consider three of these.

Although modernist and postmodernist forms of dance have articulated a growing awareness of the politics of dance reception, the equation between women, dance and the inarticulate crystallised in the lines from Mallarmé in the epigraph above remains a central problematic for contemporary dance. The classicist, ballet model of audience and performers in which there is a rigid separation of the two upheld by the belief that they inhabit different worlds, with dancers on the side of the mysterious and ineffable and audiences inhabiting the quotidian, seems to be alive and well in Aotearoa today. It can be seen in the reluctance of dance-goers to comment on contemporary dance performance, a reluctance which does not extend as greatly to other art forms such as literature, drama and music. The view that dance is a language which resists verbal explanation is often used as a claim for the unique status of dance, yet its flipside is that dance, seen as being outside of spoken language, becomes the repository of those things about which Western culture does not wish to speak. In classical ballet the idealisation of the ballerina serves to mask an enactment of the symbolic processes in which Western capitalist society is constituted and by which death is denied. In classic Romantic ballets the spectacle of woman appears as sign of (male) mortality

– the swan queen, the sylph, the mad peasant girl who returns as death-dealing spectre.[10] As Elizabeth Dempster describes her, the balletic heroine is: 'the unraveler of the social order, the unmaker of categories ... the seducer who draws man away from his social duties'.[11]

The figure of the ballerina, aligned with death and the forces of social disruption, becomes, in a feminist psychoanalytic reading, a sign of the inert maternal body which pre-exists language and forms its material ground. The body signalling death is the mother's which, upon the child's recognition of its loss, heralds the fear of a return to origin: mortality. This fear is played out in veiled fashion in the grand narratives of the classic Romantic ballets, where the ballerina becomes a phallic object par excellence, signifying the dream of immortality (the wili, the swan queen, the sylph) which stands against the masculine-articulated terror of death and irreversible privation.[12] Foster observes that in the nineteenth century:

> As a figment of the imagination, as in the sylphide, or as an independent and volatile gypsy, [the ballerina] augmented male sexual potency before she vanished. Or if she passed from one male partner to the next, she lubricated the exchange of their sexual power ... Her body, fetishized both on- and off-stage, offered itself up to the viewer from the same abstract distance as that from which the burgeoning capitalist market offered its goods ... She danced out the erotics of acquisition under a system that measured all objects with a common symbolic denominator. In all these mutually reinforcing roles, the ballerina conferred phallic power upon male viewers by enacting their scenarios and appearing as their fantasy projection.[13]

In the ballets which survive from this period and are still performed today, the sylph in *La Sylphide*, the peasant girl who becomes a wili in *Giselle*, and the character of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*, all lead the male hero to his doom through his choice of an inappropriate love object. In these ballets narrative closure occurs when the hero and/or his ethereal love die and are eliminated from society. The figure of woman dancing is both the undoing of society and, through her sacrifice, its salvation. The ballerina's role as the 'unmaker of categories' or disruptive element in classic Romantic ballet narratives thus places her as the sign marking the limits of the social,[14] so that, to quote Elisabeth Bronfen: 'femininity is ... installed ... as the

material through which (and as the barrier against and over which) the hero, society and culture and their representation are constituted'.[15]

Since she functions as the sign of the limits of the social (the barrier between death and life), the ballerina as seductress/ghost also facilitates economic and symbolic exchanges in a veiled fashion, or as Foster has described, she functions as the phallus.[16] This is so both symbolically in terms of the narratives of the classic ballets, in which she is exchanged from man to man, and literally in the historical sense in which ballerinas sought the patronage of wealthy men in order to augment their meagre salaries, and were harshly scrutinised and compared with each other by male patrons and critics.[17]

The mystique of the female dancer in ballet, or the ballerina as phallus (object of exchange) effectively masks or equates to the invisibility of the affective contract between performers and audience members which subtends the economic one: the buying and selling of entertainment. Ballet continues to be marketable precisely because its rigidly defined conventions allow us, in forgetting ourselves, a cathartic response. As Rimmer observes, 'In [ballet] performance male and female bodies are the site of economic, social and sexual oppression but they are represented structurally as bodies that are free of conflict'.[18] We identify unproblematically with the dancers onstage, who in their apparent obliviousness to us allow us also to remain unaware of the dynamics of this interaction. Thus is ballet depoliticised.[19]

In contrast to the ballet tradition, modern and postmodern or 'new' dance forms seek to explore the common ground and sites of differentiation between dancing and everyday bodies. Modernist forms of dance sought to ground the body and explore the relation between spirit and flesh in regard to human mortality rather than celebrate ephemerality at the expense of the physical, while postmodern dance has intensively studied the body's quotidian movement, and has taken literal steps to break down the barrier between performer and audience imposed by the proscenium stage.[20] The dancers associated with the Grand Union and Judson Church in the 1960s and 70s in America – the heydey of new or postmodern dance – would often dance amidst the audience, and performed in non-theatrical spaces. They might 'appear as neutral as their props and costumes', wearing the same clothes as the average audience member and manipulating everyday objects, or, alternatively, 'display all the natural impulsiveness tradi-

tionally pruned out of dance performance'.[21]

Foster describes some of the postmodern dance work arising from the Judson experiments as investigating the narrative processes involved in the 'distribution of power inherent in the project of using the body to communicate to a passive receiver'.[22] In other words, the politics of dance reception. She also locates, in the work of Meredith Monk, Twyla Tharp and the Grand Union itself, specifically, what she calls a genuinely 'resistive postmodernism [which] ... includes its viewer in the formulation and critique of its own meaning'.[23]

Contemporary occasions of talking dancing reflect their postmodern legacy through questioning the audience, implicitly when not explicitly, about where the dancing body ends and the audience member's body begins; about what makes a movement 'dancerly' and why an audience member has come to watch it performed 'on stage'. Talking dancing also raises the question of what an audience desires from dance performers, and requires that audience members address this question rather than take their position as spectator for granted. All of these aspects of talking dancing imply a kind of 'choreography' mounted by dance performers on their audience, an image which I find appropriate not only because many dance performers do choreograph but also because it suggests a reversal of the old idea that dancers, because they work with their bodies, are unthinking, uninvestigative creatures.

The following occasions of talking dancing suggest to me a sense of playful reversal of attitudes to dance and dancers which circulate in the culture at large. They also reflect an attempt to choreograph the audience in the dancer's sense: to engage in the work of co-creation (a dynamic, participative event, in which both creating and performing parties are essential to the artistic process); to make significant, even intimate, contact by way of discovering what a body can say and do; to require that the bodies present remain aware of their possibilities for motion (and emotion), in short, to encourage in the audience an awareness of their reciprocal relationship with the bodies and affects of dance performers.

At the very least I argue that in these examples of contemporary performance, talking dancing encourages the audience to psychically enter the performing space and to become aware of their relationship to it: one of desire, projection, fear, anxiety, and also movement, since audiences no less than performers adhere to certain 'rules' of behav-

iour when they attend performances and regulate their bodies' activities accordingly. In contrast to ballet's veiled enactment of psychic and symbolic processes, talking dancing in a contemporary dance context draws attention to the dynamics of the affective contract operating between performers and audience. In this way it can open up for exploration some of the facets of performance which classical ballet masks: the nature of the investment of audiences in bodies deemed 'beyond language' (and what this says about their/our attitudes towards our embodiment); the social and political context in which a performance arises and how this affects its reading and reception; and, significantly, the gendered nature of the binary talking/dancing which informs the history of dance as a secondary art form and is destabilised when dancers operate as subjects of language and speak.[24]

TALKING DANCING: Audience Affects

In Douglas Wright's *Forever* and its companion piece *Buried Venus*, performed at Auckland's Maidment Theatre in 1994 and 1996 respectively, Wright forms a connection with viewers by gently satirising the social behaviour and awkward body language of New Zealand women and men. Spoken language is used in both these pieces, although it is only in *Buried Venus* that the audience is directly addressed. In both performances speech is used in those parts of the work which include socially recognisable movements, the use of speech, which dancers and audience have in common, highlighting the fact that the dancers performing on stage are playing 'us', are showing us the 'bodies we know'.

In *Forever* speech functions as a natural adjunct to the dancing and does not disturb the seamless flow of movement taking place on stage. As an audience we can watch in relative peace. In *Buried Venus*, however, speech exceeds the bounds of the enclosed stage-world inhabited by the dancers. Wright has said he intended the second work as an exploration of male-female relationships from a female point of view, in contrast to *Forever*'s obsession with male-male social bonding and its attendant joys, anxieties and fears. *Buried Venus*, like the first work, mines the embodying of social habits in New Zealand culture for material to construct a kind of dialogue between the sexes. That is, *Buried Venus* contains examples of female social behaviour to match *Forever*'s sequences of back-slapping, yahooing, all-blokes-together male camaraderie – there is a memorable sequence

with cups of tea and a kitchen table where two women comfort another who has suffered a loss in love. The dancing is punctuated with outbursts of crying from the woman in distress. Another unforgettable scene is the one where two dancers – one male, one female – mime a heterosexual couple dancing in a nightclub, each in the self-conscious, rather restrictive style belonging to the male and female genders respectively in the less than cool variants of Kiwi party culture.

But the moment in *Buried Venus* which most disturbs the viewer/viewed dynamic between audience and dancers is where one of the dancers speaks to the audience in direct reference to the ways in which the body betrays unconscious affects on social occasions, and the embarrassment this can cause. Following a danced sequence, the dancer walks on and faces the audience at the front of the stage, shuffling his feet and making nervous movements with his hands. He starts to speak about how he feels about his body – how it makes him uncomfortable, how he'd like another body, how he doesn't know what to do with himself sometimes, the silliness he feels in social scenarios. This fairly authentic-sounding revelation is both humorous and somewhat discomforting for the audience. While we have all no doubt seen aspects of ourselves in some part of the performance prior to the point of the social inept's soliloquoy, that recognition has been softened by our sense of relative anonymity in the darkened theatre space. When the dancer speaks to us directly there is a moment of uncertainty for us: his speaking to us as 'himself' (and whether or not this is a truthful confession or a manufactured one, we can't be totally certain) disables us from performing a complete fantasy projection onto the dancer/s, and from safely laughing off the satire on our habitual social malfunctions in the belief that those performing them are not 'like us' and are not subject to those same failures.

We are, then, forced to place ourselves in the performance context. The effect of the personal confession played as real in *Buried Venus* is to make us question the nature and status of dance performance itself as a discourse: Wright's dancers have mimed our own failings for us and made us laugh at them/ourselves. They have done this through a staged dance which employs the body as material for the articulation of emotion. While we recognise these echoes in the dancers' movements we feel safe enough to laugh at them, but when the dancer speaks personally about his/our own anxieties we are made to see that the dancer's labour is no guarantee of a true distinction be-

tween us: dancer and audience member alike engage in socially scripted movements which betray us, displaying more than we intend. The spoken confession forces the audience to some kind of awareness of the commonality between performing and viewing bodies, and of the unspoken agreement by which this equation is normally suppressed. As an audience we may be reminded of our need to see dancers as people who embody the wholeness we lack – as unfailing, gravity-defying, immortal bodies. In *Buried Venus* we are unable to completely sustain the unconscious belief that in watching dancing we buy the right to a remission of the certain knowledge of our death, and that dancers bear the unspoken but emotionally weighted burden of this knowledge by virtue of their trade, a burden which they themselves may not express.

The director of Blackgrace Dance Company, Neil Ieremia, has stated publicly his hope to attract audiences who do not normally come to dance performances, and that those audiences should feel that they are an active part of the performing space. To this end Blackgrace, an all-male, largely Polynesian and Maori member company, include speech in their shows, most particularly in the latest one, *New Works* (performed at the Maidment Theatre in Auckland in June 1996) to encourage the audience to relax and 'talk back' to the dancers, which they usually do. Blackgrace commonly use speech to introduce themselves and welcome their audience at the beginning of a show. This is intended as an acknowledgement of the performers' cultural heritage and of the ancestors who have enabled them to attain a dancing career. But these personal introductions also function as a form of resistance to the anonymity and indifferentation traditionally accorded dance performers – even contemporary dance performers – on European stages. An assertion of cultural difference such as Blackgrace perform in dance and spoken language also makes the audience aware of their own cultural specificity: the Eurocentrism which supports the false universality of ballet 'classics' and renders dance-goers neutral observers is called into question.

Further, Blackgrace seek to provoke an affective response in those who attend their performances. In their desire to broaden the cultural base of their audience they foster an environment for dance reception which is more Polynesian than European, in that the audience are encouraged to forget themselves, to enter into the performance through gesture and voice. As the company attracts growing num-

bers of viewers who are new to dance performance, their ability to direct their audience's responses away from the 'sit quietly, don't move, talk only in the interval' model of European theatre-going increases.

Insofar as they speak, apparently truthfully, about themselves and their experience as men who dance, Blackgrace members resist the equation with femininity that attends Western males who dance for a living. However, in their readiness to talk 'as themselves', particularly with regard to their cultural and spiritual heritage, company members must also engage in a complex negotiation of the role of the black male performer in Western theatrical traditions. While the dancers' colloquially spoken, personally oriented introductions have the effect of presenting them as desiring subjects rather than objects of audience desire or projection, their tendency to make jokes against themselves and their backgrounds also echoes the music hall and minstrel show, in which the specularisation of black performers, their being fixed as an exotic object in the audience's gaze and so rendered incapable of genuine challenge or comment, was a condition of their being seen.[25] There was more than one piece in this season which used slapstick moves, and one of them was based on the choreographer's teenage experience of 'going out stealing' and performed to a Beastie Boys track, among other things. I am unsure of the extent to which this sort of work questions or endorses stereotypes of young black men, although the use of a personal, spoken introduction does at least ground the representation in a particular context, and it is possible that the personalising of this piece lifted it above the stereotypical.[26] It remains to be seen how far Ieremia and Blackgrace will attempt to open up and question cultural attitudes to race, given that their rationale at present is focused on increasing audience numbers. But with their sights set on attracting non-Paheka, generally non-dancegoing audiences, it is quite possible that in the future their work will become more confrontational, or at least more subtly nuanced.

'ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?': Choreographing the Audience

In Carol Brown's *The Mechanics of Fluids*, performed initially at the University of Surrey at Guildford and then at the Watershed in Auckland in 1995, the audience is explicitly and implicitly invited to reflect on the nature of their function and role. The work is described by Brown as:

> comprising a trilogy of different responses to the problematic representation of the female body – as object, icon and image – from a feminist perspective. *The Anatomy of Reason* combines text and movement in a parodic manoeuvring of my body as 'object' through the discourses of psychoanalysis and philosophy. *The Mechanics of Fluids* re-appropriates the image of the still and silent, prone and naked female body which abounds in western art history and turns her into an object gone hard, resistant and febrile. The final work in the programme, *Acts of Becoming*, concerns history and genealogies, my own dancing history and its crossings with other subjectivities. Positioning myself both inside and outside the dance it is both an acknowledgement of the co-presence of other dancing selves and a celebration of the pleasures of embodiment.[27]

Clearly, then, *The Mechanics of Fluids* attempts to cross the invisible boundary separating dancer from audience by directly addressing those attitudes which inform our expectations of the female performer. Brown resists the traditional encapsulation of the female dancer within the audience's gaze by using speech to commentate on her parodic acts: in the first section (*The Anatomy of Reason*) she steps out of a black cocktail dress to face the audience in a white bra and French knickers. Walking forward, she announces 'I'm miming philosophy', by way of beginning a speech about attitudes to 'woman' held by Western philosophy and psychoanalysis. She punctuates this speech with suggestive movements, adjusting her underwear to cover her buttocks, peering inside her knickers, demonstrating the ways in which 'woman' physically exceeds her construction within these discourses and is presented within them as an object of mystery, requiring vigilance and regulation.

In the work's second section (*The Mechanics of Fluids*) Brown seems to deploy a kind of self-conscious hysteria. Her body, initially seen naked on a plinth and later clothed and dancing, is fluid yet also mechanical, articulating opposition to the plasticity of interpretations men have made of the (naked) female form over the centuries. After rising from the plinth and clothing herself, the dance in this section involves frantic brushings and preening movements as though Brown is hyperactively playing the part of a woman before a mirror. Again this suggests femininity as a role that is perpetually exceeded in everyday performance, or the way in which women necessarily fail to compare with the stereotypes presented to them in culture.

Throughout *Mechanics* Brown also manipulates a doll she has

brought on stage in the opening section, and many of the work's movements parody those of dolls. The dancer winds herself up, sketching winding movements with her hands, ironically commenting on the ways in which women are required to be doll-like (Barbie-like): innocent, mindless, *dumb body*, in Western culture. There are moments in the second section where Brown turns her head to the side with her hands and lets it spring back of its own accord, miming the placing of herself in a position as 'object' and then allowing her body to stage its own resistance.

Throughout *Mechanics*, Brown performs a self-conscious exceeding of the idea of the doll-girl-woman through engaging artifice for feminist political ends. She is explicitly concerned with charting the territory between the construct 'woman' and the experience of the female dancer and choreographer (Brown herself), and in exploring how feminist artistic production might move beyond the constraints of the feminine model.[28] She thus constitutes herself as a dancing hysteric: performing twice over the cultural requirements of femininity in the masculine symbolic, through miming on the stage, with a political agenda, how women strive to meet these terms.[29]

Hysterics are, of course, the founding bodies of psychoanalysis and there are, for me, some pertinent connections to be made between Freudian and post-Freudian versions of psychoanalytic theory and the practice of talking dancing. In *The Mechanics of Fluids* Brown alerts us to some of the factors governing the interpretation of female dance performers and the ways in which we learn to see them, by referring to psychoanalysis as a science based upon the observation of female bodily movement, the politics of which it has sometimes neglected to address. I think that psychoanalysis also has a broader application to the viewer-dance performer relationship, which I will discuss briefly before returning to talk about *Mechanics*, and to explain what interests me in this connection.

Psychoanalysis is itself a dramatically charged body of knowledge,[30] made mobile through its allegiance to the disruptive and unpredictable power of the unconscious. Its truths are borne originally out of attention to the exchanges which take place in a darkened room where a woman, often troubled by bodily innervations that exceed the expectations of feminine comportment (I'm talking, of course, of Freud's hysterics), speaks, or 'performs' to the analyst, an audience of one.[31] Later the analyst interprets this occasion of performance;

his own investment in it contributing to his conclusions as he recalls the flow of energies that has dynamised the contract between clinician and patient.

Psychoanalysis is built upon a display of attention to the (suffering) body speaking even if it cannot avoid a certain colonisation of that speech. Yet it does at least allow for the possibility of a reciprocity of interpretation from hysteric (read performer) to analyst (read viewer) and back again. The analyst Monique David-Ménard describes the psychoanalytic attention to the dynamics of the particular moment of analytic performance in this way:

> Freudian thought ruins every philosophical or scientific idea of truth, not by dissolving the difference between interpretation and theory, but by making it possible to say at what price the universal is constructed – by making interpretation the aftermath of constructions of concepts that pretend to put an end to interpretation.[32]

Psychoanalysis, then, is founded on the irresolvable (and productive) tension between the task of paying genuine regard to the discourse of the hysteric – or the unconscious – which wreaks havoc on its conscious dreams, and attempting to resolve those conflicts in writing, through the production of the case history. The psychoanalytic case history can be likened to the work of the dance critic: in both scenarios the writing momentarily fixes the disconcerting mobility of the symptom or performance (and separates performer from viewer) in order to draw conclusions from it. In this moment of analytical displacement the clinician/critic allows their words to literally take the place of the movement (of hysteric or performer) that has been observed and has now vanished, its trace remaining in the observer's mind and memory. The psychoanalyst attends to the dynamics of this displacement by investigating the transference: the complex pathways traversed by their own affective investments as they navigate the underground circuitries forged by the patient's symptom. The analyst attempts to choreograph or discern a pattern in the dual movement of the hysterical symptom and their own responses to it. This written choreography will replace the performance of the symptom, but the replacement will bear unmistakeable signs of the analyst's own investment and the symptom's (or the dance's) excess. Peggy Phelan describes the congruence between psychoanalysis and the work of dance writing thus:

> Freud tracks the movements of the unconscious as they do the work of repression, he follows the trace of that which has disappeared from consciousness. In this regard, Freud's work precedes our own – to write about dance is to fix and make secure the thing that reveals itself as it disappears.[33]

But as with the analytic case history, the trace of the dance performance in the work of the critic can be discerned only because we have a written record of the encounter. How do we begin to theorise the affective exchanges which take place between dance performers and their audiences when the audiences leave no record, and when no audience is the same as another? In a discussion of performance art Simon Frith reminds us that:

> Performance requires an audience and an interpretation ... Rhetorically, performance is a way not of acting but of posing; it takes for granted an audience's ability to refer these bodily movements to others (. . .). The performance artist ... depends on an audience which can interpret her work through its own experience of performance, its own understanding of seduction and pose, gesture and body language; an audience which understands, however 'instinctively' (without theorising), the constant dialogue of inner and outer projected by the body in movement. For performance art to work it needs an audience of performers; it depends on the performance of the everyday.[34]

So we relate the movements we see on the stage to other movements we have seen or those we perform ourselves – the performance of the everyday.[35] I want to argue that 'Talking Dancing' intervenes in this space of recognition and translation by using speech to command a (dancing) subject position; in contrast to the way in which we have come to think of writing and speaking as having their own agency, yet of dance as requiring speech or writing before we can make sense of it.[36] A further effect of this shift in the space of dance performance is to deny the audience the opportunity to project a one-way fantasy onto the performers; and to force us to a recognition of the investments we bring to the performing space.

The equation I have mapped out above between dance critic and analyst also reminds us of the feminisation that inheres in the specularising of the hysteric/performer. Hysterics and dancers in the Western world are mainly women, and the traditional performance space is, as I have argued, historically feminised by virtue of the fact that

bodies are presented within it as signs of desire, visible commodities.[37] Yet I suggest that a dancer talking in a performance context can have something of the effect of the hysteric's speech in defence of her symptom: it can question the mastery of the viewer and force the viewer, who is also a listener (the analyst, the audience member) to awaken to their own imaginative habitation of the performance space – or their transference, if you like – and their own feminisation in the sense that they too are being watched (by the performer/s) and directly addressed: they in turn become markers of the performers' desire.[38]

In Section One of *The Mechanics of Fluids* Brown follows a brief, cryptic autobiographical speech about her experience of her body with a pause and then the words: 'Are you following me?'. The line is delivered with an intonation suggesting challenge, as though accosting a voyeur, and works as simultaneously ironic, parodic, and questioning of the audience in a similar manner to the question articulated by the hysteric's symptom. The ambiguity of the words theatrically enacts the duplicity that is associated with women in order to destabilise the audience's position. This is what the hysteric is also reputed to do. We are aware that the line has more than one possible meaning. It could mean: 'Are you following my reasoning, my argument?' as well as 'are you spying on me? Attempting to objectify me with your gaze?'. I suggest both, since Brown is attempting to stage a female-bodied, kinetic intervention into the masculine nature of reason, or philosophy: 'Are you following me?' alerts us to the fact that we cannot follow her reasoning in this context without at the same time objectifying her, since logic and reason are predicated on the invisibility of the female body, what Luce Irigaray calls 'the blind spot of an old dream of symmetry'.[39] And the pause in performance which follows this question marks the audience's sudden awareness of the affective entanglement – the mingling of desires – which operates in a veiled fashion between ourselves as watchers of performance and the dancer in the theatre space.

Brown's interruption of her performance as girl-doll-woman with the masculine-coded question 'Are you following me/my reasoning?' – her destabilising enactment of two genders in one body – disturbs the relationship we as audience members conventionally take up when we watch a performance, projecting our desire outward onto the bodies/body on the stage (the feminised space). Not only do Brown's words disrupt this viewer position, but they require participation of us as well.

Inevitably when we watch a performance we follow the dancer/performer, seeking to take in what s/he has to give us, yet rational argument is seldom what we expect nor what we generally go to a dance performance for. So we are taken by surprise when Brown plays both these assumptions about the nature of our connection with her back to us in the form of speech, making us aware of the dualistic conditions under which we habitually interpret (female) dance performance.

The final section of *Mechanics* perhaps comes closest to effectively staging the ways in which female experience of embodiment, insofar as it exceeds conventional formulations of woman as passive object, can be mobilised for female empowerment. *Acts of Becoming*, a danced tribute to Brown's dancing foremothers, the teachers whose bodies' articulation of movement have shaped her own, presents a model of woman-to-woman communication which cannot be colonised, since the divisions between teaching and dancing bodies are difficult to mark. Brown speaks in the voice of her teachers (at the microphone) and dances as herself, but where does one end and the other begin? No trained dancer knows this for sure. Brown's speech in this section bears the traces of her dancing in her shortness of breath: dancing and speaking (instructing) blend. *Acts of Becoming* produces another take on the parody of mothering (the doll-play) enacted in the work's first section. The mothering portrayed in *Acts of Becoming* is that by which female teachers nurture their dancing protégées, a relationship of rearing and dependence which is yet a relationship between equals, since the dance teacher no less than the dance student learns through a constant process of re-embodying movement, and once a dancer has learned through a teacher's work, it becomes impossible to say what aspect of her movement is her own, what her teacher's.

This model of woman-to-woman communication which Brown, quoting Irigaray, suggests as a challenge to the containment of 'woman' within Western aesthetic tradition's specularising gaze, implicitly addresses too the relation between audience and performer. The message that in dance practice bodies are not as separate from each other as we might tend to think reminds us of our own incorporation of ideas from the performance through a process of being forced to attend to the nature and politics of our reading of Brown's performing body. Brown continues dancing as we leave the theatre: our egress becomes a conscious choice of which we are physically aware

since in making our exit we must also perform a departure from theatrical convention, leaving her dancing on the stage. There is an uncanny feeling that she may be watching us as we leave, and a definite shift in the power relations which operate unnoticed when, according to custom, we demonstrate our approval (or otherwise) of the dancer's finished show and ready ourselves to leave the auditorium.

The words of Irigaray, spoken last by Brown ('be what you are becoming, without clinging to what you might have been, what you might yet be'),[40] force us to an understanding that we cannot produce meanings from a woman's performing body without putting our own bodies into play, without becoming aware – even on an unconscious level – of our relationship to the performer, and of the dynamic energy which, circulating between us, fuels our understanding and mobilises our respective kinds of speech. In Irigarayan terms we might make this reading of the audience-performer contract a model for a new use of language: one which does not require a repression of the body's responses in order to achieve an unambiguous mode of discourse. We might regard 'talking dancing' as a possible move towards closing the gap between the denial of the body's immediate sensations necessary for speech and the view, still prevalent, that the body and by implication dance, does not speak intelligibly itself.[41]

Dancers, I think, address these issues of necessity frequently, even if the address is not put forward in linguistic terms. In arguing for an interpretation of talking dancing which highlights the interdependence of dancer and audience in performance, and the exchange of desires between them, I hope to move towards giving articulate voice to the dancing body and to gesture towards an audience which can read or trust its own bodily and affective responses to dance performance. It is only when both these things occur that dance can thrive and grow and people watching dancing can feel enlivened in the dance-viewer relationship.

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NOTES

1 Stéphane Mallarmé, quoted in André Levinson, 'The Idea of the Dance: From Aristotle to Mallarmé', *Theatre Arts Monthly* (1927), quoted in Elizabeth Dempster, 'Revisioning the Body: Feminism, Ideokinesis and the New Dance', *Writings on Dance,* 9 (1993) pp. 9-21.

2 Douglas Dunn, 'Talking Dancing', quoted in Sally Banes, *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance* (Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, New Hampshire [1977] reprinted 1987) pp. 200-201.

3 The past ten years or so has seen a surge of feminist academic output on dance. Much of this work addresses the high concentration of women in the history of Western concert dance and its association with values deemed feminine. See Ann Daly, 'The Balanchine Woman: Of Hummingbirds and Channel Swimmers', *The Drama Review*, 31:1 (1987) pp. 8-21; 'Classical Ballet: A Discourse of Difference', *Women and Performance*, 3:2 (1987-88) pp. 57-66; Dempster, 'The Economy of Shame', *Spectator Burns*, 1 (1987) pp. 24-26; 'Revisioning the Body': 'Women Writing the Body: Let's Watch a Little How She Dances', in Ellen W. Goellner and Jacqueline Shea Murphy (eds), *Bodies of the Text: Dance as Theory, Literature as Dance* (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick [1988] reprinted 1995) pp. 21-38; Marianne Goldberg and Ann Cooper Albright, 'Roundtable Interview: Post-modernism and Feminism in Dance', *Women and Performance*, 3:2 (1987-88) pp. 41-56; Anne Flynn, 'Dualism and Dance', in Winnie Tomm (ed), *The Effects of Feminist Approaches on Research Methodologies* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario, 1989) pp. 171-83; Janet Wolff, *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990); *Resident Alien: Feminist Cultural Criticism* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1995); Christy Adair, *Women and Dance: Sylphs and Sirens* (Macmillan, Basingstoke and London, 1992); Rachel Fensham, 'Dancing In and Out of Language: A Feminist Dilemma', *Writings on Dance*, 9 (1993) pp. 22-39; Lesley-Anne Sayers, 'She Might Pirouette on a Daisy and It Would Not Bend': Images of Femininity and Dance Appreciation', in Helen Thomas (ed), *Dance, Gender and Culture* (St Martin's Press, New York, 1993) pp. 164-83; Carol Brown, *In-*

scribing the Body: Feminist Choreographic Practices, DPhil dissertation, University of Surrey, Guildford; 'Re-tracing Our Steps: The Possibilities for Feminist Dance Histories', in Janet Adshead Lansdale and June Layson (eds), *Dance History: An Introduction* (Routledge, London and New York, 1994) pp. 198-216; Ann Cooper Albright, 'Incalculable Choreographies: The Dance Practice of Marie Chouinard', in Goellner and Murphy (eds), *Bodies of the Text,* pp. 157-81; Susan Leigh Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', in Susan Leigh Foster (ed), *Corporealities: Dancing Knowledge, Culture and Power* (Routledge, London and New York, 1996) pp. 1-24; Peggy Phelan, 'Dance and the History of Hysteria', in Foster (ed), *Corporealities*, pp. 90-105. See also the earlier Roger Copeland, 'Towards a Sexual Politics of Contemporary Dance', *Contact Quarterly*, 7:3-4 (1982) pp. 45-50; and Deirdre McMahon, 'The Feminist Mystique: Ballerinas, Feminist Critics and Male Choreographers', *Dance Theatre Journal*, 3 (1985) pp. 8-10.

4 Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 6.

5 See Daly, 'Classical Ballet'; Dempster, 'Women Writing the Body'.

6 Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 7.

7 Elizabeth Dempster writes: '[Dance] has traditionally been defined in relationship to the male-identified art forms of music and drama, and its communciative potential, force and action is commonly misrepresented as dependent upon those relationships. In this (false) representation, the body is dispossessed of its capacity for mindful action. The 'male' arts of music and drama commandeer the space of mind and spirit; the female-identified art of dance is relegated to the nether regions of an unthought and unthinking body. Dance may be the mother of all manner of things but she cannot know or speak of herself'. Dempster, 'Women Writing the Body', p. 24. See also Fensham; Brown, *Inscribing the Body* and 'Re-tracing our Steps'; Goellner and Murphy, 'Introduction: Movement Movements', in Goellner and Murphy (eds), *Bodies of the Text*, pp. 1-18. In a recent article, Foster demonstrates the history of this notion, observing that the attribution of mutually exclusive functions to dance and verbal or written text is a product of the early nineteenth century, a consequence of Enlightenment humanism's focus on individual interiority and self-control as the basis for social and political rights. In the seventeenth century, both danced and written language are part of a strictly hierarchised social and political system which attributes to both an expressive and inscriptive function within that system. However post-Enlightenment thought construes dance or movement language as containing a unique propensity to trigger the

emotions: 'the body's expressive movements thereby secure a private place, an incipient interiority for the individual, over which that individual exerts his or her control' (Foster, 'Textual Evidances', pp. 231-46, p. 234). Post-Enlightenment, theatrical dance functions as a domain in which the limits of social control over the individual are played out, with the aristocratic male heroes of classic-Romantic ballets exhibiting this conflict through their thwarted desires for an otherworldly or dangerous female figure. See Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe'.

8 See Mary Ann Doane, 'Woman's Stake: Filming the Female Body', in Constance Penley (ed), *Feminism and Film Theory* (Routledge, New York and BFI, London, 1988) pp. 216-28; 'Subjectivity and Desire: An(other) Way of Looking', in Antony Easthope (ed), *Contemporary Film Theory* (Longman, London and New York, 1993) pp. 162-78; Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in The Screen Collective (ed), *The Sexual Subject: A Screen Reader in Sexuality* (Routledge, London and New York, [1975] reprinted 1992) pp. 22-34.

9 Valerie Rimmer, 'The Anxiety of Dance Performance', in Thomas (ed), *Dance, Gender and Culture*, pp. 200-215, p. 209.

10 In the classic ballets *Swan Lake, La Sylphide,* and *Giselle* respectively.

11 Dempster, 'Revisioning the Body', p. 17.

12 Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe'.

13 ibid., p. 14.

14 Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1992) p. 209; Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 11. See also Jacqueline Rose, 'Margaret Thatcher and Ruth Ellis', *Why War? Psychoanalysis, Politics, and the Return to Melanie Klein* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1993) pp. 41-86.

15 Bronfen, p. 209.

16 On woman as phallus in psychoanalytic theory, see Elizabeth Grosz, 'Phallus: Feminist Implications', in Elizabeth Wright (ed), *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford and Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1993) pp. 320-323. See also Rose, 'Introduction - II', in Jacques Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*, [Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds)] (Macmillan, Basingstoke and London, 1982) pp. 27-57; Rosalind Minsky, 'Lacan', in Hazel Crowley and Susan Himmelweit (eds), *Knowing Women: Feminism and Knowledge* (Polity Press/Open University, Milton Keynes, 1992) pp. 188-205.

17 See Daly, 'Classical Ballet', p. 60; Deborah Jowitt, *Time and the Danc-*

ing Image (William Morrow and Co., New York, 1988) pp. 45-46; Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 9.

18 Rimmer, p. 214.

19 Foster writes that ballet, 'with its pedagogical orderliness and clear criteria for excellence, promises a homogenizing medium for the expression of cultural difference... Today's ballet, a sanitized geometry, emphasizes physical discipline and dedication. Rather than offering a travelogue through real and imaginary worlds as it did in the nineteenth century, contemporary ballet provides a seemingly neutral *techne* through which intensities of cultural or psychological ambience can be projected'. Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 2. The naturalisation in ballet performance of 'the feminine mystique' and cultural politics in general also neutralises the sexual and racial politics which operate in ballet companies. These are mostly peopled by women yet headed by men, and black ballet dancers are employed only in token numbers in companies which are not all-black. See Adair, pp. 167-70. I argue elsewhere that ballet's representation of 'woman' as the sign of the limit of the social or death is congruent with women's inability to mobilise their death drives outwardly, resulting in extremely high incidences of eating disorders and other masochistic behaviours among female ballet dancers. See Eluned Summers-Bremner, 'Reading Irigaray dancing', forthcoming in *Hypatia*. See also Daly, 'The Balanchine Woman'; Adair, pp.17-19, 88-89; Brown, *Inscribing the Body*, pp. 70-71.

20 On modernist dance see Joseph H. Mazo, *Prime Movers: The Makers of Modern Dance in America* (William Morrow and Co., New York, 1977); Don McDonogh, *The Rise and Fall and Rise of Modern Dance* (a cappella Books, Chicago, 1990); Jowitt, pp. 151-98; Adair, pp. 119-38; Selma Jeanne Cohen, 'The Modern Dance: Moving from the Inside Out', in Cohen (ed), *Dance as a Theater Art: Source Readings in Dance History from 1581 to the Present* (Princeton Book Co./Dance Horizons, Princeton, 1992) pp.118-23. With regard to postmodernist dance forms, see Sally Banes, *Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theater 1962-1964* (UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor, 1983); *Terpsichore in Sneakers*; Judith Mackrell, *Out of Line: The Story of British New Dance* (Dance Books, London); Nick Kaye, *Postmodernism and Performance* (St Martin's Press, New York, 1994) pp. 90-117; Ramsay Burt, *The Male Dancer: Bodies, Spectacle, Sexualities* (Routledge, London and New York, 1995) pp. 135-58.

21 Jowitt, p. 308.

22 Foster, 'The Signifying Body: Reaction and Resistance in Postmodern Dance', *Theatre Journal,* 37 (1985) pp. 45-64, p. 47.

[23] ibid., p. 47.

[24] Dempster, 'Women Writing the Body', pp. 23-24.

[25] See Bill T. Jones in Johanna Boyce et al, 'Movement and Gender: A Roundtable Discussion', *The Drama Review*, 32:1 (1988) pp. 82-101; Karen Cronacher, 'Unmasking the Minstrel Mask's Black Magic in Ntozake Shange's *spell #7*', in Helene Keyssar (ed), *Feminist Theatre and Theory* (Macmillan, Basingstoke and London, 1996) pp. 189-212; Thomas DeFrantz, 'Simmering Passivity: The Black Male Body in Concert Dance', in Gay Morris (ed), *Moving Words: Re-writing Dance* (Routledge, London and New York) pp. 107-120; Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1993) cited in Joseph R. Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1996) pp. 5-6. See also Burt, pp. 119-121.

[26] See Burt, p. 130. I am less certain that Ieremia's most recent work for the company, *Compression* (performed at the Maidment in October), succeeds in this regard. The work is described by Ieremia as an exploration of the social forces operating in his Samoan child – and teenage – hood, and large portions of the work depict male-male aggression and scapegoating. There is in my opinion so much of this kind of behaviour in the work that it is difficult to discern a statement or thematic question in it, and in this sense I think *Compression* fails to rise above the level of artistic stereotype.

[27] Personal communication with Carol Brown.

[28] Brown, *Inscribing the Body*.

[29] Many feminist thinkers describe hysteria as a manifestation of female desire which, denied expression in culture as it exists, takes the form of an extreme version, or mimicry, of the patriarchal requirements of femininity. An example is the modern illness *anorexia nervosa*, which can be seen as a parody of late twentieth-century capitalism's expectation that women should be thin. See Danielle Celermajer, 'Submission and Rebellion: Anorexia and a Feminism of the Body', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 5 (1987) pp. 57-69.

[30] See Barbara Freedman, 'Frame-Up: Feminism, Psychoanalysis, Theatre', in Sue-Ellen Case (ed), *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre* (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1990) pp. 54-76; *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1991) p. 47; Elizabeth Hirsh, 'Back in Analysis: How to Do Things with Irigaray', in Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor and Margaret

Whitford (ed), *Engaging with Irigaray: Feminist Philosophy and Modern European Thought* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1995) pp. 285-315.

31 See Phelan, p. 90.

32 Monique David-Ménard, *Hysteria from Freud to Lacan: Body and Language in Psychoanalysis* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York and London, 1989) p. 195.

33 See Foster et al, Introduction to Foster (ed) *Corporealities,* pp. xi-xvii. See also Heidi Gilpin, 'Lifelessness in Movement, or How do the Dead Move? Tracing Displacement and Disappearance for Movement Performance', in Foster (ed). *Corporealities*, pp. 106-128.

34 Simon Frith, 'Editorial', *Special Issue: Performance Matters, New Formations*, 27 (1995-96) pp. v-xii, pp. v-vi.

35 See Johannes Birringer, *Theatre, Theory, Postmodernism* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1991, reprinted 1993) pp. 205-31.

36 See Foster, 'Textual Evidances', pp. 233-4.

37 In fact, the increase in numbers of female hysterics and the popularisation of the Romantic ballerina take place in the same historical moment, so that they can almost be seen as an inversion of each other. The ballerina, as Foster observes, operated as a sign of male desire: 'as desired mate within the heterosexual union, she fulfilled the procreative part of the social contract; as spectacularly charismatic fantasy, she proved the self-sufficient fantasy of the male character; as the entity of exchange within a homosexual or heterosexual male economy, she ensured male potency and rationalized their entitlement to governance; and as the fetishized promise of sexual acquisition, she ordained male capitalist competition within a society of consumption'. Foster, 'The Ballerina's Phallic Pointe', p. 12. In contrast, Freud recognised that female hysteria was an attempt to avoid this equation, for as Jacqueline Rose reminds us, Freudian psychoanalysis begins in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, a cultural moment when European women were seen to be responsible for the 'well-being of the nation', and where, if a woman failed in this duty, she was considered 'disordered or diseased'. Rose writes that 'the hysteric was either the overeducated woman, or else the woman indulging in non-procreative or uncontrolled sexuality'. Jacqueline Rose, 'Femininity and its Discontents', in Jacqueline Rose, *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (Verso, London, 1989) pp. 83-103, p. 96. The hysteric's symptom, as so many of Freud's analyses make clear, functioned as a kind of uncontrolled dance which disrupted the organi-

sation of family life. The hysteric is considered by many feminist psychoanalytic thinkers to be articulating with her body an unconscious protest at her constitution as a sexual subject within the prevailing economy of masculine desire. The hysteric thus performs, although no less theatrically, a sort of inversion of the specularisation of 'woman' which was simultaneously occurring in dance on the European stage. See Dianne Hunter, 'Hysteria, Psychoanalysis, and the Case of Anna O.', *Feminist Studies*, 9:3 (1983) pp. 465-88; Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1985) p. 136; Elizabeth Grosz, *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989) pp. 134-136.

[38] The Lacanian formulation describes hysteria as that which questions the structures of knowledge and so must always evade or reformulate the analyst's answer. Jacques Lacan, *Encore: Séminaire XX* (Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1975), cited in Martha Noel Evans, *Fits and Starts: A Genealogy of Hysteria in Modern France* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York and London, 1991) pp. 190-192. See also Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, 'Hysteria', in *Feminism and Psychoanalysis*, pp. 163-166, p. 165. Ragland-Sullivan observes that, in a general sense, 'Lacan saw the hysteric as embodying the quintessence of the human subject because she speaks, as agent, from the lack and gaps in knowledge, language and being. In her "being" she reveals the incapacity of any human subject to satisfy the ideals of Symbolic identifications'. Therefore, 'Lacan argues that hysteria is the condition of the division of any speaking, desiring subject' (pp. 164-165). Evans traces the development of Lacan's thinking on hysteria and points out that, in his early thoughts on the topic, the hysteric's inability to conform to specific gender requirements in the symbolic reiterates the 'nonbiological, nonnecessary character of gender' within Lacanian theory (Evans, p. 179). But later, Lacan gave more emphasis to the fact that the hysteric articulates a *question* to the analyst and to the structures of knowledge in the symbolic; therefore her language articulates the limit point of the analyst's/symbolic understanding. The hysteric's symptom becomes more generative than symptomatic at this stage of Lacanian theory: 'If the address of her question to a Master implies the hysteric's submission to him, it could also be said that she "invents" him, creates his place in language ... There is something about the question that woman both poses and is which cannot be mastered, cannot be put into language' (p. 191).

[39] Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1985) pp. 13-129.

40 Irigaray, *This Sex*, p. 214.

41 My 'Reading Irigaray, dancing' explores Irigaray's work on the sensible transcendental, an attempt to revalue the material side of the mind/body dualism foundational to Western thought through attention to the productive nature of the body's mobile and porous qualities. The essay takes up the idea of the sensible transcendental as a possible means to develop a language for dance, or bodily movement, itself. Currently, the subjection of the rhythms and vicissitudes of the body to the singular, authoritative mode of linguistic speech is the norm in Western culture. Yet dance articulates a language of the body which can enliven and reverse the dulling effects of monopolistic language, and insofar as dance is equated with femininity in the West, it can also produce a challenge to masculinist linguistic politics.

Representation and Self-Presentation:
The Use of Oral History in Texts about Maori Women

SIOBHAN McKIMMEY

Oral history is an invaluable means of recovering and presenting the experiences of Maori women. While not necessarily without mana among their own people, too often these women have been overlooked by the western, document-based historical tradition. As women, and as Maori, they have been, until recently, historically marginalised.

The rise of women's history (that is, history which recognises the value and importance of women's experiences), coupled with the realisation of the need to recover and record the histories of colonised peoples, has led to the emergence of a body of literature which makes Maori women and their experiences visible. Oral history has been increasingly used by historians over the past few decades in order to recover 'history from below', that is, the experiences of those people who have not traditionally been part of the historical record, and whose stories are unrecorded, except in memory. Among Maori, history was, and in some areas still is, primarily transmitted orally, and women have always been important purveyors of such history. It might, then, be argued that oral history is an eminently suitable means of recovering the experiences of a group which has been historically marginalised along the lines of both race and gender, and which has traditionally transmitted its history by oral means. But important questions about the uses of oral history need to be asked. To what extent do oral narratives retain their subjectivity when published, and to what extent do they become subordinate to a master narrative or controlling narrative voice? What should be the relationship between the interviewer and the informant? This essay will attempt to answer these questions with reference to published material about Maori women which draws on oral sources.

An important result of bringing Maori women into historical focus through the use of oral narrative has been the correction of a popular misconception. Judith Binney writes that 'it is said to be axiomatic that indigenous women living in a society that is structured by a numerically pre-eminent European culture, itself based on male gender dominance, will inevitably form the most oppressed stra-

tum in that society'.[1] However, when Maori women are able to present their own stories, it becomes immediately obvious that this generalisation is incorrect. While a certain amount of acceptance of Maori poverty is evident in many narratives, it is clear that within their own communities Maori women were not without status.[2] The narrative of Heni Brown, one of a group of women connected to the Ringatu faith interviewed by Binney and Gillian Chaplin and presented in *Nga Morehu*: *The Survivors*, is intimately concerned with establishing the mana of her great-grandmother, Meri Puru, and, by association, her own status. Meri is shown to be a woman of great spiritual power, her connection to the prophet and founder of the Ringatu faith, Te Kooti, being the origin of this power. Heni connects the tapu of her great-grandmother to the loss of one of her own children; she recounts her unwitting donning of one of Meri's petticoats as the cause of this tragedy.[3] The use of oral sources allows Maori women the opportunity to dispel the Western notions of female subordination surrounding their culture, and present themselves as people with a great deal of mana.

Nga Morehu presents the oral life histories of eight Maori women, all of whom were raised, and lived much of their lives, in communities connected with the Ringatu faith. Thus, the stories are not only personal narratives, but are intricately connected as 'part of the larger history of those who followed Te Kooti'.[4] The narratives are essentially concerned with family – 'the whanau gives particular identity, the source of its mana is its ancestors'.[5] Each story is shaped by tradition and shared communal knowledge. Thus, they are not simply stories about Maori women. They come out of a particular context, that of the Ringatu faith or close association with it. The informants have a great deal more in common than race and gender. They are also poor, rural and influenced by the Ringatu faith. The stories are thus bound together by many commonalities, and *Nga Morehu* is just as important a book for its insights into the lives of Ringatu followers as it is for what it can tell us about Maori women.

Nevertheless, as a book about Maori women, *Nga Morehu* is very significant. The narratives presented in it are the personal, unmediated stories of the lives of eight women, constructed by the women themselves. Only in a very limited sense have they been shaped by Binney and Chaplin; the informants were asked basic questions about their

lives, families, education and values. Binney writes that 'we left the direction and the development of thought to each woman ... Each dialogue generated its own shape and its own life ... The narratives are the women's stories, the subjective reality of their lives'.[6] The comments and questions of the interviewer have been deleted in the published text, and material recorded on separate occasions has been brought together so that each story is a continuous narrative, but it is obvious that there is no desire to impose any other words upon the stories. This is evident in the choice to conduct the interviews and record the women's stories in English. Although the informants' fluency in English varied, Binney and Chaplin 'consider it ... more appropriate to record their spoken words than to have translated them from Maori, thus imposing our own words upon them'.[7] The women themselves, they believe, are their own most eloquent translators.

What comes through, in these personal, unmediated narratives, is a strong sense of what has been and is still important to the informants, both as individuals and as Maori women. One of the most feared experiences for Maori women is childlessness, or wharengaro, literally 'the house destroyed'.[8] Even recently, the statistics for Maori post-neonatal deaths were double those of the European population. In 1984 there were 13.9 Maori post-neonatal deaths per one thousand live births compared to only 6.1 for non-Maori.[9] The strength and centrality of this fear in the lives of the women in *Nga Morehu* is very apparent in their narratives. Almost all of the women have experienced the loss of a child, and in each case, an explanation for the tragedy, seldom in line with European ideas of causality, is sought. Heni Brown's story of her great-grandmother's petticoat is one such story. Another, within the same narrative, recounts the still birth which Heni believes was caused by her disobedience to instructions not to swear.[10]

At the same time as this predictive, spiritual view of history is maintained, the women also offer insights into their daily lives, domestic arrangements, diet and living conditions. Putiputi Onekawa, for example, recounts the process of childbirth in a simple and matter-of-fact manner: 'We don't lie flat on the bed like that. We just sit up, like this ... The only time I want Mac is when the baby is born. I pick him up, and cut the cord ... And wrap the baby in a towel and give it to Mac ... While I attend to myself for the afterbirth.'[11] While

readers might find the contrast between such practical acceptance of life's events and the religious and spiritual explanations offered for their personal tragedies somewhat incongruous, nevertheless, this is how these women have interpreted their experiences and how they have remembered them. To offer different explanations would be to deny them their subjectivity.

A book which operates on a similar premise is Mira Szasay's *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau: Early Stories from Founding Members of the Maori Women's Welfare League*.[12] The common or shared experience among the informants for this book is their participation in the Maori Women's Welfare League in its early years and beyond. As in *Nga Morehu*, the testimony of each woman is mediated only in so far as basic questions are asked and removed from the published text. A point in which *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau* differs from *Nga Morehu* is that well over half of the narratives are in Maori. Others are in English, and still others are spoken in both languages, the informants switching from one to the other, sometimes in mid-sentence. At no point is any translation of Maori offered to the reader. This is not only indicative of the intended audience (the book was created especially for the League, as well as for a wider audience), but also makes a similar point to that of *Nga Morehu* – translation means imposing other words on to the narrators'. These are their stories, and should be told only in their words.

Thus, *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau* presents us with a collection of stories, shaped by individual memory and experience. It is not primarily a history of the Maori Women's Welfare League (although a potted history of the League is provided), rather it is a record of its members' lives, aspirations and values. By reading these accounts, one discovers not so much what the League has done for those it sought to help, as what its individual members have gained from their own involvement. Many of the women stressed a spirit of fellowship, friendship and togetherness as being their own most important gain. Emily Paki, for example, tells Mira Szaszy that, 'the League played a big part in our lives – it got us to know one another all over the country. Sharing fellowship, love and understanding – that can't be beaten.'[13] Many also pointed to an improvement in the position of Maori women, not only through the League's work, but through its very existence and women's involvement in it. Louise Carkeek believes that 'the League made Maori women aware of

what a strong voice they could have in Maoridom'.[14]

Amiria: The Life Story of a Maori Woman also presents the reader with the personal, unmediated narrative of the life of a Maori woman as recalled and recounted by her.[15] The cover of the book indicates immediately that this will be the case. The authors are listed as 'Amiria Stirling *with* Anne Salmond', reflecting the fact that it is the former who is telling the story, a story of her own construction. Salmond is not representing Stirling; what she is doing might be referred to as presenting us, as readers, with Amiria Stirling's own presentation of herself. As with the stories in *Nga Morehu* and *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau, Amiria* is the story of a Maori woman, almost entirely unobstructed and unconstructed by anyone but the subject herself. Salmond asks only basic questions (for example, 'tell me all about when you went away to school') which are deleted from the published monograph, and she also includes appendices and some explanatory footnotes.[16] The main body of the text, however, is Amiria's story, told in her own words. Thus, the title, *Amiria: The Life Story of a Maori Woman*, can be read two ways. Not only is this the story of Amiria Stirling's life, it is also her story, constructed and narrated by her.

The Book of New Zealand Women offers another such personal account of a Maori woman's life in the self-narrated story of Erana Ahuahu Brown. Here, some brief biographical notes precede Erana Brown's short but detailed narrative, which recalls experiences from her childhood years: Maori medicines and cooking, fishing and collecting shellfish, the tattooing of moko and the karakia that went with it, and the use of puha for chewing gum.[17] All of these experiences are significant to the narrator, in that she has chosen to relate them. A less subjective account of Erana Ahuahu Brown's life might have stressed other aspects – births, deaths and marriage (as the biographical notes do) – but in this account it is the old ways of doing things which come to the fore. There is also the possibility, of course, that what is printed here is simply a selected piece from a larger taped narrative, in which case the subjectivity of Erana's story is considerably lessened, in that its contents have been chosen, if not constructed by others.

Two other narratives in *The Book of New Zealand Women* operate in a different manner. The stories of Ngoi Pewhairangi and Mere Kingi Brown are told by people who knew them, and, thus, are not

the women's own stories, but the memories and perceptions of others. Thus, Heni Sunderland's recollections of her great-grandmother, Mere Kingi Brown, present the recollections upon which Heni places significance. Henare Te Ua's account of Ngoi Pewhairangi operates in the same way. He admits that his knowledge of Ngoi is confined to his own experiences of her: 'these are my own little reminiscences. Other people could talk about Ngoi Pewhairangi who was with the mokopuna, sweeping out the dining hall, and add another dimension to the person we all knew and loved as Ngoi.'[18] While these stories do not purport to present the subjective experiences of the women in question, they do present the unmediated memories of people who were close to them, and in that capacity they are valid and often extremely moving.

In contrast, Michael King's *Te Puea: A Biography* operates in a very different manner.[19] While he does draw on oral sources to a large extent, the voices of his informants are effectively drowned by his own narrative voice. Many of his footnotes refer to oral interviews, but the corresponding section of the text is almost always told in King's words. His is the dominant narrative voice, to which the subjectivity of the oral sources are subordinated. *Te Puea*, as Jock Phillips writes, is a book which is 'unashamedly addressed to an educated pakeha audience. It scrupulously obeys the rules of western professional history.'[20] In the preface to the first edition, King draws upon the words of 'one of academia's highest gurus', Professor J.G.A. Pocock, in order to establish the significance of Te Puea Herangi as a political figure. Pocock refers to Te Puea as 'possibly the most influential woman in our political history'.[21] King's book, while in many ways a valuable and sensitive account of Te Puea's life, does not allow those who knew Te Puea Herangi to construct their own accounts of her within its pages. The voices of these people are denied in the face of King's master narrative.

Michael King's *Te Puea* also raises another important question. 'There was criticism', he writes, 'from some Maori quarters that a Pakeha should have written this book. I believe it was misplaced.'[22] Barbara Brookes and Margaret Tennant also pose the 'insiders and outsiders' problem: 'Who is entitled to write about a particular category of women?'[23] With oral history this question becomes even more important, as interviewers and informants are frequently in close contact with each other. Cushla Parekowhai answers the ques-

tion from the point of view of a Maori oral historian: 'being born slightly brown does not necessarily privilege you with a highly developed ability to "hear" what is really being said. It helps but ought not preclude the valuable insights available to other pinker kinds of listeners.' Judith Binney and Gillian Chaplin found it easier to talk with women, but denied that barriers were set up for them as 'outsiders', because they were viewed not as manipulators of knowledge, but recorders of it.[24] Difference then need not hamper communication. Open-mindedness and a desire to learn many different ways of seeing and doing things are more important qualities than similarity.

A relationship which involves trust and sharing is also important in recording narratives like those in *Nga Morehu*, *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau* and *Amiria*. In the case of Binney and Chaplin, the relationship was built through the interviewer/interviewee situation, the long hours spent with the informants, and the laughter, conversation and reflection which took place during this time.[25] In the cases of Salmond and Szaszy, a common background or friendship existed prior to the interviews. Mira Szaszy was herself a founding member of the Maori Women's Welfare League, and it stands to reason that many of her interviewees would have known her personally and for some time. This is evident in the narratives – Szaszy is often addressed by the narrator as one with shared experiences, and she is sometimes turned to in order to back up or confirm parts of the narrative. Emily Paki, for example, asks, 'do you remember all those men that used to sit at the side there – opposite where their women were?'[26] Anne Salmond and Amiria Stirling had a strong and special relationship, which Salmond likens to a 'grandparent-grandchild closeness' long before work on *Amiria* began.[27] What is clear is that these relationships are not based on shared race, tribe, or even gender, but on the less tangible qualities of respect, trust and sharing.

The appeal of books like *Nga Morehu*, *Amiria*, and *Te Timatanga Tatau Tatau* comes from allowing the informants to tell not only the story of their experiences, but their own stories. These stories are told as they are remembered, with individual belief systems and values intact. In contrast, Michael King's *Te Puea* does not allow the memories of those who knew Te Puea to remain as they were constructed and told to King. He writes, it would seem, with a particular historical tradition behind him and a particular audience in his mind.

Differences in background, however, need not preclude one group of people from writing about another. A desire to learn, to share and to record, rather than to reshape and manipulate knowledge is more important than similarities along the lines of race or gender. An important means of learning about Maori women is to give them the opportunity to present themselves, and to open up the historical record to new kinds of narratives.

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NOTES

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23 Barbara Brookes and Margaret Tennant, 'Maori and Pakeha Women: Many Histories, Divergent Pasts?' in Brookes, Macdonald and Tennant (eds), *Women in History 2,* p. 26.

24 Binney and Chapin, *Nga Morehu*, p. 3.

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A Study in Black and White:
The Life and Work of Photographer Jessie Buckland[1]

VICKIE HEARNSHAW

Naomi Rosenblum's *A History of Women Photographers* comes as a welcome addition to the literature on women in the visual arts, spawned in the heady days of the early 1970s with Linda Nochlin's seminal essay, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?'.[2] In her book, Rosenblum examines the contribution of women photographers of North America and Europe within the context of the overall development of the history of photography. She concludes that women have been actively involved in photography since its introduction in 1839. It was a medium that women found congenial. Furthermore, with the advent of the less cumbersome dry plate process in the 1870s and the roll film camera at the end of the following decade, their participation greatly increased.

Rosenblum acknowledges that reclaiming early women photographers and retrieving their work remains difficult. Social conventions of the nineteenth century were such that women, no matter how committed they were, frequently worked at home, without recognition. Unless examples of their photographs have survived, largely through the intervention of relatives, there may be no evidence of their involvement in the medium. However, Rosenblum finds the cursory treatment meted out to the countless women photographers actively engaged in photography since these early years to be unacceptable. Figures on the numbers of women listed as working professionally at the turn of the century make interesting reading. She states that in the United States between 1880 and 1910 the number of professional women photographers rose from 271 to 4,900. By 1920, twenty per cent of all professional photographers were women. The standard histories of photography do not reflect the increasing role of women in the profession. Rosenblum concludes, 'if one agrees that history is an artefact . . . [that] does not exist until it is remembered and written down, then one compelling reason for a history on women photographers is to represent those who have helped shape the field of photography'.[3]

In New Zealand, scant attention has been paid to women photographers and their work by historians.[4] In arguing the case for the recognition of women photographers and their contribution to the art form, Rosenblum identifies the issues and provides a model for undertaking a critical study.[5] The biographical details of more than 240 women photographers of significance offer a profitable comparison with those in New Zealand.

Jessie Lilian Buckland (1878-1939) is one of the few women photographers to have received acknowledgement in surveys of New Zealand photography.[6] However, recognition commensurate with her outstanding record as a photographer for more than forty years has not been forthcoming. This study seeks to examine Buckland's development as a photographer within the context of her social, cultural and artistic background in the light of Rosenblum's observations.

Jessie Buckland follows the recognised pattern of early women photographers. She was self taught, working initially in comparative isolation, in association with her family. In her choice of subject matter, she relied almost exclusively on her immediate surroundings and its people: first, the Strath Taieri region in Otago, and after 1902, Banks Peninsula in Canterbury. Unlike many of her contemporaries, including her equally talented sisters whose early interest in photography soon lapsed, Buckland continued taking photographs. Eventually, she turned a stimulating pastime into an enterprising business which she ran from the township of Akaroa for twenty-five years.

Jessie Buckland was born at the family property of Tumai, near Waikouaiti in East Otago, on 9 May, 1878. She was the sixth child of seven, and the third daughter of Caroline, born Fairbairn, and John Channing Buckland. In the early 1890s the Bucklands moved to Central Otago to take up the leasehold of Taieri Lake Station near Middlemearch, where they remained until 1900.[7]

Although the Otago Central railway line had reached the township of Middlemarch in 1891, the comparative isolation of their situation meant that the children of the family had to find their own amusements and to seek activities that they might not have chosen had they been living in a more closely settled community, with greater possibility for more social interaction. It was in her early teens that Jessie took up photography, in the company of her siblings.

The young Bucklands' first attempts were with a 'pin hole' camera which they purchased by mail order and made up for themselves.[8]

Their aunt, Elizabeth Mary Hocken, a very accomplished woman who took an active role in the cultural life of Dunedin, was probably responsible for introducing her brother's children to photography.[9] As a practising photographer, she was well qualified to offer them both initial encouragement and technical advice. She may have provided them with their first working camera.

During the 1890s the two families were very close, as indicated in the letters of her daughter, Gladys, who spent many holidays up country with her cousins. In her letters Gladys Hocken describes regular sorties with the camera out into the Central Otago countryside.[10] She writes that all three sisters, Carrie, Susan and Jessie, as well as brother Harold, were actively involved in the taking and the processing of photographs. Gladys writes that 'Susan is going to send you another photograph of "Coming through the Rye"' (Fig. 1), which suggests that although the photograph was her sister Jessie's idea and set up by her, images were not jealously guarded once taken, but worked on freely by other members of the family.[11]

This collective attitude towards the photographic process means there can be difficulties in assigning a particular photograph to an individual family member. The three extant albums of photographs from this period offer no clues.[12] Unless a specific photograph was credited to one of them at the time of publication, it is not clear who was responsible for a particular photograph. As Naomi Rosenblum argues, this is one of the prime reasons why women's contribution to photography has so often been denied.[13]

In setting up their photographs the Buckland sisters could draw on skills acquired through their study of drawing and watercolour painting; the intense observation required in sketching assisted them in photographic composition. Rosenblum explains that some previous training in the fine arts gave women an advantage when they took up photography, and was a natural development for those who already had an interest in the visual arts.[14]

Like other young women of their social background, the Buckland girls had received some art training. Examples of their work in the Hocken Library demonstrate that they were all technically proficient. In the early 1890s, probably prior to the family's move to Central Otago, Susan Buckland received art lessons while attending a private school in Dunedin. Her teacher was Fanny Wimperis who had trained in London and recently arrived in this country.[15] Sisters Carrie

Fig. 1: Coming through the Rye, c. 1897, Akaroa Museum, Akaroa.

and Jessie may also have taken lessons with Wimperis or another member of this artistic family. Their aunt, Bessie Hocken, was also a recognised artist and exhibited regularly with the Otago Art Society during this period. At the annual exhibition of 1893 Hocken submitted a watercolour entitled 'On the Rock and Pillar Range' which suggests that she had been staying with her brother and his family at Taieri Lake Station.[16] It is likely that the Buckland girls would have gone out with her, observing their aunt's methods.

During the 1890s the advent of pictorial supplements in newspapers such as the *Otago Witness* would have been an important influence on the Bucklands as photographers and the formulation of their ideas. For instance, Jessie Buckland demonstrates how she had assimilated many of the pictorial devices of realism and adapted them to a local context in her photographs of this period. The expansive Central Otago landscape was well-suited to the type of anecdotal subject matter favoured by the realist school. Following a recognised pictorial formula, Jessie characteristically positions her figures standing close to the picture-plane, outlined against the rugged contours of the Rock and Pillar range, omnipresent in the background of her photographic studies. In 'Coming through the Rye' Jessie, as the man, and Ina Burnett, her friend and neighbour, as the woman, pause momentarily in a field of sun-ripened grain, before the craggy peaks.

The activity of 'picture making' as opposed to 'picture taking' was an important part of the whole process, with much time spent in the planning stages of each photograph. An idea had to be thought up, then suitable costumes organised and poses rehearsed with all the camaraderie of an amateur theatrical performance. For the successful outcome, Jessie was reliant on the co-operation of her family for technical assistance. In many cases, after setting up the scene, Jessie would have a 'helper', another member of the family, to release the button, as in 'Coming through the Rye' where Jessie was also a protagonist in the scene.

Presumably it was Bessie Hocken who also encouraged the Buckland children to send examples of their photographic work for publication. Carrie, Jessie and Harold Buckland all submitted photographs to newspapers in New Zealand and Australia during the 1890s. Jessie Buckland's first success in the photographic competition run by the Melbourne bi-monthly paper, the *Australasian,* came with the photograph entitled 'Such a Big Basket' and 'We Have Caught Noth-

ing' entered in the figure subject section in the latter part of 1895. Buckland was awarded second place for her entry, with prize money of two guineas.[17]

In this photograph Jessie on the left, with a fishing net, and her mother, Caroline, on the right, with an enormous cane basket, are both dressed presumably as fishwives who have not had a good catch. In this photograph Buckland followed the format she preferred for her narrative genre photographs, with one or two figures in the foreground, set against a high horizon line, in this case the bank of the river where the two women stand.

When the photograph was reproduced in the *Australasian*, it appeared next to her aunt's submission of 'Mother's Treasure Box', which was awarded first prize in the same section. For Jessie, her sister Carrie and brother Harold, the prize money which they regularly received from their photography must have been welcome pocket money.

After her initial success, Jessie regularly submitted photographs to the *Australasian* and was frequently placed in their photographic competitions. However, she always used a pseudonym. Her nom-de-plume for 'Such a Big Basket' and 'We Have Caught Nothing' was P. Gay. Why Buckland should seek anonymity for her photographs at this stage is a puzzle. As an adult she always acknowledged her work; first by a capital 'B', then, after she turned professional, she used her initials and surname in full.[18] Perhaps she felt if it became known that she was still in her teens, her work might have been taken less seriously.

Although Jessie Buckland exhibited such prodigious skill as a photographer, it was the teaching profession that she decided to enter as a career. From 1899-1902 she was engaged as a governess in the boarding house of the Otago Girls' High School in Dunedin, at an annual salary of £30, assisting students with their studies out of school hours and with gymnastics.[19] However, in June 1902, due to falling numbers in the boarding house, the school board decided that Jessie's services were no longer required. The principal, Allman Marchant, intervened on her behalf, urging the board to retain Jessie in some capacity but to no avail; her position was terminated.[20]

Nevertheless, the period in Dunedin was formative for Buckland, who seems already to have decided on a career rather than to enter into marriage. Marchant, a strong advocate for women, was an admirable role model for Buckland. Jessie's father's involvement in poli-

tics on a local and national level meant that there would have been lively debate in the home on issues of the day such as women's suffrage.[21] Jessie Buckland would have had the opportunity to explore and develop attitudes that may have led her to question the traditional roles for women of homemaking and mothering.

It was during the four-year period at Otago Girls' that Buckland's father relinquished the lease on Taieri Lake Station. Following the safe return of brother Harold from the South African war in July 1901, her father took over the running of 1,000 acres of farmland in partnership with him on the western side of Akaroa harbour on the steep slopes of Mt Bossu above the settlement of Wainui.[22] In May 1902 her father also purchased an eleven-acre property known as 'The Glen' on the other side of the harbour at Green Point, near the township of Akaroa. It was here that Jessie joined her parents and sister Carrie. The Glen remained her home until several months before she left Akaroa in early 1935.

In Akaroa, Jessie resumed her interest in photography, which she appears to have neglected while in Dunedin. One room in the large twelve-roomed house at The Glen, known to the family as Jay's room, was set aside for Jessie and her photographic activities.[23] Here, she did her developing and retouching in the early years in Akaroa and kept her library of books on photography.

Her first images from the Akaroa period feature views taken from her home at The Glen. The view looking towards Akaroa township from the extensive garden which ran down to the water's edge became a favourite subject. In one of her first photographs taken after her arrival and possibly one of the last taken in the spring of 1934, she recorded the same scene. 'Sunrise, The Glen', describes the early morning mists rising off the sea. In contrast to the strong outlines under the clear skies of the Central Otago landscape which she had formerly known, the soft air of the maritime climate is apparent in Buckland's work of this period.

The monument at Green Point, erected in 1898 to mark the site where Captain Stanley of *H.M.S. Britomart* hoisted the Union Jack in 1840, claiming British sovereignty over the South Island, was also within the bounds of the property. The definite outline of the historic monument in the foreground of the composition, silhouetted against the softened forms in the background, became a recurrent motif in her work. One of the most impressive examples belongs to a series of pho-

tographs taken by Buckland during the five-day visit of *H.M.S. New Zealand* to Akaroa in May 1913, showing the warship at anchor shrouded by sea mist with the Green Point monument in the foreground (Fig. 2).

Buckland also sought out from an early date local activities of specific significance to Banks Peninsula, for instance, the harvesting of the cocksfoot for grass seed. Cocksfoot seed was an important cash crop in the region at the turn of the century. Between 1904 and 1906, she undertook a series of photographs depicting the cutting, harvesting, threshing and exporting of cocksfoot. Possibly the best known photograph in the series is the image of Fred Kegan's bullock teams, with filled sacks of seed piled high on top of the wagons, slowly wending their way along the waterfront at Akaroa to the wharf in readiness for shipment (Fig. 3).

This series of photographs was most probably used to support the display featuring each stage in the processing of cocksfoot for the Banks Peninsula Court at the International Exhibition held in Christchurch over the summer of 1906-1907. Buckland's father, who was actively involved in local government until 1908, was a member of the committee responsible for the collection of photographic material for the Banks Peninsula exhibit.[24]

Jessie Buckland also received recognition for her Akaroa photographs from the Department of Tourism in Wellington. Representatives from the department visited Akaroa on at least two occasions, in 1906 and 1910. On each visit a selection of her photographs was purchased by the department for publicity purposes. Her photographs from this period were also selected for inclusion in the publication by James Cowan entitled *Lovely Akaroa*, the first of a number of publications to which Buckland contributed photographs during her Akaroa period.[25]

Buckland's first postcards of Akaroa and Peninsula scenes, later to become a lucrative part of her photography business, also date from this period. At some early stage she purchased a camera designed specifically for this purpose by the Kodak Company, who also produced photographic paper of the required size to facilitate postcard production. In many of these views we can see how Buckland adopted the popular contemporary practice of taking a second photograph using a yellow-absorbing filter which increased the blue and violet in the spectrum, which was then superimposed onto the origi-

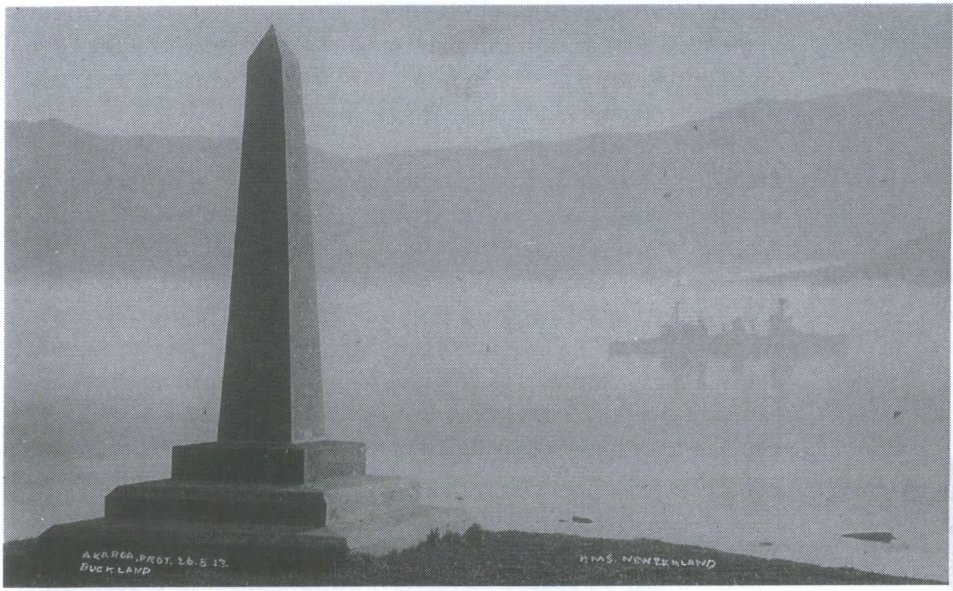

Fig. 2: H.M.S. New Zealand, *1913. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.*

Fig. 3: Bullock Waggons (sic), Akaroa, 1906. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

nal image to enhance the cloud effects. This technique has been used in the view looking towards the township of Akaroa from The Glen, taken during the winter months of 1909. Winter, when the air is still, was her preferred season for view taking.

From the beginning, Buckland took a business-like approach to the distribution of her postcards. Her nephew Dr Geoffrey Orbell recalled arriving as a small boy at the hotel at Hilltop on the way to Akaroa 'where [his aunt] had postcards for sale'.[26] Buckland also sold the rights to other publishers who reproduced her work under their names, notably, Isabel Ltd of Akaroa, Frank Duncan and Co. of Auckland, and Tanner Brothers of Wellington. In the late twenties and the early thirties she employed an English firm to produce a series of twelve scenes, some hand-coloured, which sold under her own name or under the name of her designated agent. These views, promoted on the presentation packet as 'real photographs for your snap shot album' and retailing for two shillings, proved very popular with locals and tourists alike.

Despite these successes, Jessie Buckland was slow to realise that her talent with the camera could sustain a living. Akaroa was a township of less than 600 inhabitants at the turn of the century. There was already an established photographic studio of T. E. Taylor and Co. ably serving the community.

There were certainly other women photographers in New Zealand working in a professional capacity, but they usually worked in partnership with a spouse. Rosenblum's observations in this area are useful. She reminds us that photography was one pursuit where women were successful in business, and that the initial outlays were in fact minimal if the woman already had all the necessary equipment, which Buckland had.[27]

Prior to making her decision to turn professional, Buckland had been actively seeking some worthwhile occupation outside the confines of the family home. Following the family's arrival in Akaroa, her sister Carrie had been operating her own small private school, before she was required to relinquish this position to take over the day-to-day running of the family property for her mother and ailing father. A notice in the *Akaroa Mail* in February 1906 announcing that Jessie Buckland intended holding classes for elementary students in English, French, calisthenics and drawing leads us to believe that Jessie wished to continue her sister's small school.[28] How-

ever, this did not come to pass.

During these early years in Akaroa Jessie continued to send photographs to competitions in newspapers and journals. In April 1907, she won overall first prize in the photographic competition run by the *Auckland (Herald) Weekly*. For this competition entrants had to submit six photographs that had not been previously published. Buckland's entry included photographs of the cocksfoot seed harvesting, among them the photograph of Kegan's bullock wagons reproduced in the *Weekly* on 23 May 1907, with the caption: 'The patient bullock team: Produce waggons [sic] ready for the road at Akaroa, South Island'.[29] This public acknowledgement may have been the recognition that she needed to start out on her own account as a professional photographer, for in the following weeks she announced in the public notices of the *Akaroa Mail* her intention to open a photographic studio in Akaroa.[30]

Buckland's Akaroa studio was located on Beach Road in a brick building back from the street, which she rented from Alex Munro who ran the shoe store at the front. She used his shop window to showcase her most recent work.[31] In a carefully composed study of Buckland dating from this period, we glimpse her standing at the open window of her studio, a handsome woman, one who commands our attention (Fig. 4). She holds a wooden plateholder in her right hand as an attribute of her chosen profession. In her dress she reveals her preference was for the less restrictive code adopted by the progressive woman of the period. Older Akaroa residents' most frequent memory of Buckland is of her cycling to and from her home to the studio, an image consistent with the 'new woman' of the turn of the century.[32]

Buckland's Beach Road studio was quite small. The original entry to the studio was converted into a small reception area with a darkroom partitioned off at one side.[33] Initially, Buckland not only undertook work by appointment, but also took in films from the public for processing, a service she continued to offer for many years. She employed an assistant to carry out the more routine work of the business, such as the developing and processing of films, retouching and assisting her when out on assignment. Lucy Youngman, whose father was the Akaroa postmaster from 1911 to 1921, was one who ably filled this position for some years.[34]

For youngsters coming to have their photographs taken the stu-

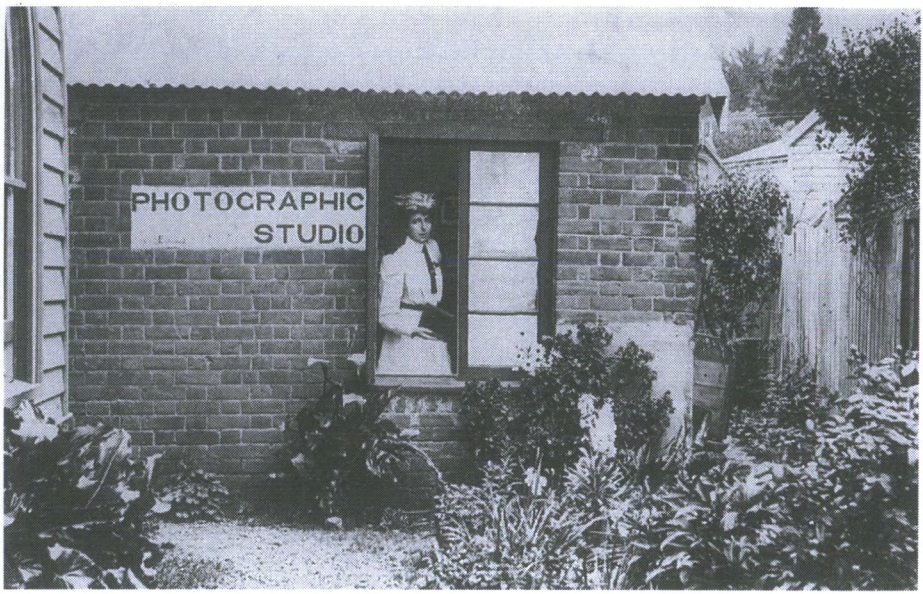

Fig. 4: Jessie Buckland at the window of her Akaroa studio, c. 1907. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

dio was like 'a magic cave', with all the mystery of the camera, black hood and flash combined.[35] At first Jessie used a 1/2 plate camera which exposed by the simple removal and replacement of the lens cap. Later she acquired a whole plate camera with a rubber pressure bulb to release the shutter.[36] In the studio, she had a selection of toys and other objects to capture the attention of the younger sitter while the photograph was taken.

In venturing into portraiture Buckland was following a recognised path for women photographers. It was generally agreed at the time, Rosenblum tells us, that women photographers were equipped with the right sensibilities to take photographs of mothers with children or children alone.[37] They were felt to be naturally more in tune with these subjects than their male counterparts, who were considered to have a more mechanical approach to their portrait-taking.

Certainly some of Buckland's photographs of youngsters reveal an empathy with her sitters. One of her early studio portraits

Fig. 5: Louise and Iris Kearney, 1912. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

was of Louise and Iris Kearney, aged three and four (Fig. 5). In this study Buckland posed the two sisters against the framework of a colonial-style chair back which their small hands entwined. In the portrait of young Alymer Newton dating from the early twenties, she again captured the innocence of childhood. In this particular photograph the little girl is shown looking down, absorbed in tinkering with the workings of a wind-up clock that has been placed in

her hands. During this period Buckland introduced to her portrait studies the technique known as vignetting, achieved by using a black filter at the time of processing to effect a white outline round the margins of the photograph – an artful device to draw attention to the subject.

Buckland did not confine her studio portraits to small children, although they may have been a large part of her business. She took photographs of groups for the school and Sunday school as well as the occasional wedding. One of the more memorable early group portraits was the study of three well-known old identities dating from 1912, published in the *Weekly Press* under the title, 'Three Sturdy Pioneers of Banks Peninsula'.[38] In this photograph she poses the elderly gentlemen in pensive mood, close to the picture plane. The photograph is reliant for its impact on the contrast of the dark cloth of their suiting with their faces, collars and cuffs, reminiscent of the Dutch masters. It was one of several portrait studies Buckland submitted to the pictorial supplements of the two Christchurch weekly papers during this period.

An area where women photographers were less to the forefront in the first years of the century was documentary and news photography. It was seen as a specialised discipline and photographers involved in this type of work were usually in the direct employ of the newspaper for which they worked. Jessie Buckland, working freelance, used her camera to document and report on local events for more than thirty years on the Peninsula.

One of the most famous incidents which she was to record was the arrival of the *Terra Nova* in Akaroa harbour in April 1912, after two years in the Antarctic. It had been secretly arranged before the ship sailed to the South Pole that it would make Akaroa its first port of call on its return. It was from this location that Lieutenant Pennell wired London with news of the fate of Captain Scott and his men. In Buckland's photograph of the *Terra Nova* we see it alongside the ship *Hammond's Launch* which normally ran a ferry service to the settlements across the harbour. This image was subsequently published in the pictorial section of the *Auckland Weekly News* and reproduced in postcard form.[39]

Over the years, Buckland was on hand to record other notable events, such as the opening of the wharf at Takamatua (1910), the opening of the swimming baths (1914), the opening of the post

office (1915), the official visit of General Pau (1918), the Armistice day celebrations (1918), the peace celebrations (1919) and the opening of the war memorial (1924).

In the early 1920s Buckland purchased a panoramic camera. It was a camera ideally suited to her and one that she had quietly hankered after. She had an initial trial with a borrowed camera in 1903, but resisted buying, presumably due to cost.[40] Prior to her purchase, Buckland had already experimented with the concept of a panoramic view by overlapping a series of photographs to produce this effect. One of her most popular images was a series of three joined photographs of Akaroa township, the harbour and surrounding hills of 1913 and reprinted in 1928. She also used this idea in a series of postcards, where two postcards can be placed together to form a panoramic view, for example the beach at Akaroa and the adjoining swimming baths taken in 1914.

The panoramic camera provided Buckland with a new facility which she used with characteristic success. One of her first photographs taken with the camera was of the view from the hill up behind her home at The Glen on 7 August 1921. A sudden winter storm the previous day had brought snow down to sea level. Buckland went out after the weather had cleared to capture this unusual occurrence. The inclusion of the walking sticks in the composition provides human interest to the scene and a sense of scale. This snow scene was printed in a variety of ways, without a caption, with a caption and a special version with hand-painted highlights.

In 1923 Buckland bought a Morris Cowley coupe. A woman driving a motor car in those days was fairly unusual, but that she had the means to purchase one herself was very unusual and suggests the sound state of her photographic business at this period.[41]

One of her most successful panoramic photographs was of a family enjoying a picnic on the beach at Wainui (Fig. 6). Here, Buckland captured the relaxed mood and conviviality of the scene, something which was almost impossible with earlier cameras because of the necessary longer exposure times. This photograph was to be one of a pair, with another scene of boys playing by a beached boat. Together, the photographs provide an expansive view of the beach looking out towards the Akaroa Heads.

From the 1920s Buckland used her panoramic camera on many occasions to document events in the town, such as the opening of the

Fig. 6: Picnic at Wainui, Banks Peninsula, 1920s. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

war memorial in March 1924, an event in which the whole community participated. To capture the occasion from various standpoints, she set up a number of cameras. In one of the panoramic views, her assistant has caught Buckland poised behind her camera about to take a shot of the ceremony taking place in front of her.

One of Buckland's best-known images, 'Home in the Evening', also dates from the mid-twenties (Fig. 7). In this photograph, Buckland captures the reunion of the Newton family at the close of day. Mother and daughter have come up to the may tree paddock at the top of Alymer's Valley, high above the small township, to greet the father on horseback, returning after a day's work on the farm. He has lifted his young daughter up onto the saddle in front of him. Together the family pauses in the golden light of evening to survey the beauty of their surroundings.

This particular photograph found its way onto the walls of many homes in Akaroa. In its subject matter Buckland returns to the narrative genre themes of the 1890s, which relied to some extent on anecdote or sentiment for their attraction. A close-up view of the same scene entitled 'Riding Home with Daddy' was published in the Christmas issue of the *Auckland Weekly News* in 1924, with three other Akaroa scenes including 'On the Road Near Akaroa', a droving scene.[42] Again, in this photograph, she returns to pastoral themes that she had first explored as a girl at Taieri Lake Station. Subsequently the photograph of 'On the Road Near Akaroa' was published in an information booklet on Akaroa under the title 'The Golden Fleece'.[43]

After the initial collaboration with James Cowan in the early 1900s, Buckland contributed photographs to a number of publications relating to the promotion of Akaroa and Banks Peninsula. Author and poet Blanche Baughan approached her to supply photographs for her book *Akaroa* which was first published in 1919 and was reprinted in *Glimpses of New Zealand Scenery* in 1922.[44] In this publication Buckland included Akaroa scenes and rather incongruously, an occasional scene taken during her years at Taieri Lake Station, including the Central Otago photograph 'Why the Mail Bag was Late?'.[45] This was not an isolated occurrence, for throughout the Akaroa period Buckland reprinted photographs from the earlier period, sometimes assigning new titles to them. For example, the photograph entitled 'Coming through the Rye' was reprinted in postcard

Fig. 7: Home in the Evening, 1924. Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

format as 'Coming through the Rye, Akaroa'; the pastoral scene of sheep being driven through an open gate, formerly known as 'Evening, June', when reprinted was issued as 'Sunset'.

After the death of her sister Carrie in 1930, Buckland gradually wound down her photographic business so that she could devote herself to the care of her elderly mother. In this she was assisted by her friend Margaret Mackenzie who came to The Glen as a live-in companion for the next four years. Following her mother's death in April 1934, there was little to hold Buckland in Akaroa. After settling her mother's estate and concluding her own business affairs, she left Akaroa in January 1935, for a long-awaited trip to Great Britain with Margaret Mackenzie.[46] Buckland's extended visit to Britain has yet to be documented. To date, not even one photograph from these years has come to light. In March 1939, Buckland was diagnosed as suffering from cancer and received treatment at a hospital in London.[47] She secured a passage to New Zealand on the *Tamaroa*, embarking on 8 May and she died during the voyage on 8 June.[48] In accordance with her expressed wishes, she was buried at sea.[49]

Jessie Buckland was a photographer for more than forty years. Photography brought her personal fulfilment and security. Celebrating Buckland's life and work and her contribution to our artistic and cultural heritage serves to highlight Rosenblum's case for the recognition of woman photographers and their work within the context of the overall development of the history of photography.

Vickie Hearnshaw studied art history at the University of Canterbury and now works as a freelance researcher. Her interest in documenting the lives and work of New Zealand photographers, particularly those from the Canterbury region, has come as a result of her association with the Macmillan Brown Library from 1990 as part-time curator of photographs. Since that date she has published a number of articles on Canterbury photographers represented in this collection and curated several exhibitions for the library. Presently, she is actively seeking to enlarge the historic photographs collection, especially photographs taken by women.

NOTES

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[2] Naomi Rosenblum, *A History of Woman Photographers* (Abbeville Press, New York, 1994); Linda Nochlin, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?', *Art News*, 69 (1971) [reprinted in Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (Harper and Row, New York, 1988) pp.145-178].

[3] Rosenblum, pp.7, 10, 55, 59.

[4] See Hardwicke Knight, *New Zealand Photographers: A Selection* (Allied Press Ltd, Dunedin, 1981); Hardwicke Knight, *Photography in New Zealand* (J. McIndoe, Dunedin, 1971); William Main and John B. Turner, *New Zealand Photography from the 1840s to the Present* (Photoforum, Auckland,1993).

[5] Rosenblum, pp.291-327.

[6] Main and Turner, p.27.

[7] Otago High School letterbooks, 1890-1899, Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, AG266.

[8] Letter, G. B. Orbell to W. Main, 16 April 1980, private collection, Wellington.

[9] Bessie Hocken was J. C. Buckland's sister and wife of Dr. T. M. Hocken. For additional information on Bessie Hocken, see Rosemary Entwisle (ed.), *'Mrs Hocken Requests ...', Women's Contribution to the Hocken Library* (Hocken Library, Dunedin, 1993) pp. 7-10. Hocken became a member of the Dunedin Photographic Society in 1892, the year women were first admitted. She also must have encouraged Harold and Carrie to join. They were each members for one year 1892 and 1899 respectively. Jessie and Susan Buckland were never members.

[10] Letter, G. Hocken to her parents, December 1894, private collection, Christchurch.

[11] Letter, G. Hocken to her parents, no date, private collection, Christchurch.

[12] Buckland albums, Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, 210, 211; folio 26,767.

[13] Rosenblum, p.7.

[14] ibid., pp.61, 81.

15 Una Platts, *Nineteenth Century New Zealand Artists* (Avon Fine Prints Ltd, Christchurch, 1980) p.186. Platt states that Susan Buckland attended Miss Duke's School. She may mean Miss Dick's School, which Jessie was purported to have attended (see Entwisle, p.35). When I asked Nancy Buckland about the girls' education in January, 1996, she said that they were tutored by a governess. However, Jessie and Susan may have had the opportunity to attend school for a short time when the family were reported to be living in Dunedin c.1902. For further information on Fanny Wimperis, see Platts, pp.258-59.

16 Exhibition Catalogue, no. 234 (Otago Art Society, Dunedin, 1893).

17 *Australasian*, 24 August 1895, p.359.

18 Jessie Buckland signed her Akaroa work 'B' until she opened her studio in 1907. At this time she purchased a blindstamp inscribed 'J. L. Buckland, Akaroa, NZ' in script. Circa 1919 she purchased a second blindstamp. This stamp was inscribed 'J. L. Buckland, Photographer, Akaroa' in block letters. In this way the approximate date of any undated photographs can be ascertained.

19 Otago Girls' Schools' letterbooks, Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, AG266, 6 March 1899, p.115.

20 Otago Girls' Schools' letterbooks, Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, AG266, 3 May 1902, p.258; 3 June 1902, p.262.

21 For information on J. C. Buckland's public life see Guy Hardy Scholefield (ed.), *A Dictionary of NZ Biography, Volume 1* (Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 1940) p.114.

22 See N. M. Buckland, *The Bucklands* (Christchurch, 1975) for information on all members of the Buckland family, including Harold. The date of purchase of this property has not been ascertained, however, the property was sold by the Bucklands in April 1934 (*Akaroa Mail*, 1 May 1934, p.2).

23 Interview, Nancy Buckland, January 1996.

24 *Akaroa Mail*, 6 June 1906, p.2; 24 July 1906, p. .

25 *Akaroa Mail*, 30 March 1906, p.2; 4 March 1910, p.2.

26 Letter, G. H. Orbell to W. Main, 12 April 1980, private collection, Wellington.

27 Rosenblum, p.59.

28 *Akaroa Mail*, 26 February 1906, p.3.

29 *Auckland Weekly News,* Pictorial Supplement, 23 May 1907, p.1.

30 *Akaroa Mail*, 7 April 1907, p.3.

31 Interview, Jack Drummond, Akaroa, March 1996.

32 Interview, Bill Weir, Akaroa, March 1996.

33 Interview, Nancy Buckland, Christchurch, January 1996.

34 Interview, Alymer Newton, Christchurch, January 1996.

35 ibid.

36 Letter, G. H. Orbell to W. Main, 16 April 1980, private collection, Wellington.

37 Rosenblum, p.74.

38 *Weekly Press* (Christchurch), 20 March 1912, p.39.

39 *Auckland Weekly News,* Pictorial Supplement, 20 October 1924, p.11.

40 There is a panoramic photograph dated 1903 included with watercolours by Jessie Buckland, Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin, G/B942.

41 Letter, G. H. Orbell to W. Main, 12 April 1980, private collection, Wellington.

42 *Auckland Weekly News*, 20 October 1924, p.19.

43 *Come to Akaroa Canterbury's Premier Seaside Resort,* 1929, unpaginated pamphlet, Akaroa Museum, Akaroa.

44 Blanche Edith Baughan, *Akaroa* (Whitcombe & Tombs, Auckland, 1917); Blanche Edith Baughan, *Glimpses of New Zealand Scenery* (Whitcombe and Tombs, Auckland, 1922) pp.83-323.

45 Baughan, *Akaroa,* p. 34.

46 *Akaroa Mail*, 15 January 1935, p.2; 17 May 1935, p.2.

47 Entwisle, p.37.

48 *Akaroa Mail*, 13 June 1939, p.2.

49 Buckland wrote her will in May 1938 (National Archives, Christchurch, probate no. 20142/1939). In it, she expressed her desire to be buried at sea.

META ASSINK

Lover's Invitation to Dinner

In our doorway sits a prickly insect.

Mantis poised, arms pressed in
prayerful longing.
Long hooked claws tucked under
drooling jaws.

Eyes red-beaded by bloodlust
twist as triangular head angles
after the insect movement of its
timid creeping prey.

This time it is the lover who comes.
Succumbing to a risky temptation
he caresses her tasty foreleg.
Softens her.
Strokes her into submission.

Deed done, off he strides.

But brutal femininity ambles after
and bites off his satisfied head.
Annoyed by the softened sexual
ritual she refuses to ignore the
crisp invitation to dinner.

Insects (And How They Relate to Women)

The rhythmic chirrup of crickets
  accompanies me through this night.
Now, keeping me awake, they annoy me.
  Now, lullaby-like, they soothe me.

Remember those mornings in childhood?

Pulling tough plastic covers off the sandpit.
  Standing startled listening to the rustle and clatter
of small brittle bodies each seeking to evade
  the light. A creeping mass of waving insect legs
as they scrambled in hopping haste over one another.

Remember also,

A boy who bit the heads off cicadas
  with a sickening crunching-munching sound.
    He said he thought it made him a man.

Another who tore dragonfly wings from struggling bodies
  and scattered them like cellophane wrappers in the stream.
    He said he thought it made him a man.

Yet another ripped the limbs from startled grasshoppers
  leaving dismembered emerald legs in the green.
    He said he thought it made him a man.

The sun rises, birds stir, a lone cricket offers
a cricket's lament for some of the things that
some men do to women which are, likewise,

cruel and inhuman boys' games.

Meta Assink is a student at the University of Auckland

'Sameness' and Suckling:
Infant Feeding, Feminism, and a Changing Labour Market

JUDITH GALTRY

> Feminism has always had some difficulty with biology. On the one hand, feminism was founded on the rejection of the idea that the positions accorded to women and men in current society are the inevitable result of biological differences between the sexes. On the other hand, feminism had to recognize that there are such differences and that they must have some effects.[1]

Parental leave policies have long been the subject of debate in New Zealand, particularly since the mid 1970s. Initially, the debates were seen to fall within the realm of 'women's issues', but lobbying, mainly by women's groups, meant that the subject of leave around the birth of a child came to be increasingly perceived as a labour market concern. Embedded in these debates, however, are some complex and fundamental issues concerning the reconciliation of women's reproductive biology with the goal of gender equality in the market-place. The complexities of these issues are emphasised when the subject of breastfeeding is brought into the analysis.[2]

In New Zealand, although some reference has been made in discussions about the development of labour market policy to the need for women to recover following childbirth, breastfeeding has not significantly featured, especially in recent years. In this paper, I examine the possible reasons behind the exclusion of breastfeeding as a subject for explicit feminist analysis within these debates. I then go on to argue that this exclusion, although understandable within the context of developing more gender-inclusive parental leave and family-friendly workplace policies, may have had the dual effect of assisting some groups of women to achieve equality with men in the market-place while, inadvertently, failing to address the needs of another group in terms of 'choice' over infant feeding. Recent labour market changes, in particular, the increasing numbers of women in paid employment who have infants, along with a developing body of biomedical research on the benefits of breastfeeding have brought this problem into focus.

THE COSTS OF 'DIFFERENCE' IN THE LABOUR MARKET

An extensive body of literature makes the point that any deviation from the traditional male work cycle is costly in labour market terms.[3] Thus, within discussions concerning the development of labour market policy, there has sometimes been a well-justified fear of calling attention to women's reproductive biology. To do so threatens to raise the twin spectres of essentialism and biological determinism, or the notions that women and men have uniquely different natures which are biologically derived and, therefore, justify particular roles, responsibilities, and positions in society. Breastfeeding, in particular, has traditionally served as a powerful, and often convenient, rationale legitimising a gendered division of labour which assigns women the primary responsibility for child rearing.[4]

While pregnancy, like breastfeeding, constitutes a potent and visible sign of sex-specific 'difference' or 'otherness' in the marketplace , unlike the latter it is inevitable for most women in the process of metamorphosis to motherhood.[5] In contrast, breastfeeding represents a female reproductive process which is, in most instances, no longer necessary to infant survival, at least within industrialised nations. Accordingly, breastfeeding can be more conveniently located within a discourse emphasising individual choice over infant feeding decisions. This emphasis on individual choice, which also reflects an understandable desire to avoid the prescriptive pitfalls which have historically marred the issue of infant feeding, has contributed to the marginalisation of breastfeeding within feminist debates concerning the development of labour market policy in recent years.[6] I will return later to the implications for various groups of women of this increasingly powerful discourse of individual choice in relation to infant feeding.

In order to more fully understand the marginalisation of infant feeding issues within the development of labour market policy, it is necessary to briefly outline and contextualise the development of female-specific labour legislation in this country.

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PROTECTIVE LABOUR LEGISLATION

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw the enactment in New Zealand, as in many other Western nations, of legislation aimed at protecting women employees from adverse working conditions, including long hours of work. In 1873, the New Zealand

Employment of Females Act limited the hours women could work in factories to eight per day. Over a century later, as recently as the 1970s, there were reported instances of women being dismissed by their employers on becoming pregnant and even, in some industries, on marriage.[7]

Female reproductive biology has traditionally served as the explicit rationale for these protective labour laws restricting women's involvement in paid work. In general, it was believed that women needed such legislation in order 'to safeguard their health as future mothers'.[8] In an overview of protective legislation enacted in Europe, the United States, and Australia between 1880-1920, Alice Kessler-Harris, Jane Lewis and Ulla Wikander claim that it is commonly agreed that a discourse of maternalism underlay such policy – in most instances, the emphasis was on women's presumed maternal role rather than on their right and, often, their economic need to be in paid work.[9] Invoking the issues of both declining fertility rates and high infant mortality rates, these maternalist discourses, promulgated at times by women reformers and conservatives alike, stressed the need for 'protection' for women workers of childbearing age, but placed the emphasis on protection from paid employment as opposed to protection of it.

Nowadays, as Kessler-Harris *et al* observe, accounts of the history of labour legislation often express ambivalence about the maternalist creed which inspired such 'protective' laws. Nevertheless, in real welfare terms, many women and their offspring did, in fact, benefit from such reforms. Hand-in-hand with these benefits, however, was the tendency for women's interests to be perceived as 'in opposition to those of their children and thus to insist that women subordinate their own interests to some greater good'.[10] This maternalist discourse, embracing not only pregnancy and childbirth but also breastfeeding and often motherhood in general, has sometimes served to legitimise a compulsory period of leave (often without wage replacement) or even dismissal from paid employment for women workers.

With the benefit of hindsight, then, recent feminist accounts have demonstrated the way in which much sex-specific labour legislation, although at times well-intentioned, served in effect to undermine the interests of many women workers, justifying their exclusion from the workforce and their low pay and status within a sex-segregated

occupational hierarchy.[11] As a result, feminist policy makers and those organisations lobbying for workplace improvements for women have tended to view any allusion to female reproductive biology within the context of developing labour market policy with well-justified suspicion.

In an international overview of demography and public policies potentially supportive of gender equality, Alena Heitlinger maintains that, despite the somewhat tarnished history of labour legislation aimed specifically at women, there is a need to differentiate between two types of protective measures.[12] These include those 'based upon historically specific (and outmoded) views about women's capabilities and appropriate roles in society, and those aimed at protecting women's reproductive and maternal functions'.[13] Heitlinger contends that although the former rationale is highly dubious, protective legislation aimed at ensuring 'reproductive and foetal health', despite presenting some difficult and complex challenges for the formulation of public policy, is sometimes necessary.[14] One of the challenges for public policy, according to Heitlinger, is how to reconcile these health considerations with the goal of equal employment opportunity. In this paper, I argue that this analysis needs to be extended to include breastfeeding and its intersection with women's participation in the labour market.

ISSUES OF EQUALITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PARENTAL LEAVE DEBATES IN NEW ZEALAND, 1970 - 1990: The feminist input

Lucinda Finley, in an analysis of the American workplace, stresses the need to distinguish between 'old-style' protective labour laws, characteristic of late last century and early this century, which served to constrain or exclude women from paid employment, and labour legislation which is inclusive in its effect on women's labour market involvement. Using the specific example of maternity leave with guaranteed job protection, Finley contends that although this provision represents a form of sex-specific protective legislation, it is nevertheless 'designed to foster the inclusion of women'.[15]

In New Zealand, it was not until 1948 that some form of job-protected maternity leave was introduced, despite the fact that the International Labour Organisation had established its maternity convention as early as 1919.[16] Even then, it covered only maternity leave within the public service. Over thirty years would pass before statu-

tory leave was extended to private sector employees.[17] During the 1970s, a decade in which there was a dramatic resurgence of interest in feminist issues, various organisations and committees submitted recommendations calling for some period of maternity, and often paternity, leave.[18]

In late 1979 the National Government introduced the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill. The proposed legislation sought to enable women to take 26 weeks of leave around the birth and/or adoption of a child while ensuring job protection. Just under half of the 70 or so submissions to the select committee considering the Bill were from women's organisations or other groups with predominantly female membership.[19] It is important to note, however, that many of those groups who prepared submissions may not, at that stage, have had well formulated policies on parental leave. Moreover, the viewpoints expressed may not necessarily have been fully endorsed by the organisation concerned. These submissions represent, nevertheless, a public record and can be taken as indicative, to some extent, of the particular organisation's thinking at that time.

In general, the introduction of this Bill was welcomed by women's organisations. The proposed legislation was seen to represent a first step towards enabling women to reconcile labour market and family responsibilities. It was, however, the focus of much contention. For many, this related primarily to the fact that, within the terms of this draft legislation, there continued to be a very obvious upholding of differences between the responsibilities of women and men with regard to both paid work and child rearing. In particular, as indicated by its title, leave for infant care was seen to be relevant only to mothers. Highlighting the ambivalence of many feminists towards this Bill, were the great number of submissions which argued for some additional provision for parental and/or paternity leave. Some groups also invoked the need for leave payment.

Not surprisingly, the goal of most of these groups was legislation potentially supportive of gender equality in both family and workplace. It was recognised that fundamental to this goal was the need not only to preserve and enhance women's employment paths but also to enable and encourage men to take a more active role in child rearing. It was foreseen that if, as proposed, such legislation was to apply solely to mothers, there would not only be reinforcement for inequitable patterns of unpaid work within the household but, within the market-

place, employers would also be more likely to discriminate against female employees by not hiring those of childbearing age.

Given the particular political context and the mainstream feminist goal of more gender-inclusive leave legislation, it is not surprising that the majority of submissions failed to mention the subject of breastfeeding. Possibly, there was some recognition that to draw attention to this sex-specific practice might, in fact, prove deleterious to the desired outcome. Strategically, there was little point invoking it as a specific issue. The proposed legislation would, in any event, potentially enable those women in paid work who were both eligible for, and could afford to take, leave to breastfeed if they so wished.

What is perhaps surprising is that several women's organisations did raise the subject of breastfeeding, although, in most instances, indirectly.[20] The difficulties posed by this issue in the particular context of debate are highlighted in the Labour Women's Council's mention of breastfeeding in, ironically perhaps, its call for the provision of paternity leave:

> The Bill makes the sexist assumption that the care of a young child is the sole responsibility of its mother, even in the case of adoption where the woman is unlikely to be breastfeeding the child . . . The Bill is guilty of discriminatory practice in that it neither provides paternity leave as of right, nor extends maternity leave to parental leave where appropriate. [21]

This may be read as meaning that the one exception to the sexism of assuming that the care of a young child is the sole responsibility of its mother is during the breastfeeding period. Similarly, the Wairarapa branch of the Women's Electoral Lobby, in calling for more gender-inclusive legislation, argued that:

> In our knowledge and experience we can see no justification for making provision for the adoptive mother and the non-lactating mother which is not available to fathers. We know that men are quite capable of performing the tasks necessary to care for small babies.[22]

Again, the breastfeeding mother is held to be an exception to the principle of gender-neutral child rearing. Notably, where breastfeeding is invoked directly it is as a major rationale for extending the duration of maternity leave from the proposed 26 weeks to 52 weeks:

> Many women prefer to continue breast-feeding for 9 months, and this is medically favoured if possible where there is a history of allergies such

as asthma etc. [23]

Citing breastfeeding in order to justify a longer period of maternity leave, however, could potentially undermine the broader goal of more gender-neutral legislation. The submission of the National Council of Women points out, yet again, the problems associated with a focus on legislation aimed only at mothers:

> The Bill confines itself to maternity leave only. We would have welcomed some recognition of the role of the father . . . Several of our Branches have favoured paternity leave, in the interests of equality in both the home and employment situations. If the Bill were to deal exclusively with maternity leave, this could be discriminatory and could operate against women's employment prospects in the first instance. There was also the possibility of the loss of the mother in childbirth, or protracted recovery following the confinement due to either physical or mental impairment. The Minister in his introductory speech mentioned the establishing of the mother-child bond. In cases such as the above the granting of paternity leave would ensure that this important bonding can still obtain.[24]

Some submissions called for a combination of provisions including gender-specific leaves, that is, maternity and paternity leave, as well as an extended period of gender-neutral parental leave. At times, the need for maternity leave appeared to be located within a disability framework. For instance, the Auckland branch of the National Organisation for Women, while arguing for all three provisions, posed the need for maternity leave specifically to 'cover the birth period, adequate recovery time (4-6 weeks), any pre-natal ill-health, any post-natal ill-health or complications'.[25]

Stressing the need for leave legislation which would enable parents to share equally in child rearing, this submission construes the period following childbirth primarily in terms of the time required for post-birth recovery and any potential ill-health or complications. This reference to ill-health and complications potentially invokes disability, thereby minimising notions of 'difference' which the sex-specific process of breastfeeding so starkly highlights. Recourse to a disability discourse within the context of calling for more gender-inclusive legislation may be construed as an attempt to emphasise 'sameness'; or, the need to accommodate women's biological processes within, or partially within, a conceptual framework which cov-

ers those conditions potentially experienced by men as well as women.[26] While the attainment of 'sameness' with the dominant group is commonly seen as synonymous with, or a prerequisite to, the attainment of equality, the previously mentioned example appears to represent a qualified attempt at 'sameness'. It is invoked, not within a strictly gender-neutral framework but, rather, within the context of citing the need for some provision for gender-specific maternity leave as well as gender-neutral parental leave. The American situation, whereby federal family and medical leave legislation has been designed to be explicitly gender neutral, at least in terminology, if not in practice,[27] provides an interesting contrast.[28]

Attaching maternal embodiment to a discourse of disability, however, has its costs. Heitlinger, for instance, notes that the 'language of disability assigns pregnancy a negative value'.[29] This analysis can be extended to include not only childbirth and postbirth recovery but also breastfeeding. According to Wendy Chavkin, 'A model based on the male as the norm offers an equality of form only; it does not take into account the physical and social realities of women's lives'.[30]

There also appears to be some allusion to disability contained within the submission of the Hawke's Bay branch of the Women's Electoral Lobby. However, this submission, which calls for a combination of maternity leave, parental leave, and paternity leave, as well as an additional extended period of childcare leave, simultaneously registers the need for a longer duration of maternity leave, partly on the basis of breastfeeding:

> We consider that a *mother* and child need up to twelve months together in order to develop a lasting and stable relationship, and to enable a reasonable period of breastfeeding, the benefits of which are widely acknowledged. A loving and close relationship between *parent* and child has already been proven necessary for a baby to thrive and develop both physically and mentally. Deprivation of a *parent's* constant care in the first year is as detrimental as malnutrition.[31]

The shifting of referent from 'mother' to 'parent' in this submission seemingly represents an attempt to reconcile the need for leave provisions potentially supportive of breastfeeding with those accommodating of gender-neutral child rearing practices. In contrast, the Blenheim branch of the National Organisation for Women, in their support for gender-neutral legislation, endeavoured to reduce as much

as possible any conception of 'difference' between women and men:

> Conjoint with this proposal is the necessity of removing the word female through the Bill. Females only become pregnant and therefore it is they who have leave before birth. Care after birth can be given by either parent, if desired. The word female and use of the feminine gender becomes redundant when this concept is accepted.[32]

Even at what appears to be the 'purely' biological level, this submission explicitly accepts only the need for women to take leave before, and obviously during, birth.

These submissions throw into relief the feminist dilemma concerning the wisdom of drawing attention to female reproductive biology, particularly within the employment arena. Although sharing the overriding goal of legislation which would both support childbearing and the early period of child rearing and ensure employment protection, these submissions exhibit varying degrees of ambivalence regarding the issue of breastfeeding.[33]

Despite the extensive calls for gender-neutral legislation, including those from the Labour Opposition and the National government's own member for Waipa, Marilyn Waring, the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill was enacted in 1980. A minimum code for maternity leave was established, but there were no provisions for leave for the father of a child or, for that matter, other partners or family members.

BREASTFEEDING AND THE PARENTAL LEAVE AND EMPLOYMENT PROTECTION BILL

Despite the introduction of a Labour government in 1984, it was not until late 1986 that the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Bill was introduced. The most significant feature of this proposed legislation was the expansion of leave provisions to include fathers. However, it also proposed extending the period of leave entitlement from six months to a year. This Bill was clearly less contentious than its predecessor, receiving only 16 written submissions, of which 60 per cent supported the proposed legislation but wanted provisions further liberalised. For those in favour of the legislation, three key issues emerged: eligibility to take leave, flexibility in its use, and payment.

There were six submissions from women's organisations to the

labour select committee considering the Bill and, as in 1980, several from other groups with a high female membership, including the Nurses' Association, the Clerical Workers' Association, and the Hotel Workers' Association. These organisations were generally in favour of the introduction of 12 months parental leave which would apply to both parents within heterosexual families equally, although several submissions also raised the need for a more inclusive definition of family to include lesbian, gay, and extended families. Not surprisingly, perhaps, given the desired legislative outcome, the subject of breastfeeding lay dormant. It was, however, cited by both the Federation of Labour and the then Combined State Unions. As in its 1980 submission, the F. O. L. upheld the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation, in particular the maternity protection convention established in 1919 and revised in 1952, and raised the need for breastfeeding breaks in the workplace.[34] Echoing this recommendation, the C. S. U. speculated that the lack of breastfeeding breaks in the workplace was probably one of the reasons why many mothers did not return to paid work following the 26 weeks leave entitlement.[35] In commenting on the Bill and its submissions, the Department of Labour claimed, however, that 'unless childcare is available at or near the place of work, there is little point in providing breastfeeding breaks. In most cases in New Zealand, childcare is not provided at the workplace'.[36]

In 1987 the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Bill was enacted. Despite the extended parental leave provision which treats parents equally, some notion of 'difference' between women and men continues to be upheld in this Act. This is evident in the provision of separate leaves for parents around the time of childbirth, with women having access to a considerably longer leave period.

CURRENT DISCUSSIONS ON PARENTAL LEAVE AND 'FAMILY-FRIENDLY' WORKPLACE POLICIES: The positioning of breastfeeding

In the 1990s parental leave is no longer perceived primarily as a 'women's issue'. Instead, discussions generally occur within an industrial relations and labour market framework.[37] Within this framework, in 1995 the Ministry of Women's Affairs published a comparative analysis of the parental leave policies of five countries including New Zealand.[38] Although this report states that one of the policy objectives of parental leave schemes is health protection for mothers

and children, no mention is made of breastfeeding. This omission is understandable, reflecting the international literature on parental leave which generally makes little or no mention of breastfeeding, a major exception being within the Swedish policy context.

Later in the same year, the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, in conjunction with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Employers' Federation, and Telecom, published a report entitled *Work & Family Directions: What New Zealand Champions are Doing.*[39] It describes the family-friendly provisions, including parental leave measures, instituted by various national workplaces. The centrepiece of this publication's front cover depicts a woman walking a tightrope. In her right hand, she balances a baby's bottle and a briefcase. The obvious deduction is that she is both a mother and a 'career woman'. On the periphery are several smaller figures, including what appears to be a man in a suit, also carrying a briefcase and treading a tightrope.

This imagery is significant. It captures the fact that paid work has increasingly become a reality for many women with children under one year of age.[40] However, it embodies, perhaps unwittingly, some complex and disturbing implications.[41] In the social and economic landscape of the occupational élite, both briefcase and baby bottle appear to be potent symbols of gender equality, albeit of the assimilationist kind. Both accoutrements are deliberately and self-consciously gender-neutral, equally employable by both partners within heterosexual families, or at least the dual-career version.

Despite the way in which these twin symbols interactively connote gender equality – suggesting that men, and indeed other partners and family/whanau, can share child rearing, thereby enabling women to compete on equal terms in the market-place – this depiction does not reflect the reality of most women's lives. Not only, according to labour market data, are there far fewer women than men in those jobs where briefcases are commonplace, there is also little evidence that when babies are bottle fed, whether on infant formula or expressed breastmilk, men share equally in feeding them.[42] In any event, it is the woman who balances both bottle and briefcase, or, more precisely, the responsibility for paid and unpaid work; the man, clearly less central to the overall image, sports only a briefcase.

Although accurate in depicting many women's double burden of paid and unpaid work and at the same time optimistically evocative

of equality, at least of opportunity, between middle-class women and men, this portrayal throws into relief the deeply rooted and complex tensions within the equality/difference dilemma. Differences become apparent not only between women and men but also between various groups of women.[43] Clearly, not all women can aspire to those occupations which warrant a briefcase, but, as I hope to illustrate, neither are the women in such occupations those most likely to bottle-feed their babies.

Inadvertently perhaps, this imagery misrepresents the reality of infant feeding practices in relation to the market-place. Not surprisingly, it seems that labour market involvement is taking a greater toll on 'choice' over infant feeding among those women who occupy some of the most disadvantaged positions within the workplace. For instance, recent findings from the Plunket National Child Health Study indicate that, for women from Pacific Islands communities, resumption of paid employment, or study, represents the primary reason for stopping breastfeeding between six weeks and three months after the birth. This was also a major factor influencing cessation of breastfeeding within the first six weeks, and from three to six months following the birth.[44]

While it might be tempting to view these findings as evidence of some form of resistance to dominant cultural prescriptions embedded in health policy directives, it is clear, by virtue of its extensive practice in recent years, that breastfeeding is valued within Pacific Islands communities.[45] A recent case study describes the distress experienced by a Samoan mother, economically compelled to resume paid employment one month after giving birth, over her inability both to recover fully from childbirth and to continue breastfeeding her baby. The researchers report that:

> The mother in this family was in the paid workforce during the year before the child was born. She had two older children aged 2 and 8 years at the time of birth . . . When the infant turned one month of age she resumed a 40-hour week of shift work, leaving the infant at home in the care of his grandfather. 'I had no choice, we needed the money so I went back to work when [child] was 1 month old, I went full-time.' The mother explained that she was still breastfeeding her baby and, had she been able to afford it, she would have stayed home for a year. But she could not afford to wait for the lump sum payment – she needed the money on a day-to-day basis . . . She summarised her own experience

this way: 'I would have loved to have stayed home longer with my babies. For my own health as well, but because of all the bills'.[46]

A review of overseas literature suggests that there are several key factors which facilitate the integration of breastfeeding and paid employment.[47] These are a period of time out of the workforce following the birth of a child; involvement in part-time as opposed to full-time paid work in the first few months following birth; and professional or semi-professional occupational status. Relating these findings to the New Zealand situation, it becomes apparent why many mothers from Pacific Islands communities are constrained in their choice of infant feeding method. Concentrated in the types of jobs identified as least accommodating of breastfeeding in the workplace, Pacific Islands women are also likely to be among those women economically compelled to return to full-time paid employment in the immediate post-birth period.[48] Moreover, it is increasingly probable, given recent labour market changes, that the infant feeding options of a significant number of New Zealand women across all ethnic groups will be severely circumscribed by economic and employment-related factors.

Despite the no-win nature of the image of a woman balancing a baby's bottle and a briefcase for many mothers, the implications of this model of equality are potentially more serious for certain groups of women and their infants. Highlighting the constraints of this dilemma, this imagery begs the question as to whether feminists need accept a version of gender equality which may be contingent, at least for one group, on a lack of choice over infant feeding.[49] This question becomes particularly pertinent in the light of an increasing body of biomedical research indicating a range of benefits associated with breastfeeding to infants and to mothers in industrialised nations. Maternal benefits, although arguably not as extensive as those to infants, include possible protective effects against breast cancer in premenopausal women, ovarian cancer, and osteoporosis. Benefits to infants are comprehensive. They include increased protection against sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and otitis media with effusion, commonly known as glue ear, both of which are major concerns for New Zealand infants, particularly those from low socio-economic groups. Maori infants are noted to be at increased risk of SIDS, while both Maori and Pacific Islands infants are identified as particularly

at risk of developing hearing problems associated with recurrent bouts of glue ear. While hearing problems often result in learning difficulties, the importance of human milk in terms of infant brain development has also been indicated by a range of studies. Other potential benefits conferred by breastfeeding to infants include protective effects against asthma and certain chronic conditions in later life.[50]

While this body of research cannot be easily dismissed, privileging biomedical knowledge is, nevertheless, problematic. Feminist analyses of women's health have been instrumental in identifying the way in which such 'knowledge' has come to represent the only legitimate understanding of the body and its processes, supporting, in many instances, prescriptions and practices which have adversely impacted on women. On the other hand however, denunciation of 'best practice' recommendations for infant feeding as merely another example of patriarchal prescription tends to both trivialise the influence of this advice on women's lives and to reinforce the current situation whereby only certain women have any choice over how they feed their infants. Moreover, this lack of choice may, at times, have far-reaching social and economic consequences for those families who can least afford them. The costs of infant illness to families, and often to individual women, can be debilitating, leading among other things to increased absenteeism from paid employment and, as a result, increased potential for dismissal.

Given the inter-relationship between various economic and employment-related factors and the degree of choice experienced over infant feeding method, the image of 'baby bottle and briefcase' is misleading. Perhaps more realistic, although less glamorous, would be the juxtaposition of bottle and mop, given that a high proportion of Pacific Islands women work as cleaners,[51] or, alternatively, breast and briefcase, in view of the fact that, as already mentioned, women in semi-professional and professional occupations are among those with most options concerning the integration of infant feeding and labour market involvement. Not surprisingly, this is generally attributed to the greater flexibility and control experienced by such employees in the workplace. Within the private sphere, too, this group is more likely to be able to afford the necessary support to facilitate this integration. For instance, there are examples of mothers in high-paid and high-status occupations having 'nannies' who bring the baby into the workplace to be breastfed.[52]

In paving the way for gender equality, this depiction seeks to abolish any potential impediments to either the equal involvement of fathers, other partners or family members in early child rearing or to women's trajectory in the labour market. In doing so, it is seemingly necessary to deny maternal biological 'difference', as epitomised by breastfeeding. As argued by Gisela Bock and Susan James, 'a sense of mutual insecurity is fuelled by the fact that both these ideas [that is, equality and difference] can be, and have been, used against women; formal equality has all too often been defined in male terms, and appeals to female difference or otherness continue to be used to justify the inequality of the sexes.'[53] This analysis is relevant to the dilemma which the subject of breastfeeding poses in relation to labour market issues. Arguing for a period of paid leave and workplace provisions to assist mothers who wish to breastfeed threatens to reinforce the significance of this sex-specific process, with the risk for all women workers of being construed primarily in terms of their presumed maternal role. As in the past, this maternalist discourse has the potential to justify systematic and sometimes subtle discrimination against women in economic and employment terms. Not to draw attention to the issue of breastfeeding, however, although conveniently side-stepping essentialist connotations, provides tacit acceptance for the current situation, whereby only some mothers have the opportunity to breastfeed their infants while remaining attached to the labour market.[54]

Drawing on post-structuralist theory, Joan Scott highlights the impossibility of the dilemma confronted by feminists when equality and difference are viewed as mutually opposed, 'When equality and difference are paired dichotomously, they structure an impossible choice. If one opts for equality, one is forced to accept the notion that difference is antithetical to it. If one opts for difference, one admits that equality is unattainable.'[55] Scott points out that, rather than being in antithesis, the notion of equality is predicated, by its very existence, upon an acknowledgement of differences. She claims that while there is a need to be ever vigilant regarding the inclusion of differences, this must, nevertheless, be attendant upon an awareness of their conditionality and specificity, so as not to invoke 'absolutist, and in the case of sexual difference, essentialist categories' for either women or men.[56] Consequently, argues Scott, political claims based on difference/s need to be assessed for their usefulness within par-

ticular discursive contexts.

Although Scott makes the point that viewing complex policy and theory issues in terms of the equality/difference formulation tends to rule out the identification of strategic alternatives, scepticism has also been expressed concerning the possibility of completely transcending this dichotomy, particularly at the level of practical politics. For instance, Lise Vogel claims that, 'Declaring a dichotomous opposition to be an illusion or intellectual trap that must be transcended is one thing; actually doing so, another.'[57]

Strategically, the issue of infant feeding and its intersection with women's labour market involvement presents difficulties for feminists.[58] Questions are raised as to how the goal of gender equality in both home and market-place can be reconciled with what is an obvious highlighting of maternal biology in a context where 'difference' is often costly. It is, nevertheless, my contention that the issue needs to be brought forward and reconfigured by feminists involved in the development of labour market and health policy as one of 'reproductive choice' to be extended to all women.

CONCLUSION

Within the context of debating appropriate parental leave and, in more recent times, 'family-friendly' workplace policy, there has been an understandable concern among many feminists over drawing attention to female sex-specific processes, as epitomised by breastfeeding. In latter years, however, it seems that what has previously been a benign and strategically salient form of relative neglect has become potentially more insidious. The adoption of bottle feeding imagery reflects, even if unintentionally, an opting for a model of equality predicated upon 'sameness' with the male market-place norm. At the same time, it reinforces the assumption that infant feeding is a matter of individual choice, with all women potentially experiencing such choice.

As has been shown, however, many women in paid work experience very little choice over how they feed their infants. Recognition and advocacy is therefore required for those social and economic changes which might expand the infant feeding options of all women. As noted, one of the key factors enabling women in paid work to breastfeed appears to be access to a period of leave following the birth. However, while in New Zealand there exists national legisla-

tion providing for 14 weeks maternity leave and 12 months parental leave, this leave remains unpaid. For many women, then, taking a period of leave to breastfeed their baby does not represent a genuine option.[59]

As evidenced by both the 1980 and 1987 submissions on maternity/parental leave and employment protection, women's groups have been at the forefront of support for paid parental leave. The connection between the need for leave payment and the issue of breastfeeding has not, however, been made.[60] While strengthening the case for some form of payment, arguing for paid leave on the grounds of breastfeeding nevertheless presents a dilemma. Invoking breastfeeding as a crucial aspect of parental leave debates has the potential to support a conservative policy agenda, whereby leave might be re-construed as relevant to mothers only. Difficult issues are raised in relation to the goal of gender equality in both home and market-place.

Despite this quandary, the issue of access to breastfeeding needs to be reconfigured within feminist debates in terms of expanding choice over leave, primarily through access to payment, not only to a greater variety of family types but also to those whose options over infant feeding are severely circumscribed by economic and employment-related factors. Failure to address this issue condones, in effect, a situation in which only a small and privileged group of women workers have the option of accruing for themselves as well as passing on to their offspring the physiological advantages of breastfeeding.

POSTSCRIPT

Since the original submission of this paper to the *Women's Studies Journal*, the EEO Trust, with the support of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Employers' Federation, have issued a public statement urging employers to support breastfeeding within the workplace (*New Zealand Herald*, 14 April 1997, p. A4).

Judith Galtry is undertaking doctoral research within the Women's Studies Department at Victoria University. Her thesis involves an examination of the intersection of breastfeeding, feminism and labour market policy. The initial interest for this topic was inspired by working for many years as a health professional amongst women in very disadvantaged positions in the labour market.

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NOTES

1 Helen Crowley and Susan Himmelweit, 'Biology, Society and the Female Body' in Helen Crowley and Susan Himmelweit (eds), *Knowing Women: Feminism and Knowledge* (Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers/ Open University Press, Cambridge, 1992) pp. 58-65, p. 58.

2 Linda Blum, 'Mothers, Babies, and Breastfeeding in Late Capitalist America: The Shifting Contexts of Feminist Theory', *Feminist Studies, 19:2* (1993) pp. 291-311, argues that within the context of late capitalist America breastfeeding represents a site of enormous discursive struggle for feminists. Tiina Vares, ('Feminist Women Talk About Breastfeeding', *Women's Studies Journal,* 8:2 [1992] pp. 25-41) makes a similar point in the New Zealand context.

3 Barbara Bergmann, *The Economic Emergence of Women* (Basic Books, New York, 1986); Anne K. Horsfield, *Women in the Economy: A Research Report on the Economic Position of Women in New Zealand* (Ministry of Women's Affairs, Wellington, 1988); Prue Hyman, *Women and Economics: A New Zealand Feminist Perspective* (Bridget Williams, Wellington, 1994).

4 Sociobiological explanations for the division of labour between women and men in various societies have stressed the centrality of breastfeeding. For instance, Edward Wilson (*Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* [Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1975] p. 456), claims that, 'The key to the sociobiology of mammals is milk. Because young animals depend on their mothers during a substantial part of their early development, the mother-offspring group is the universal nuclear unit of mammalian societies.' Similarly, Kathleen Gough ('The Origin of the Family', *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 33* [1971] pp. 760-771,) argues that the traditional assignment of childcare to women had a biological basis, in that breastfeeding mothers were necessarily excluded from participation in wide-ranging group hunting in order to work close to offspring and home.

5 This does not mean to say, however, that pregnant women are necessarily free from pressure to be the 'same' as men in equivalent positions in the labour market. For instance, Phillida Bunkle ('Demystifying Mar-

ket-Speak', in Nicola Armstrong, Celia Briar, and Keren Brooking [eds], *Women and Work Conference: Directions and Strategies for the 1990s* [Department of Sociology, Massey University, Palmerston North, 1992] pp. 1-16, p. 14) notes an advertisement for 'three piece suits for the pregnant executive' claiming that, in general, women are 'allowed to enter the market in as far as they are willing to impersonate men, and conform to the male life cycle.'

6 Erik Olssen ('Truby King and the Plunket Society: An Analysis of a Prescriptive Ideology', *New Zealand Journal of History, 15:1* [1981] pp. 3-23) claims that breastfeeding has traditionally been a central component of the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society's prescriptive philosophy of motherhood.

7 Robyn Ingram, *The Politics of Patriarchy: The Response of Capital and Organised Labour to the Movement of Women into the Paid Workforce in New Zealand*, MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1988.

8 Sandra Coney (ed), *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women Since They Won the Vote* (Penguin, Auckland, 1993) p. 211.

9 Alice Kessler-Harris, Jane Lewis, and Ulla Wikander, 'Introduction' in Ulla Wikander, Alice Kessler-Harris and Jane Lewis (eds), *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States, and Australia, 1880-1920* (Urbana and Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1995) pp. 1-29.

10 ibid., p. 11.

11 See also Carol Lee Bacchi, *Same Difference: Feminism and Sexual Difference* (Allen & Unwin, NSW, 1990); Lise Vogel, *Mothers on the Job: Maternity Policy in the U. S. Workplace* (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, N. J., 1993).

12 Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policies* (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993).

13 ibid., p. 169.

14 ibid.

15 Lucinda Finley, 'Transcending Equality Theory: A Way Out of the Maternity and the Workplace Debate' *Columbia Law Review*, 86:6 (1986) pp. 1118-1182, 1174.

16 The 1919 ILO maternity protection convention, revised in 1952, outlines the need for 12 weeks paid maternity leave, job protection, and two half hour paid breastfeeding breaks during each working day, International Labour Office, *Conditions of Work Digest: Maternity and Work, 13* (1994).

17 The Ministry of Women's Affairs provides an historical outline of maternity/parental leave policy in both the public and private sector in New

Zealand in its report (*Parental Leave Policies, Women and the Labour Market: Comparative Analysis of: New Zealand, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, Australia* [Ministry of Women's Affairs, Wellington, 1995]).

18 New Zealand Parliamentary Select Committee on Women's Rights, *The Role of Women in New Zealand Society: Report* (Government Print, Wellington, 1975); National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, *Annual Report* (NACEW, Wellington, 1977); Royal Commission of Inquiry. *Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion in New Zealand: Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry* (Government Print, Wellington, 1977).

19 These included the National Council of Women, the National Organisation for Women, the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, the Society for Research on Women, the Labour Women's Council, the New Zealand Federation of University Women, and a number of regional branches of the Women's Electoral Lobby. In addition, there were also submissions from the Nurses' Society, the Nurses' Association, Wellington Cleaners' Union, and various early childhood workers' groups.

20 This is, perhaps, partly attributable to the relatively high profile of breastfeeding at this time. Compared with the dramatic decline in breastfeeding rates from the early 1950s to around 1970, breastfeeding rates increased in New Zealand throughout the 1970s in line with international trends, and remained high throughout the 1980s (Ian Hassall, 'Breastfeeding in New Zealand', Presentation at the 1983 Breastfeeding Seminar [New Zealand Paediatric Society, 1983]); Public Health Commission, *Our Health: Our Future, Hauora Pakari, Koiora Roa: The State of the Public Health in New Zealand 1994* [Public Health Commission, Wellington, 1994] p. 46).

21 The Labour Women's Council's submission to the select committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 3.1, p. 3).

22 The Submission of the Women's Electoral Lobby (Wairarapa) to the Select Committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 2d, p. 2).

23 The Submission of the New Zealand Federation of University Women to the Select Committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Clause 6, p. 2). The Submission of the National Council of Women similarly suggested the need for a longer period of maternity leave on the basis of breastfeeding (Clause 6, p. 3).

24 The Submission of the National Council of Women to the Select Com-

mittee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Clause 1, p. 2).

25 The Submission of the Auckland Branch of the National Organisation for Women to the Select Committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill, p. 1.

26 In recent decades in the United States, feminist policy and law makers have, at times, drawn on a framework of disability in the development of labour legislation. Lise Vogel (*Mothers on the Job*, 1993) and Wendy Chavkin ('Parental Leave – What There Is and What There Should Be', *Ms* [September 1984], pp. 115-118) discuss the various political, philosophical, and practical implications for women of disability model legislation.

27 Zillah Eisenstein, *The Female Body and the Law* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988) contests the supposedly gender-neutral nature of the 1993 United States Family and Medical Leave Act on the grounds that the wage gap between women and men ensures that, in most instances, women are the ones to take leave.

28 A comparative analysis of various countries' family leave policies and some of the surrounding debates has been made in 1995 by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and by Judith Galtry and Paul Callister ('Birth and the Early Months: Parental Leave and Paid Work' in Paul Callister and Valerie Podmore with Judith Galtry and Theresa Sawicka, *Striking a Balance: Families, Work, and Early Childhood Education* [New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington, 1995] pp. 13-75).

29 Heitlinger, p. 132.

30 Chavkin, p. 115.

31 The Submission of the Women's Electoral Lobby (Hawke's Bay) to the Select Committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 6.1, p. 3); my emphasis.

32 The Submission of the National Organisation for Women (Blenheim) to the Select Committee considering the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 1.3, p. 1).

33 Just as surprising, perhaps, as the fact that several of the submissions seeking more gender-inclusive leave did raise the issue of breastfeeding is the fact that the proponents of the Bill, the then National Government did not seize upon this issue within the parliamentary debates as a reason to further justify this gender-specific legislation.

34 The Submission from the Federation of Labour to the Select Committee considering the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 3.1.1, pp. 17-18).

[35] The Submission of Combined State Unions on the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Bill (Section 16.2, p. 10).

[36] Department of Labour, *Report on the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Bill* (Department of Labour, Wellington, 1987) p. 28.

[37] Paul Callister and Judith Galtry, 'Parental Leave in New Zealand: Is it Meeting the Needs of Employees, Employers and Children?', Working paper presented at the New Zealand Council for Educational Research Seminar, Striking a Balance: Families, Work, and Early Childhood Education (NZCER, Wellington, June 18, 1996).

[38] Ministry of Women's Affairs, *Parental Leave Policies, Women and the Labour Market,* 1995.

[39] Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Employers' Federation, and Telecom, *Work & Family Directions: What New Zealand Champions are Doing* (Ministry of Women's Affairs, Employers' Federation, and Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, Wellington, 1995).

[40] Department of Statistics, *New Zealand Social Trends: Work* (Department of Statistics, Wellington, 1993) p.104-5.

[41] Despite my critique of the imagery which has been employed for the *Work and Family Directions* publication, I wish to state my support for the important work of the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust and the Ministry of Women's Affairs who have been instrumental in promoting and supporting 'family-friendly' workplace policies throughout New Zealand.

[42] For instance, in countries with relatively low rates of breastfeeding, such as the United States, there is no indication that bottle feeding, whether of infant formula or expressed breastmilk, has resulted in a high incidence of shared parenting arrangements. This is further discussed in Judith Galtry, 'Suckling and Silence in the U.S.A: The Costs and Benefits of Breastfeeding', *Feminist Economics 3:3* (forthcoming).

[43] Suzanne Franzway, Diane Court and Robert W. Connell (*Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State* [Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1989] p. 13) claim that an unintended outcome of much equal opportunity practice is its tendency 'to widen class divisions among women'.

[44] The findings of this longitudinal cohort study of 4,286 New Zealand infants born in a twelve month period between 1990 and 1991 are reported in Charles Essex, Paul Smale and David Geddis, ('Breastfeeding Rates in New Zealand in the First 6 Months and the Reasons for Stopping', *New Zealand Medical Journal* [8 September 1995] pp. 355-357).

45 Murray Bathgate *et al., The Health of Pacific Islands People in New Zealand* (Public Health Commission, Wellington, 1994) pp. 99-100.

46 Valerie Podmore and Theresa Sawicka, 'Parents' Voices: Case Studies of Families' Employment and Childcare Arrangements', in Callister *et al*, *Striking a Balance*, p. 119-167, 154.

47 Judith Galtry, 'Mothers: Breastfeeding, Parental Leave, and Paid Work', in Callister *et al*, *Striking a Balance*, pp. 24-39.

48 Judith Galtry, 'Breastfeeding, Labour Market Changes and Public Policy in New Zealand: Is Promotion of Breastfeeding Enough?', *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand, 5* (1995) pp. 2-16.

49 While it may be claimed that, technically, the bottle represents a receptacle for expressed breastmilk as well as for infant formula, health advocates have long argued that the primary association of this symbol is with the latter.

50 The previous biomedical studies are referenced in Judith Galtry, *Striking a Balance,* 1pp. 24-26.

51 Vasantha Krishnan, Penelope Schoeffel and Julie Warren, *The Challenge of Change: Pacific Island Communities in New Zealand,* 1986-1993 (New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development, Wellington, 1994) p. 64.

52 'All in the Family', *Next,* (November, 1992) pp. 91-93.

53 Gisela Bock and Susan James (eds), *Beyond Equality and Difference: Citizenship, Feminist Politics and Female Subjectivity* (Routledge, London and New York, 1992) p. 3.

54 Elizabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1988) makes the point that silence does not erase difference/s but, rather serves to disguise and perpetuate privilege, thereby reinforcing conventional structures of power.

55 Joan W. Scott, 'Deconstructing Equality – Versus – Difference: Or, the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism', *Feminist Studies,* 14:1 (1988) pp. 33-50, p. 43.

56 ibid., p. 47.

57 Vogel, p.5.

58 Lucinda Finley (1986) makes the point that the equality/difference dilemma arises only in the context of societal and workplace values and structures which are unsympathetic to the needs of most women.

59 A period of paid leave may enable those women in low paid, low status occupations with little negotiating power in the workplace to have some recovery time following the birth of a child as well as greater choice over infant feeding method. However, in relation to eligibility criteria,

there are some complex policy issues as to what type of leave provisions would be most effective. While some form of paid leave is one of several complementary strategies which would enhance the integration of paid work, postbirth recovery, and breastfeeding, there is also the need for national provisions for infant feeding breaks in the workplace.

60 Marilyn Waring (*If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics* [Harper and Row, San Francisco,1988], p. 210) points out, however, that, '[w]omen who breastfeed in accordance with the best practise for the health of mother and child are simply expected to get on with it, to continue their valueless productive and reproductive activity in their own time'.

Ettie Rout's Other War:
New Zealand Nurses and Their Campaign Against Ettie Rout

JAN A ROGERS

This article examines a six-month period during World War I (June to November 1915) when Ettie Rout attempted to implement a nursing service for soldiers at Trentham Camp, and in doing so threatened the livelihood of trained nurses. Jane Tolerton, in her book *Ettie: A Life of Ettie Rout*, focuses on 'safe sex', the term used to equip New Zealand soldiers for sexual freedom during World War I.[1] However, Rout began her war career fighting to enter the army as a nurse. For the thousands of soldiers who survived their wounds and their illnesses during World War I, nurses figured significantly in their care.[2] But it was not only nurses who provided a service for soldiers. Numbers of amateur women, especially in Britain, volunteered their services. Here in New Zealand, amateur women were kept to the fringe, assisting with bandage-making, Red Cross parcels and, later in the war, helping the trained nurses in the wards.

Rout's initial foray into war work during 1915 challenged and, in fact, coveted the professional military work of New Zealand trained nurses – work that nurses had been trained to do. The one legitimate way for women to work for the military was as nurses, and while trained nurses had been accorded the opportunity to become members of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, untrained women found their role restricted to womanly duties of knitting, sewing and performing voluntary work for the troops. Rout attempted, indeed volunteered, to 'nurse our boys' by joining the war effort as a nurse. So began her military campaign through the conventional route of women's war-time work – military nursing. By choosing this route, she was undermining the 'professionhood' of trained nurses and in doing so encountered a complex situation of resistance against her and her Volunteer Sisterhood scheme.

Ettie Rout's challenge to nurses' military role during 1915 developed into a 'war among women' who wished to nurse the sick and wounded soldiers. In a period of history when nurses were reinforcing their sphere of professional practice, Rout attempted to have her

Volunteer Sisterhood, a group of volunteers keen to do their 'bit' for the soldiers, included as nurses. Her route to war exposed a conflict of interests. While the belief that all women 'by their nature' were nurses still held sway throughout World War I, and in Britain the Voluntary Aid Detachments had gained a stronghold in military nursing, here in New Zealand, nurses ostracised women who failed to fit the prescription of a registered nurse. Rout felt the full force of nurses' antagonism.

World War I provided trained nurses with the opportunity to attempt to change the existing structures of military nursing and they enthusiastically joined with nurses of other nations in providing an indispensable service for the sick and wounded. Throughout their military nursing experiences, nurses confronted complex social situations that reinforced the traditional beliefs about women's work which, in turn, shaped nurses' contribution to the war effort. In order to emphasise their professional status within gender-based professional and military hierarchies, nurses adopted various strategies to prove their womanly qualities and to ward off the untrained women who practised nursing. These strategies, however, were undermined within military structures by nurses' professional emphasis on women's duty to care, even though the particular nursing skills gained through training were identified as a useful service to the army.

Ettie Rout has, in retrospect, challenged the professional claim of trained nurses. She has been alternately praised or blamed for her lifestyle and her work during World War I. Historians have variously called her a 'socialist feminist', an 'exceptional woman' and an 'eccentric'.[3] Before Rout began her war work she had earned her living as a reporter and advocate for workers' unions.[4] Her newspaper articles, however, drew indignation from some women's groups for what they considered to be the 'aspersions cast on New Zealand women'.[5] Although the period of history brought the bicycle to the fore and knickerbockers were items of wear at the turn of the century, Ettie is recalled by one acquaintance as bicycling around Christchurch, her home town, in knickerbockers, and considered to be wearing unusual clothes. Her attire was obviously worth comment, as one writer referred to her style of hat balanced precariously on the back of her head and remarked that it would be easier to imagine Rout 'flying than flirting'.[6]

Regardless of her sartorial looks, Rout is one of the outstanding women of the early twentieth century publicly involved in war work in a variety of settings during World War I. To become involved in the war, she flouted the prevailing constraints on women in the early part of this century through strategies that managed to side-step mechanisms of military structures. Rout began this journey through the conventional route of women's war-time work – military nursing. This route led her into conflict with trained nurses who saw their professional strategy as military nurses jeopardised by those they considered amateurs. For some thirty years, the new order of nurses had struggled to preserve nursing as the right of those who had undertaken nurse training.[7] Although by 1914 few would have identified a New Zealand nurse as other than a woman trained in the skills of nursing, a number of untrained women still practised nursing, their work now mainly confined to the private sector, while the public hospitals employed probationer nurses supervised by trained nurses.

From 1883 New Zealand formalised its nursing structure and, like other occupations and sectional groups, nurses had sought to secure recognition for their expertise and standing, to stipulate conditions of entry to nursing, to achieve pay rates appropriate to their professional standing, to encourage nursing as an occupation for single women, and to achieve a situation which would exclude or disadvantage outsiders. From the turn of the century Maori nurses were encouraged in some areas to undertake nurse training, but the system failed to progress past 1910.[8] Through its appropriation of the British nursing concerns of domesticity, nursing skills and womanly propriety, the new order of New Zealand nursing emphasised the exclusiveness of the profession for European women and took pains to prevent those they considered amateurs from caring for the sick. The introduction of nursing legislation in 1901 helped the profession to mark off its territory and define who was entitled to be called a nurse. The legislation also emphasised that nursing belonged to women and reinforced the belief that trained nurses had the right to nurse the sick. By creating an image of a profession that was measured in terms of nurses' ability to be womanly, dedicated and morally respectable, nursing developed into a solid occupational group with legal and social structures that gave power to the profession.

Martha Vicinus in *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920*, gives an account of single women's

quest for a public life.[9] Vicinus describes single women's organisations in British society between 1850 and 1920 as a 'paradox of power and marginality, of enormous strength within narrow limits, of unity and support linked with division and doubt'.[10] In her chapter on 'Reformed Hospital Nursing: Discipline and Cleanliness', Vicinus focuses on the British nurses and their fight for professional status. She examines the strategies that the leaders of nursing used to carve out a profession based on women's 'natural' ability to nurse. Vicinus examines the difficulties faced by nurses who based their professional claim on the premise that educated women with impeccable moral standards and skills could transform the hospital environment. The development of nursing as a womanly profession which elevated womanly concerns and values also brought conflicts between trained nurses and those who were labelled amateurs. Strong professional leadership and adherence to high standards of moral virtue were required in order for nurses to replace the untrained women employed as nurses. From 1883 the moves to promote a new system of New Zealand nursing included a deliberate campaign to limit the place of the untrained in the nursing work force. This campaign continued to direct strategies nurses used during World War I to ward off the amateur war-time workers brought in to help with nursing duties.

While nurses received recognition for their nursing skills and special knowledge of caring for the sick, it was through their adherence to the widespread belief in women's claim to be morally virtuous that they gained their professional standing. As a united group, morally scrupulous and disciplined, nurses gained increasing control over civilian nursing in both the public and private sphere and by 1914 successfully challenged the place of those amateurs still practising.[11] Well placed to expand their professional status, nurses saw the opportunity presented by World War I to expand their service to include military nursing. Nevertheless, the achievements of nursing, accomplished through the rhetoric that nursing belonged exclusively to trained nurses, met resistance from within military structures.

While the opportunity for members of the NZANS to provide overseas military nursing became a reality in April 1915, there seemed little chance that the same opportunity would occur at home. The New Zealand Government authorities saw no need for nurses at military camps and little concern was given to the medical need of soldiers undertaking training. Unlike Britain with its military hospitals,

the New Zealand military organisation had only limited medical services. Trentham Military Camp, the main base for training soldiers was a large tented camp, situated at Upper Hutt, some forty kilometres from Wellington. It had a six-bed hospital annex staffed by orderlies, where visiting doctors diagnosed and organised treatment at 'sick' parade. As early as January 1915, Hester Maclean, a trained nurse and the Assistant Inspector of Hospitals, had attempted to have nurses appointed to Trentham Camp. She approached the Minister of Defence, James Allen, and Colonel J. R. Purdy, the Army's Director of Medical Services, informing them that nurses could help instruct orderlies in their duties.[12] The publication of this initiative received support from a writer to the Wellington morning paper, the *Dominion*, who stated that orderlies, trained only in first aid, could hardly be considered suitable to give nursing care to sick soldiers.[13] In fact, claimed the writer, the appointment of orderlies would be 'prejudicial' to the welfare of sick soldiers. No official action occurred, however, and the sick soldiers at Trentham remained in the care of fifteen to twenty conscripted orderlies.

Although evidence of increasing illness among soldiers in training could be identified from May 1915, it was not until infection swept through the camp a few weeks later that nurses had the opportunity to prove their worth on the national front. Between November 1914 and July 1915 about thirteen hundred men had passed through Trentham Camp, 7,000 of them between May and the end of June 1915.[14] With this number of men in training, the inadequacy of the medical services soon became apparent. A measles epidemic spread throughout the camp in June, followed within weeks by cerebro-spinal meningitis and a virulent form of influenza.[15] Not only the camp facilities but also the local public hospital services soon became overcrowded. Early in May, Wellington Hospital had re-opened an old plague hospital at Berhampore in an attempt to accommodate the increasing numbers, while Trentham Camp extended its sick-bay to the nearby Trentham Race Course buildings.

Against a background of public concern over medical services at the camp, which could no longer stand up to scrutiny, Thomas Valintine, the Inspector of Hospitals, appointed trained nurses to cope with the epidemic at Trentham Camp on 27 June 1915. In this crisis, the nurses assumed the control of ward duties and delegated the housekeeping to the orderlies. The orderlies appeared to know little about

nursing and at least one orderly had been offering sick soldiers non-prescribed drugs.[16] Soldiers who were healthy became pressed into orderly duties, cleaning the wards and attending their sick comrades. At first, the causes of the severe illnesses remained undiagnosed, some doctors suspecting typhoid, others meningitis. Supervising the isolation procedures became a nightmare as convalescent patients and those with more virulent forms of disease were crowded together to make room for more beds and stretchers.

By July the death-rate from complications of measles at both Berhampore and Trentham Camp totalled nineteen, with deaths from cerebro-spinal meningitis reaching the alarming figure of forty.[17] Wellington's *Evening Post* alerted the public to the numbers of soldiers suffering from infection:

> During the past few weeks there has been some uneasiness among the public in regard to the measles epidemic at the Trentham Camp. People are asking whether the provision for coping with the trouble among the soldiers is up to the point desired, and whether the authorities are taking adequate precautions.[18]

Despite the appointment in May and June of a limited number of nurses (eight to be exact), concern continued to be exacerbated. Women, in particular, agitated for a more active role in caring for soldiers. What was becoming the almost exclusive domain of trained nurses in peace-time, became an especially attractive occupation to many untrained women during the war. A month in advance of the beginning of the war, August 1914, the Red Cross Society and St John's Ambulance Association had established strong lobbies for their women members to contribute to overseas nursing service if required.[19] Individual women holding St John's nursing certificates waited in the wings hoping for the call.[20] Publicity given to the plight of wounded soldiers overseas had brought nursing into the limelight, and now the Trentham affair re-emphasised the possibility that women could become useful to the nation through using their 'natural' ability to care for the soldiers.[21]

Ettie Rout, in particular, organised a voluntary scheme for untrained women to nurse the soldiers at Trentham. Calling her organisation the Volunteer Sisterhood, Rout launched her service at the end of June when the epidemic was at its height. Through the organisation of the Volunteer Sisterhood, Rout saw an opportunity to secure a

place for the untrained in the nursing of soldiers.[22] Nursing held the key to women's involvement in war and, in a report written especially for the *Maoriland Worker*, Rout claimed that women's work should be to 'render aid' to the fallen soldier. She envisaged it being women's patriotic duty to 'tend the sick and wounded'.[23] Rout's knowledge of formal nursing appeared to be a brief encounter with midwifery during her time as a reporter for the *Maoriland Worker* when she investigated a report from Australia on the correlation between midwifery training and a decline in the birth rate.[24]

Rout timed the initiative well. The public outcry over the Trentham epidemic was at its height in late June 1915. Rout claimed in a press report that she had been requested to find women to work at Trentham and suggested she had the support of both the Government and Health Department. In fact, she had contacted Valintine (Inspector of Hospitals) offering to supply her volunteer workers for Trentham. Valintine, in some desperation for nursing support, whether it be from trained or untrained women and possibly influenced by such womanly patriotism, referred Rout's offer to Louise Brandon, a trained nurse who had assumed control of the nursing at Trentham Camp from 27 June.[25] One day later, twenty-one untrained women, members of Rout's newly formed 'Volunteer Sisterhood', moved in to Trentham Camp.

Although Rout originally planned for her volunteers to act as nurses, Valintine and Brandon determined from the start that this would be an unwise move. Rout's offer, accepted on condition that the volunteers assumed 'the work instructed to military orderlies', seemed to have succeeded to some degree.[26] From July to September 1915 a total of thirty-two recruits of the Volunteer Sisterhood assisted with the care of sick soldiers 'by sorting sheets, washing floors, mending, cleaning, cooking ... and doing everything asked of them willingly and cheerfully'.[27] The self-styled 'honorary-secretary', recruiting officer and treasurer of the organisation, Ettie Rout, selected married women over the age of thirty-five, different criteria from those used to select nurses for training – twenty-one years, single and of middle-class status. The July issue of the *New Zealand Nursing Journal* did warn that 'great damage to our [nursing] profession will be caused if these untrained women are encouraged in a nursing capacity, unless, of course, there [was] a shortage of trained nurses'.[28] This letter, no doubt written by a trained nurse, highlighted the view

that nursing required more of women than just a desire to do good deeds. Skill and knowledge, the cornerstone of the professional nurse, was being undermined by a flurry to rectify the nursing conditions at Trentham.

With her women ensconced at Trentham, the rationale behind Rout's Sisterhood became clearer. In mid-July, as the numbers of volunteers at Trentham grew, Rout suggested that members of the Sisterhood could see their work extending to assist with nursing the troops overseas. New Zealand had no organised voluntary nursing service along the lines of Britain's Voluntary Aid Detachments Schemes and it appears that Rout hoped to replicate this British system. Up to this time, the members of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service remained the sole, formally recognised, New Zealand women's group involved in overseas military work. Individual women had moved overseas to join British voluntary organisations, and in September 1915 the Government had supported three women from Wanganui to assist with housekeeping duties at the Aotea Convalescent Home at Zeitoun in Egypt.[29] For Rout, the only way to move overseas was to accept the contract devised by Brandon and Valintine as a temporary expedient, in the hope that it might open the way to an overseas consignment.[30]

The prospect of Rout extending her untrained volunteers into the realm of overseas military work intensified the prejudice that trained nurses held towards amateurs, and Rout in particular. Affronted at the bid by untrained women to nurse combatants, nurses complained that a 'body of untrained women should style themselves nurses, and abhorred the request that patients should address the Sisterhood as sisters or nurses when on duty'.[31] The Evening Post published a letter from 'Registered Nurse' asking:

> Has this scheme, which involves the sending of untrained women on active service abroad to assist in the nursing of the sick and wounded, the full approval of the Minister of Hospitals and of the registered nurses?... In the lists of nurses published as having joined the sisterhood some are described as trained and registered nurses. If that is so, how is it that not one of these names appears on the register of general trained nurses – the latest copy of which is before me?[32]

'Hater of Sham' added her voice to the argument giving support to the questions raised by 'Registered Nurse'.[33] Not a 'mite'

would be forthcoming from 'Hater of Sham' for those married women who abandoned the duty of the home when many single women, well-trained nurses, had no home ties. However, despite the objections from 'Registered Nurse', some writers applauded the independent action of the Sisterhood and supported the 'naturalness' of nursing as women's work. 'No Sham' scathingly attacked the 'bitter and small-minded' pettiness of trained nurses who opposed the 'truly self-sacrificing' women of the Sisterhood who were 'fulfilling a womanly duty in a time of need.'[34] While Rout had originally called her women 'nurses' and dressed them in nurses' uniforms, she now dismissed these complaints as irrelevant. According to Rout, members of the Sisterhood merely assisted the trained nurses as did the probationers in public hospitals, 'not as nurses or as nursing sisters'.[35]

While Rout and her Sisterhood posed the greatest challenge to the nursing profession, other women's organisations also campaigned to provide nursing services for soldiers at home. Concern was also being expressed that the number of trained nurses would become depleted. A meeting of the Dunedin branch of the St John's Ambulance Association argued that Rout's Sisterhood had no prior claim to nurse soldiers overseas and fifty-one women gave their names as being ready to nurse soldiers should the need arise.[36] The 'girls' of the Auckland Women's Navy Relief Fund, women between the age of twenty and thirty-five years, offered to pay their own way to Egypt for the opportunity to apply their skills in 'first aid' for the benefit of the soldiers.'[37] Other Auckland women joined the local St John's Ambulance Association, receiving instruction on care of patients with diseases, and the Nursing Division of the Red Cross began meeting weekly to teach practical nursing.[38]

The pressure from voluntary women's organisations to allow amateurs to nurse the sick and wounded became so strong through the months of July and August 1915, that G. W. Russell, the Minister of Public Health, called a conference to address this thorny issue. Undoubtedly, Rout's bid to send women to Egypt was a central factor in the calling of this meeting. Russell's conference had two agenda: the first to coordinate women's nursing efforts and the second to control those who might attempt to move overseas to nurse the soldiers. It became clear early in the meeting that the government was not prepared to send unqualified nurses abroad. Russell 'forcefully'

informed those present that sufficient trained nurses existed and no untrained women would be nominated by government to nurse the combatant soldiers.[39] No further discussion on this point took place. This was not surprising as before the meeting the Trained Nurses' Association had 'approached the government protesting that until the supply of trained nurses failed, untrained women should not be used to take their place'.[40] With Grace Neill and Sybilla Maude representing Hester Maclean, who was overseas with the first contingent of fifty nurses who had left for service in April 1915, numbers of trained nurses attended the conference ready to defend their military role and professional abilities. Valintine had also consulted the Trained Nurses' Association on the supply of trained nurses. He received assurance that adequate numbers of trained nurses remained available for military nursing and that, if needed, probationers could act as assistants to trained nurses. With this background and with Valintine's firm support for trained nurses, Russell confidently endorsed the place of nurses for overseas service, and considered who might coordinate women's voluntary efforts.[41] The Trained Nurses' Association attacked Rout directly, declaring its unqualified approval for either the Red Cross or St John's Ambulance Association. Rout, representing the Volunteer Sisterhood, received no support. In fact, she faced a conspiracy against her involvement in any nursing venture.[42] Russell who supported the Trained Nurses' Association, insisted that the St John's Ambulance Association act as coordinator of women's voluntary work and advised Rout to 'merge' with them.[43]

The conference reaffirmed the professional status of nurses and placed all untrained amateurs in a subordinate role. Now, with ministerial backing, only trained nurses would have the opportunity to work abroad and, in the event of a need for greater numbers of nurses, the St John's Ambulance Association, with an established interest in nursing and first aid, would coordinate women's voluntary efforts. Rout's voluntary organisation created a problem for the government, not least because it had moved beyond the parameters of voluntary women's work which was seen as knitting, sewing and packaging parcels. With voluntary women's services organised and medical services at Trentham improved, the Sisterhood's days at Trentham were numbered. By September, with the worst of the epidemic over, Valintine informed Rout that her last twenty members were no longer needed.[44]

With the crisis over, these women were now identified as preventing orderlies from gaining the experience needed for their service overseas. Despite the failings of orderlies, as shown by the Trentham inquiry, their work remained secure within the military domain, and their services would still be required in the event that front-line war work was needed.

While Rout and her volunteers had given service and support during the crisis, they received little other than thanks from Allen for their patriotic spirit, their due payment of 10s per week, a minimal amount in relation to trained nurses, and criticism from other women's organisations. Undeterred, Rout sought other ways to have members of the Sisterhood serve overseas. Despite Allen's denial, she claimed that Allen had given permission for the volunteers to proceed overseas and, finally, by October 1915 succeeded in posting members of her organisation to voluntary overseas duty. Funding the venture with a heavy mortgage on her life insurance policy and the support of her friends, Rout had by November achieved her personal goal of reaching Egypt. Following a period of work in Red Cross canteens, she moved into independent practice, quite apart from nursing, advocating prophylactic treatment for venereal disease.[45] In the following years she proved her ability as an organiser, attending to the social and sexual welfare of New Zealand soldiers – including supervising a brothel run on 'safe sex' lines.[46]

By September 1915, trained nurses had won permanent positions at military camps in New Zealand.[47] On the completion of the building of the twenty-bed Trentham Camp hospital, with a further twenty-bed extension in November, members of the New Zealand Army Nursing Service became a regular part of the staff establishment.[48] Public donations to the camp hospital not only provided the beds, linen and clothes, and supplied the furnishings for the nurses' quarters, but also contributed cushions and curtains made by women's voluntary work.[49] The appointment of nurses to Trentham soon extended to other camps. From late 1915 the emphasis placed on medical and nursing services for soldiers in New Zealand was expanded and included special hospitals for convalescent soldiers.[50] At the beginning of 1916 King George V Hospital in Rotorua opened as a hospital and convalescent facility to provide special care for soldiers with orthopaedic problems. In addition, civilian hospitals set aside wards for military patients, although

a number of beds within the general wards were also used for soldiers.[51] Returning members of the NZANS, appointed to military hospitals and soldiers' wards within civilian hospitals, reinforced their control of military nursing on the home front. Members of the nursing division of the St John's Ambulance Association and the Red Cross Society, at first unpaid, carried out housekeeping duties – washing linen, cleaning, preparing meals and assisting registered nurses.

Rout was not spared other humiliations. In 1916, when attempting to find a passage home on a troop ship, she met another 'hitch' to her endeavours. The captain refused her a berth because she was to travel as a passenger and not a nurse. Jessie Mackay, Editor of the *Canterbury Times* had this to say:

> If the War office has good words to spare for the New Zealand staff nurses, the military organisation in Egypt, it seems, has neither good words nor good help for a woman who has done and dared as much as any nurse, and perhaps done more to keep our New Zealand men in Egypt fit and fed, clean and honorable than any woman in that lurid country.[52]

In a period of history when nurses were reinforcing their sphere of professional practice, Rout's attempts to have her Volunteer Sisterhood included as nurses threatened the status of the New Zealand trained nurses and challenged their professional knowledge. Rout's route to war exposed a conflict of interests. Trained nurses saw it as their job to nurse the sick and wounded soldier – to protect 'our boys'. Rout and her Sisterhood of untrained women represented a threat to thirty years of development in the nursing profession. While the belief that all women were nurses still held sway during World War I, and in Britain the Voluntary Aid Detachments had gained a stronghold in military nursing, here in New Zealand nurses turned on women who failed to fit the prescription of a nurse and Rout felt the full force of nurses' antagonism towards the untrained. Her controversial war work as a fighter against the organised professional nurses makes an interesting contrast to the usual story of Rout's work as a marginal worker for the welfare of soldiers in Egypt.

Jan Rodgers is a registered nurse and midwife who has maintained her interest in teaching and learning in a variety of nursing settings over the years. Her nursing clinical practice ranges over surgery, midwifery, and community services, but mainly she has been employed in nursing education positions. In 1986 she joined the staff at Massey University as senior lecturer and has taught a number of courses. She has an MA in Education and a PhD in History. Over the last three years she has taught undergraduates and graduates at the Palmerston North and Albany campuses of Massey University.

NOTES

1 Jane Tolerton, *Ettie: A Life of Ettie Rout* (Penguin, Auckland, 1992).

2 Katie Holmes, 'Day Mothers and Night Sisters: World War I Nurses and Sexuality', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Gender and War: Australians at War in the 20th Century* (Cambridge University, Melbourne, 1995) p. 42.

3 Ettie Rout has also often been singled out as a representative of the abilities of New Zealand women during the first part of the twentieth century. See William Sutch, *Women With a Cause* (New Zealand University Press, Wellington, 1973) pp. 99-106; Steven Eldred-Grigg, *Pleasures of the Flesh: Sex and Drugs in Colonial New Zealand*, 1840-1915 (A. H. and A. W. Reed, Wellington, 1984) p. 146; Tolerton, *Ettie.*

4 Sutch, p. 99.

5 *Maoriland Worker*, 29 June 1913, p. 2.

6 F. H. Charity, 'Ettie Rout, M.A.', *Quick March*, 25 May 1918, p. 3. Rout, in fact, did not hold an MA.

7 See chapter 3, Jan A. Rodgers, '"A Paradox of Power and Marginality": New Zealand Nurses' Professional Campaign During War, 1900-1920', PhD thesis, Massey University, 1994.

8 Alex McKegg, '"Ministering Angels": Government Backblock Nursing Services and Maori Health Nurses, 1909-1939', MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1986.

9 Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women,* 1850-1920 (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1985).

10 ibid., p. 9.

11 Jan. A. Rodgers, 'Nursing Education in New Zealand, 1883-1930: The Persistence of the Nightingale Ethos', MA thesis, Massey University, 1985.

12 Anonymous, 'Hospital at Trentham Camp', *New Zealand Nursing Journal (NZNJ)*, 8:1 (1915) p. 30. Purdy, DMS, had been replaced by Doc-

tor W. Will in 1913. When Will embarked with the Main Body in October 1914, Purdy was re-appointed DMS from the reserve list.

13 Trentham Base Hospital', Letters to the Editor, *The Dominion*, 19 January 1915, p. 3.

14 *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives*, 1915, H-19B, p. xiii. From November 1914 to July 1915 13,607 men passed through Trentham Camp.

15 National Archives (NA), Army Division (AD) 1, 49/130, 49/130/1, files on outbreak of measles, influenza, etc. NZEF Camps.

16 'Military Medicos', *Evening Post (EP)*, 17 July 1917, p. 3.

17 'Spread of Measles', *EP*, 9 July 1915, p. 8.

18 ibid.; 'Soldiers' Illness', *EP*, 29 June 1915, p. 5.

19 NA, AD1, 49/27, memorandum from Colonel Neill to Director of Medical Services, 18 July 1914.

20 NA, AD1, 49/65/1, letters from Mary Duff, Nurse Barlow, Te Kuini Ellison, the Mayor of Auckland, to J. Allen, August 1914 to December 1914. NA, AD1, 49/2/7 memorandum from Maclean to the Adjutant-General, Wellington, 27 August 1914. About 400 women wrote to Allen during the first six months of the war offering their services as nurses.

21 'Nurse-Recruiting', *EP*, 17 July 1915, p. 7. Waipawa District Hospital adopted a scheme for volunteer women recruits to receive a short course of tuition in nursing in hopeful readiness for military duties.

22 Jane Tolerton, 'Ettie Rout and the Volunteer Sisterhood: Fighting to Get into the Great War', *Women's Studies Journal*, 6:1/2 (1990) pp. 153-167.

23 'Volunteer Sisterhood', *EP*, 17 July 1915, p. 2. Ettie Rout was a reporter for the *Maoriland Worker* and a freelance writer for the *Lyttelton Times*.

24 NA, files 289, 1026, 1234, letter from Rout to Valintine, 17 January 1914, Midwives Registration, miscellaneous correspondence on nurses and midwives.

25 Louise Brandon trained at Wellington Hospital, registering in 1910. She had been one of the six nurses who went to Samoa in August 1914. She began overseas duties on the New Zealand Hospital Ship, *Maheno*, July 1915.

26 NA, AD1, 49/200, memorandum from Valintine to Allen, Minister of Defence, 21 September 1915.

27 'Volunteer Sisterhood', *EP*, 17 July 1915, p. 2.

28 'Editorial', *NZNJ*, 8:3; (1915) p. 115.

29 Anonymous, 'Aotea Convalescent Hospital at Zeitoun, Egypt', *NZNJ*, 9:1 (1916) p. 36. The Misses Macdonald from Wanganui joined Mary

Early (22/185) to work at the convalescent home throughout the war. Wanganui citizens provided the finance for the convalescent home which was staffed by volunteers from the Wanganui area. Early registered in 1908 from Wellington Hospital and acted as matron of the Aotea Convalescent Home with the assistance of volunteer helpers.

30 'Volunteer Sisterhood', *EP*, 17 July 1915, p. 2.

31 'Women in Print', *EP*, 5 August 1915, p. 9.

32 'Volunteer Sisters', *EP*, 27 July 1915, p. 4. The names of members of the Volunteer Sisterhood did not appear in the list of registered nurses in the *New Zealand Gazette* until 1916 when the name of Edith Roach appears. Roach was a member of the Volunteer Sisterhood. She trained in England in 1902 and came to New Zealand in 1914.

33 ibid.; 'Volunteer Sisters', *EP*, 31 July 1915, p. 9.

34 ibid.; 'Volunteer Sisters', Letter to the Editor, *EP*, 10 August 1915, p. 2.

35 ibid., p. 9.

36 'Sick and Wounded', *EP*, 18 August 1915, p. 2.

37 NA, AD1, 49/200, letter from A.G. Watkins, secretary of the Auckland Women's Navy Relief Fund to Allen, 21 July 1915. Watkins refers to the women who were willing to nurse as 'girls'.

38 'Women in Print', *EP*, 19 August 1915, p. 9.

39 Anonymous, 'Report of Conference on the Supply of Nursing Aid for the Sick and Wounded', *NZNJ*, 8:4 (1915) pp. 163-165.

40 Anonymous, 'New Zealand Trained Nurses' Association: Otago Branch', *NZNJ*, 8:4 (1915) pp. 161-162.

41 Three of the NZANS matrons were present and members of the Trained Nurses' Association members from Auckland, Dunedin, Wellington and Christchurch.

42 Anonymous, 'Report of Conference', pp. 163-165. The President of the Trained Nurses' Association, J. Foote, in a letter to the Conference specifically stated that the 'St. John *(sic)* Ambulance and the Red Cross workers have been doing their utmost to fit themselves for any emergency that may arise ... their services should be accepted before the recently-formed body of women named the "Volunteer Sisterhood".'

43 Trained nurses were involved with the St John's Ambulance Associations throughout the country providing nursing instructions to members. District nurses also received financial assistance from this association for their community work. The Red Cross Society took over the administration of the British-based New Zealand VAD organisation.

44 NA, AD1, 49/200, memorandum from Valintine to Allen headed 'Miss Rout's Ambulance Orderlies', 21 September 1915.

45 Tolerton, *Ettie*, p. 119.

46 ibid., p. 12.

47 In the second epidemic at Trentham during the winter of 1916 the improved nursing resources for soldiers' welfare limited the public outcry.

48 In 1916 the staff establishment for Trentham Hospital, which by then had 200 beds, was seven officers, one dentist, one quartermaster, 68 non-commissioned officers and other ranks, and five NZANS sisters. Nurses who enrolled in the NZANS for New Zealand military service for placement in New Zealand only, were Maud Dawson, Muriel Bartlett, Agnes Burgess and Edith Edwards. They were employed at Featherston Military Camp and in military wards in public hospitals.

49 'Another Hospital Ship', *EP*, 21 September 1915, p. 6.

50 Queen Mary Hospital at Hanmer opened as a centre for the care of soldiers with neurological illnesses.

51 NA, AD1, 49/245, file on Hospitals (General) in New Zealand.

52 *Canterbury Times*, 14 March 1917, p. 68.

Feminist Ethnography:
On The Politics of Doing Research on Women

PAULETTE BENTON

ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND THE PARTICIPANT OBSERVER

In March 1996 I undertook in my place of employment a participant observation exercise. The aim was to consider the phenomenon that is the sexual division of labour and the way that it operates, in a service industry workplace, to maintain power relations which place particularly female workers in subordinate power roles to the majority of male workers. The workplace observed can briefly be described as a cafe and bar which provides meals and coffees or alcoholic beverages from midmorning until after midnight seven days a week. It is characterised from the worker's perspective by a division of work sites into kitchen, bar and restaurant floor. All of these work sites employ the labour of both male and female workers, although in varying and significant proportions; there are distinct hierarchies that operate within each of the work sites, in terms of worker seniority, and between the work sites, in terms of work valuation. I was employed at this workplace on a part-time basis as senior wait person prior to the start of the university year. Hence, I was already a participant in workplace relations (and I brought with me knowledge acquired from previous workplaces of similar nature) prior to beginning ethnographic research into the role of gender in the maintenance of workplace hierarchies.

My intention was to make a brief re-study of the ethnographic research conducted by Spradley and Mann in the early 1970s (*The Cocktail Waitress: Women's Work in a Man's World*) in so far as it considers the sexual division of labour.[1] Their work documents the assignment of job roles on the basis of gender within a cocktail bar in mid-west America. They found that the most basic function of the sexual division of labour is that:

> routine tasks become symbols of sexuality. The values that underlie femininity and masculinity are restated continuously each night merely by the act of working. As a symbol of one's sex, work is transformed into a ritual activity that announces to the audience of customers the significant differences our culture attaches to sexual gender.[2]

Their account of the workplace sex roles in a cocktail bar yields up specific rules and gender assumptions which underlie relations between the male and female workers in ways that entrench the control exercised by males and the relatively subordinate position of women.

By considering their study in relation to my workplace I hoped to see what changes had occurred in male-female work relations over the twenty-year period since *The Cocktail Waitress* was published and with regards to the New Zealand setting. In general, I expected to find that the use of gender in workplace power dynamics had become more complex, in that formal structures of the sexual division of labour are no longer legally acceptable and the workplace has been undergoing continual development with the ever increasing number of women entering and remaining in it. To some extent that is what I saw. But I also discovered that the power relations no longer supported by formal manifestations of the sexual division of labour continued to exist within the workplace and between workers. They were implicit in the structures used by management to regulate and differentiate between workers and work roles which were in turn internalised and utilised by the staff. Behaviours which on a formal level are no longer acceptable in the workplace, such as sex discrimination in employment appointments, the use of sexually explicit language and behaviours in reference to staff, as well as behaviours which could be considered sexual harassment, were endemic to the functioning of informal interstaff relationships. Ostensibly, for the men anyway, this kind of behaviour is an acceptable expression of their sexuality. For the women however, it engenders a considerable ambivalence to their workplace and towards work itself.

Seemingly this is a very appropriate site to conduct feminist research into the social structures that maintain sexual segregations which are oppressive and difficult for women. Ethnographic research processes have been depicted by many feminist researchers as most suitable to feminist research processes that require the drawing out of highly complex social realities, the slow and complex definition of meaning, and the development of alternative and empowering meanings and actions for women. However, I found the process of developing an ethnographic research project which constructed me as both a participant and an observer in my own workplace difficult and conflictual. My early responses to the process of observing and being conscious of the gendered dynamics of my workplace involved

a growing awareness of my position as marginalised and relatively powerless because of the very real operation of gendered hierarchies and oppressive dynamics. I discovered that most of the men in my workplace were in some way involved in the perpetuation of power dynamics that were oppressive and antagonistic towards the female workers in ways that were gendered – that is, the devaluation of work that is performed mostly by women and hence defined as 'women's work' – and sexed – that is, involving male expressions of a sexuality that is male defined. A developing awareness of my position and interaction within these gendered power dynamics made operating in my workplace on a day-to-day basis very difficult for me and unbalanced the delicate relationship that I maintain between my academic study and my paid work. As a consequence I discontinued the process of collecting ethnographic research in my workplace rather than place myself at risk.

I have, however, continued to think about the difficulties I had in undertaking ethnographic research in my workplace and the relevance that the issues raised have for the continuing project of conducting feminist research into power relations that oppress women. In particular, I have questioned the sociological literature that takes an 'objective/objectifying' approach to the ethnographic process and takes little account of the personal/subjective content inherent within the construct of the participant observer. Sociologically defined participant observation research lacks a reflexive analysis of the politics of doing research and in consequence maintains a false distance between the process of researching and the cultural place that the research is in.[3] In such a way ethnographic research within sociological discourse can be accused of failing to consider the contextuality of doing research that involves an active dialogue with issues of class, race and/or ethnicity and gender in particular. There are, however, a few emerging texts by women within sociology which begin to deal with issues of personal response and reflexivity in social science that are relevant to the project of conducting research that is feminist defined and are worth exploring.

Ideally, that project should be undertaken in conjunction with feminist considerations about doing research in situations where the researcher is not privileged but rather situated within the research context. It would seem, however, that there is little accessible literature directly on the issue of the context and situatedness of the re-

searcher who is a participant observer in a concrete and context-laden research location. Much feminist writing to date on conducting research has been focused on reversing the androcentric bias in the social sciences that has resulted in the invisibility of women in sociological studies. Feminist analysis has advocated research that is by, for and about women, and in doing so has gone some way toward developing a careful analysis of the politics of doing research. It is, however, still necessary to bring together divergent strands of thought when considering such questions as: what does it mean to do research in a setting where as a participant the researcher is intimately involved in the process and outcome of the research? and to do field research in a social setting where the researcher is in a relatively powerless position? or to do research where the possibilities of change and empowerment for women are limited? But before I turn to consider these questions more fully, I wish to discuss in more detail my initial research project and findings.

GENDER AND SEX IN THE SERVICE WORKPLACE

Spradley and Mann note that a division of labour takes place in all but the smallest societies and that the most frequent method of doing so employs differences based on gender.[4] It is arguable that class or social standing is also an important factor in the allocation of work, and is closely linked to gender as an allocatory sign. They found that there was considerable significance in the division of work roles into male and female for the meanings that a culture attaches to sexual gender. By discovering the underlying cultural rules and implicit definitions of masculinity and femininity they were also able to discover the significance of 'men's work' and 'women's work'.[5] They found that specific social rules maintained the demarcation between men's and women's work which, in turn, assigned relative value or valuelessness to the work done. Amongst the rules identified were the 'handicap rule' whereby women were arbitrarily forbidden from engaging in certain social rituals by virtue of being women and the 'cross-over phenomenon' in which women are permitted to perform work which is normally defined as male work and are required to be grateful for the opportunity to perform more valuable work despite the asymmetrical nature of the rule, the labelling of the same function as work or non-work depending on the gender of the person performing it. In short, Spradley and Mann found that there were

significant demarcations between the work performed by women and by men, that men's work was considered more valuable than women's work, and that definitions of masculinity and femininity in a wider social context were both the consequence of and the reason for the lower valuation of women's work.[6]

The aim of making a re-study of *The Cocktail Waitress* was to see how much the general theme of work as a symbol of gender remains central to my service industry workplace twenty to twenty-five years after the original ethnographic study. The workplace has undergone considerable change in that time, not least of which has been the increased numbers of women entering and remaining in the labour force at all levels. This has meant that not only is the demographic make-up of the workplace changing, but also that juridical discourse on the workplace has been forced to develop in accordance with that change. Today there are laws against sex discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as procedures for dealing with personal grievances that make the overt employment of a sexual division of labour illegal. It is also arguable that women are in general more aware of their formal rights and expectations of treatment in the workplace today than in the 1970s. Although equally, more women seem to be aware that there are institutional structures that continue to disadvantage them in workplace relations. Such ambivalence surrounding women's position in the workplace is especially relevant in the service industry, where a large number of particularly young women find work because of its characterisation as lowly skilled, casual or part-time and easily available. These factors also contribute to the relatively little power that women in the service industry have available to them when negotiating on all matters with their employers and in other employment scenarios. To what degree then, does gender continue to be a signifier of value in the workplace and how does the sexual division of labour manifest itself in such a workplace?

On a formal level my workplace operates three work sites which are distinct and yet interdependent. They are: the kitchen which cooks and serves food with a minimum of customer contact; the bar which provides coffees and beverages within the restaurant but operates on request of the wait staff; and the restaurant floor where the wait staff interact with customers so that they may be served food and beverages. I found that the amount of customer contact was a significant factor in the hierarchisation of work sites and roles. In an inversion

of actuality, the more contact the worker has with the customer the less value is assigned to the work role.

This may be as a consequence of the relative valuelessness that is attached to work roles throughout society that are concerned with the aiding, helping or serving of others. Such roles have been traditionally occupied by women in jobs defined as women's work and have historically been devalued. Such traditions do however continue to have an effect, despite the operation of sex discrimination laws and the rhetoric of 'women [workers] can do anything' in today's workplace. They are integrated into management style and strategy which defines hiring patterns, work role allocation, work site relations and dispute resolution and which, in turn, are internalised and later performed by the staff. I consider it no coincidence that all except two of the workers in the kitchen and the bar are males, whereas eighty per cent, or four out of five of the restaurant wait staff are female. Revealingly, at the time I was hired, despite my substantial experience in bar work and previous position as a bar manager, I was assigned work on the restaurant floor and have been allocated contingent bar shifts as I have proved my reliability and quality of work. A male worker hired at the same time with less bar experience was allocated bar shifts immediately and is only occasionally approached to work fill in restaurant floor shifts. Management are often prepared to undertake considerable rearrangement to oblige bar staff, usually at the convenience of wait staff. This implicit hierarchisation of work roles involves a gendered dimension by virtue of the operation of informal sex discrimination in staff hiring patterns and has consequences for interstaff relations.

The kitchen is characterised by mostly male workers in a male-orientated atmosphere that can be openly hostile to female intervention. Their work is the least subject to scrutiny from the customers, and workers operate with relative autonomy. Most of the workers are full-time and enjoy a slightly higher wage rate. Supervision, rather than being directly through management, is via a senior and somewhat autonomous staff member. These circumstances, together with a hierarchy that privileges the kitchen as work site, create a 'female-hostile' environment. I identified two types of behaviour which are utilised by the kitchen staff to maintain their privilege and which are gendered. One involved the marginalisation and effective expulsion of a female staff member. In a complex play of meanings, a now past

head chef, currently accused of sexual harassment, hired a young East Asian woman to work in the kitchen. The response of the kitchen staff was hostile to say the least. They maintained an antagonistic and unfriendly attitude, refused to speak to the woman, made racist and sexist comments in reference to her competence and generally maligned her in and outside of the workplace. They were, however, required to work with her because of her sponsorship by their superior for the period of his employment. Once he completed his employment, however, their behaviour towards her became so openly hostile that she quickly resigned and left. The attitude and behaviour of the kitchen staff was not commented upon by management and, as a result, their gendered and racist use of power and privilege entrenched their ability to maintain a sexual division of labour.

Another way that the kitchen maintains its position of privilege in a gendered labour structure is through overt sexual reference and behaviour in the presence of and toward the female wait staff. Verbal reference is often made to sexual acts, genitalia, sexy women and sexual desire when women are working nearby. Actions which are suggestive and explicit in relation to sexual acts are often made in conjunction with verbal references. To a large extent this behaviour goes on at times when the restaurant floor is busy and the kitchen is not, so that the wait staff are intermittently and briefly in the kitchen or at some location nearby. Occasionally, usually at times when the whole workplace is especially quiet, such references will be extended to directly include the female wait staff. As an example of the behaviour being discussed is the sexual innuendo present in this interchange between a male kitchen worker and a female wait person. A brief discussion about meat takes place in which the woman discloses that she is vegetarian.

Male Kitchen Worker: *What sort of vegetarian are you?*
Female Wait Person: *I just don't eat meat.*
Male Kitchen Worker: *You don't eat any meat at all?*
Female Wait Person: *Nope.*
Male Kitchen Worker: *Do ya stick it in your mouth?*

This is followed by laughter by all the kitchen staff and the woman's response of 'ha-ha'. A response that at once acknowledges the double meaning intended and attempts to dismiss its relation to her sense of subjectivity.

The middle ground in the hierarchy of work sites is occupied by

the bar. It has more contact with customers than the kitchen, but is not directly responsible to them as is the restaurant floor staff. Of the four permanent bar staff, one is a woman. She is the longest serving staff member. It is the intermediary nature of this work site's valuation that influences its interstaff structures and relations. Its reliance on wait staff to make its job as easy as possible means that it cannot afford to alienate the largely female floor staff with processes of female marginalisation that are as overt as those employed by the kitchen. Instead, I identified a tendency toward what I termed the sexual objectification of women. In effect this involved a projection of sexual desire onto women by the male bar staff that is alienating and conflictual for the female wait staff. For example: female customers are admired in terms of a single body part; 'nice legs', 'great tits', 'swish bum'; or denied subjectivity: 'that's nice', 'look at that', 'check that out', 'schwing'; or infantilised: 'babe', 'chic', 'sweetie'. Such conceptualisations of women and their sexual desirability are internalised by female wait staff and reinforce the divorce between the working, autonomous, self-possessed woman and her sexuality. Considering the extent to which a woman's value is attributed in accordance with her sexual desirability in our society, such a technique is very effective for maintaining gendered hierarchies of work site and work role valuation.

There were also instances where the hierarchy between bar and restaurant floor was more overtly referred to. Comments are frequently made by bar staff to the effect that they make the decisions that concern the operation of the restaurant. One comment made was: 'If I say the bar's closed then the bar's closed. What the barman says goes'. Bar staff are referred to by all the male employees as barmen, despite there being a permanent female bar server. She also plays an important, although inadvertent role, in maintaining gendered hierarchies. Her promotion from wait staff to bar staff came by virtue of proving herself as an exceptionally loyal and hardworking staff member and she defends that promotion in a very active way. The reason for this is that the intermediary valuation of the bar as a work site defines it as man's work. The distinction between the restaurant floor and the bar relies upon the historicity of women as servers and men as drinkers to maintain a gendered hierarchy of valuation. Techniques such as the sexual objectification of women serve to undermine women's subjectivity and bolster male acts of definition.

The participant observation study I undertook did reveal a gendered division of labour that relies on conceptions of masculinity and femininity and their respective sexualities that are oppressive to women. By using displays of male-defined sexuality in a context of historicity that defines women as passive receivers of male sexuality, as servers in a male economy that does not value serving, and as workers that cannot be feminine in a way that is sexually desirable, women workers in the service industry are defined as being of little value and denied their subjectivity. In line with the findings of Spradley and Mann, I found that there were specific meanings associated with work roles and work sites that defined them as men's work or women's work and attributed greater value to men's work.

There were, however, significant contradictions operating alongside the ostensible performance of a sexual division of labour. Not least of which is the juridical discourse which backgrounds today's workplace. The Employment Contracts Act 1991 makes illegal: discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of gender (amongst others), sexual harassment, and provides procedures for dealing with personal grievances.[7] It is feasible that at least some of the behaviours encountered by female staff in their workplace could constitute one of these grounds and that an action for recompense could be successfully made by one or a group of female workers. It would seem that an action for sexual harassment is now pending against an ex-kitchen worker where sexual touching is alleged. But equally it would seem that none of the female staff consider that the verbal, sexually suggestive or sexually explicit behaviour that is endemic to their workplace constitutes sex discrimination or sexual harassment. This is not to say that the female staff are unaware of the gendered dynamics of their workplace, or that they lack the agency to condemn those dynamics. Instead, what I understood as being their position was that they considered themselves obliged to work and were reliant upon their continued employment for economic survival. And they didn't consider that other workplaces would be any different. I believe that these women, far from being the victims of sexist workplace dynamics, were only too well aware that the institution of labour and the workplaces within it are male defined and significantly advantage male workers. Their response to such knowledge is to be better workers than their male counterparts. These female wait staff endeavour continually to outperform the male workers within

their work site and in other work roles. And to a large extent they do. So, when a female co-worker is promoted to bar staff she defends that promotion vigilantly and even though that behaviour entrenches the division between men's work and women's work the other female staff will defend her right to defend her position because she is proving that a woman can beat a man at his own game.

It was not until I came to understand the dynamics of female negotiations of the seemingly oppressive gendered hierarchies that operate in my workplace that I was able to see why my ethnographic research had placed me in such a conflictual and difficult situation. Not only did I find it difficult to observe directly the methods used to marginalise me as a woman worker, but I found it increasingly difficult to make the necessary and usually only partly conscious negotiations that allow me to operate in such an environment. Additionally, I was very conscious that my female co-workers would not (and proved not to) be responsive to the research I was undertaking. For them to be aware of or to partake in an explicit unmasking of their marginalisation would place them in an equally vulnerable position. The contradictions and ambivalences within our identity as workers and as women are such that to be reminded of their potency is to undermine the limited agency that we possess in relation to our workplace.

POLITICS AND ETHICS IN DOING FEMINIST FIELDWORK

What, then, does this say to the politics of doing ethnographic research in a feminist context? How can I justify asking how the sexual division of labour operates in a service workplace to marginalise and devalue women workers when to do so is to contribute, in an indirect way, to their ambivalence toward their work? In considering these questions I looked at sociological and feminist texts in the hope of discovering guidance on the issues of the politics and ethics of conducting research. In particular, I hoped to find discussions on the politics of doing research in social locations where gendered hierarchies do exist but their operations have complex meanings for women, where the researcher is intimately involved as a participant in that social location, and where not only are gender differences manifested but where they and other signifiers such as race and class play a significant role in the processes and meanings of such research. I was dismayed to find, however, that very little re-

search theory attempted to interact with these questions. In fact, I encountered a significant near silence in sociological texts on the political dynamics of doing ethnographic research, despite the seemingly endless texts concerned with the intricacies of the processes of research. Within feminist discourse there is a greater willingness to interact with theory and there is a considerable volume of work exploring the meanings of feminism within research but, even so, there seems to be a level of naivety or ungroundedness in relation to the realities of doing research within a feminist framework. What follows is an attempt to bring together some of the questions raised in my field work experience with the relevant but divergent strands of thought in research theory that may go some way toward developing a more reflexive and grounded context for feminist research.

The most vital influence in shaping the development of my ambivalence towards ethnographic research within the context of feminist politics was the emotional conflict I felt. With my growing awareness of the power dynamics that operated in my workplace to marginalise and devalue me came an equally important awareness that individuals informed and performed those techniques which upheld the gendered hierarchies described. The difficulty was that I had a personal, intimate and complex relationship with each of those individuals. During the actual research period, those relationships being exceedingly difficult to manage, I developed a hostile and defensive attitude towards my workplace and workmates. That hostility, coupled with the knowledge that I am financially dependent on a service industry workplace, became so conflictual that I resolved to cease doing fieldwork. From that time on the conflict subsided and I have re-established strong and affectionate ties with many of the people in my workplace. The process of writing up my fieldwork, whilst being problematic for a number of reasons, has enabled me to think more clearly about the workplace and social power structures and dynamics within which the individual operates and which s/he subconsciously reproduces. The ability to watch how an individual performs their 'split' subjectivity within social power relations allows me to see how they play out the conflict around their signifiers – factors such as gender, class and race, but including also the historicity and contextuality of influences such as upbringing, education, role models, etc. that inform identity – within a social location that not only captures the complexities of the sum total of those signifiers,

but is also informed by a history of labour relations.

That ability, however, only evolved with an understanding of the validity and importance of emotion and personal response in ethnographic style research. Catherine Kirkwood explores the dynamics of personal response in social science research in her article 'Investing Ourselves: Use of Researcher Personal Response in Feminist Methodology'.[8] She asserts that experiences of emotional response in field research can be used as a valuable and effective means of understanding women's lives in the context of feminist research.[9] Such an assertion is made despite a near absence of analysis of the role of emotional response in traditional sociological texts, where the inclusion of the research subject within the bounds of the ostensible research object is unacceptable. That absence, as well as the dichotomy that exists between research subject and object, is the result of what Kirkwood explains as a 'cultural belief that feelings are irrelevant. It is also due to the desire to create an objective science of sociology based on the principles of physical science'.[10] These principles incorporate the gendered notion that good science is based on reason and objectivity – traits traditionally associated with men. The historical association of engagement and emotion with the feminine has been used to keep women and feminist analysis out of mainstream anthropology and sociology.[11] Kirkwood argues that, in fact, good social science requires an openness to emotional response and the skill to perceive and explore personal responses so that they may be transformed into significant understandings. Those understandings will be the result of noting emotional responses and using them as information about how we are experiencing social reality. Such transformations, she argues, are important to feminist research because they form the basis of 'reflective experiential analysis', whereby the researcher actively attends to her own reactions to the research, including her emotions about women's experiences and how they relate to her own experiences, and moves between the content of the research and these reactions in the formation of a methodological process that reflects feminist understandings.[12]

In line with those feminist understandings, Kirkwood suggests that such an analysis is empowering. In doing so she uses a definition of empowerment that focuses on the 'process through which an individual discovers the potency and value of her own resources and

abilities'.[13] By using such a definition her emphasis is on the researcher as much as the research subject, and she reports that exploring her own emotions and valuing the information they gave her about herself as well as her research was empowering for her. The importance of empowering the researcher is said to be relevant to the quality of feminist research because it enables the researcher's analysis to reflect the wealth and depth of the information collected.[14] Kirkwood's analysis is relatively unique in this sense but, I think, important to feminist research theory. It was certainly through considering my own feelings and responses that I was able to understand more fully the dynamics of my workplace. It also went some way toward answering my concerns about the 'who' of my dilemmas about doing research. I could not feel comfortable about doing research on women who had little to gain from it but I sensed that the understandings I was developing were in some way important. Having the knowledge I gained valued, reinforced that feeling of significance in my research and stressed also the need for reflexivity in feminist research. The concept of reflexivity in research is implicit in Kirkwood's work. In conclusion she says:

> The outcome of exploring the content and pertinence of our responses to researching will lead to a more holistic relation between feminist researchers and their work, one in which the personal is acknowledged, understood and integrated with research methodology. Such an outcome can only create a more healthy context for conducting feminist research, for both researchers and research participants, and thus more vital and profound research.[15]

The concept of locating and being conscious of the self in research is one that has been prevalent in feminist research theory. It is a result of the knowledge that objectivity in research creates false understandings that do not reflect the influences that the researcher has on the knowledge gained. To be reflexive in ethnographic research the researcher needs to consider linked issues such as the dynamic surrounding her role as both participant and observer, the process of writing ethnographic texts, and the taking of signifiers such as gender, race and class seriously. Anne Williams describes the process of doing experiential reflexive ethnography:

> But in doing fieldwork ... my work is a cultural performance ... From the stream of action I encounter, I select bits and pieces. It is like Clifford

> Geertz's (1973) description of ethnography. Summarised very crudely, the fieldworker pulls together the bits and pieces of the so-called actors' constructions of what is going on to create her own constructions. Understanding emerges out of interaction between me as a researcher and the situation within which I find myself – out of the questions that emerge from my response to the situation.[16]

These issues become especially relevant when doing ethnographic research in a social location where I was very much a participant and that role as a participant did shape and influence the research process significantly, where personalities and power dynamics are so complex that to say something about that social location is not to say something else, and where the interactions of social signifiers such as gender, race and class have such variable meanings that capturing their complexity is impossible.

Williams is very conscious of the problematics of locating the self in research. She questions the complexity of the notion of self and argues that we can only ever be incompletely reflexive and that only by making very conscious efforts 'to elucidate constructions of my "self" in ethnographic text.'[17] A first step can be made by looking for emotions in the sense described by Kirkwood, as well as by being aware of the part they play in marking the boundaries between participant and observer, and around research, valuable information and general knowledge. Williams suggests that allegiance to a group in terms of gender, class or race is commonly assumed to create a sensitivity towards others in that group, but this is not always the case. There is always an interpretation of social events that is coloured by individual and personal experiences with the individual's interpretation of those experiences. She suggests that this tension can be explored by 'teasing out' the researcher's position as both participant and observer, whilst bearing in mind that these are separations which are used to think about what is a whole or continuous experience.[18] These are important considerations for feminist research theory because they feed into established feminist concerns about the class dynamics involved in the process of doing research and focus on recognising that the significance of reflexivity and empowerment in feminist research is furthered by locating the researcher and the researched in the same critical plane of activity and understanding.

> A feminist reading of my notes, in the sense that I try to explore the presence of myself in my research, illuminates methodological and epistemological problems in the process of doing ethnography. Further and very importantly, I find links between my day-to-day practice and the day-to-day practice of those whom I encounter. I begin to see how the problems I speak of, particularly in connection with my relationships with others, are mirrored in the relationships of those I encounter and vice versa. It is in this way that I can speak of beginning to understand the experiences of others, by recognising that we are located in the same critical plane of activity and understanding.[19]

That the self of the researcher is complex and affected by fluctuating power dynamics is particularly meaningful in the context of participant observation research. As a participant in my workplace, as a female worker, even as I was becoming more aware of the way that gendered hierarchies operated in my workplace, I was conscious that I performed those dynamics alongside my workmates. I felt that my identity was 'split' – not just in the sense that I have a shifting and contradictory subjectivity – but in the sense that I was a split person. I was a student doing an exercise for university credit, a feminist academic committed to producing feminist informed theory, a feminist in the practical sense that I felt ill at ease with the ethnographic process because it might negatively affect my female workmates, a worker who needs to do her job as well as possible because she is financially dependent upon it and out of a sense of personal pride, a female worker who has worked hard to climb the gendered hierarchy and is defensive of her position in that hierarchy, a female who has a sexuality in her workplace and in relation to her workmates, and a feminist at work. I know that my sense of split personhood is what is meant by the phrase 'shifting and contradictory subjectivity', but it feels like so much more. Despite all the different roles that I was playing and the conflicts between them, they do not even begin to take into account the relevance and meanings of factors such as my race, class or sexuality. What for instance is the relevance of and meaning for my analysis that two of the men in my workplace are Maori and that both of them are homosexual, or that despite being near the bottom of the gendered work hierarchy I have significantly more formal education than any of the men? By paying attention to the performance of my 'self' in my workplace within the context of being a participant observer, I at once deconstructed and created

meanings for the social relations that inform those positionalities.

In my readings I came across Liz Stanley, who argues that good research is research which is reflexive and results in what she calls 'unalienated knowledge'.[20] She considers unalienated knowledge to be a necessary precondition for the exploration of a feminist ontology in research. A feminist ontology, it is suggested, determines how we experience and respond to particular social contexts and how we perceive and perform the research process. Such a feminist ontology is said to arise from 'the experience of and acting against perceived oppression'.[21] Hence, to do ethnographic research is to become involved in a complex web of power relations in which the researcher's social signifiers create an intersubjective dynamic. To develop an awareness of those relations and attempt to understand their relevance and meanings is to take social signifiers such as gender, class and race seriously and to begin the development of unalienated knowledges. I found her analysis to be alluring until I realised that I am not entirely sure what exactly unalienated knowledges are and how they are beneficial to the possessors of them or feminism. If unalienated knowledges are 'truths' or knowledge that exists outside power dynamics, then surely what I have understood from my exercise in ethnography is that they cannot be achieved. The Foucauldian insight that 'knowledge is construed as contested and partial, an 'effect of power' shaped by the interplay of language, power and meaning' is more 'true'.[22]

CONCLUDING ISSUES

I can only assume that what Stanley means is that knowledge that is constructed within a feminist context should be reflexive in that it takes the interplay of social signifiers and their relation to the researcher seriously, and empowering, in that it adds to the growing knowledges that feminism possesses about the way that gender, in particular, is utilised and performed in ways that are oppressive to women. Reflexivity seems to me to be vital in feminist research because it acknowledges the centrality of social signifiers to the meanings of social reality that women operate within and perform themselves. It can account for the ways that women perform their 'shifting and contradictory subjectivities' by acknowledging that the researcher performs her own. It wasn't until I considered my own split personhood in my workplace that I was able to comprehend how the

women in my workplace manage the ambivalences derived from the constructed contradictions between femininity and worker by aspiring to power. My understanding of the women in my workplace is derived from my personal experience of operating within the very real power dynamics of my workplace and watching and listening to the responses and experiences of my workmates. It is that women are aware of the power dynamics that perform gender hierarchies which disenfranchise them and seek to confound them by aspiring to power. Women want to beat men at their own game because to do so will give women power that is not available if they make their own rules.

What then can be said of empowerment? Much of feminist research theory focuses on the ostensible purpose and benefit of doing research on women, that is, the empowerment of women. Usually 'empowerment' is taken to mean consciousness-raising, the process of learning how patriarchy creates and performs the relations of power in ways that systematically disenfranchise women. In that sense this research has empowered me. My consciousness about the complexities of gender oppression and its relation to the power relations that play out meanings of social signifiers has been considerably raised. My understanding that my female co-workers are on some level aware of the effects and dynamics of that gender oppression came as a considerable surprise. And it is important because the strategy being employed by these women to overcome the effects of gender oppression is in no way unproblematic. If this research in some way adds to our feminist knowledges base and raises our awareness of the concrete realities of power dynamics for these women, then we are in a position to aid them. Feminists can begin to theorise ways of disrupting gendered hierarchies from the inside and I can be less 'split' in my workplace and be more supportive of women in their daily struggles with their own 'splitness'.

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NOTES

1 John Spradley and Barbara Mann, *The Cocktail Waitress: Woman's Work in a Man's World* (John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1975).

2 Spradley and Mann, pp. 34-35.

3 See, for example, Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (Tavistock, London, 1983) or John Lofland and Lyn H. Lofland, *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis* (Wadsworth Publishing, Belmont, California, 1984).

4 Spradley and Mann, pp. 30-31.

5 Spradley and Mann, pp. 34-35.

6 Spradley and Mann, ch. 3.

7 *Employment Contracts Act*, 1991, sections 27, 28, 29.

8 Catherine Kirkwood, 'Investing Ourselves: Use of Researcher Personal Response in Feminist Methodology' in Joanna de Groot and Mary Maynard (eds), *Women's Studies in the 1990s: Doing Things Differently?* (St Martins Press, New York, 1993) pp. 18-38.

9 ibid., p. 19.

10 ibid., p. 21.

11 Diane Bell, 'Introduction' in Diane Bell, Pat Caplan and Wazir Jahan Karim (eds), *Gendered Fields: Women, Men and Ethnography* (Routledge, London and New York, 1993) p. 3.

12 Kirkwood, p. 25.

13 ibid., p. 33.

14 ibid., pp. 33-34.

15 ibid., pp. 36-37.

16 Anne Williams, 'Reading Feminism in Fieldnotes', Feminist Research Seminar (ed), *Feminist Research Processes* (Sociology Department, University of Manchester, Manchester, 1990) pp. 253-261.

17 ibid., p. 255.

18 ibid., p. 258.

19 ibid., pp. 260-261.

20 Liz Stanley, 'Feminist Praxis and the Academic Mode of Production: An Editorial Introduction', in Liz Stanley (ed.), *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology* (Routledge, London, 1990) pp. 3-19.

21 ibid., p. 14.

22 Patti Lather, *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern* (Routledge, London and New York, 1991) p. 80.

Feminism and the Sexual Abuse Debate: A Troubled Response to Camille Guy

ANNABEL COOPER

This paper is a revised text of a talk given at the New Zealand Women's Studies Association conference held at Massey University in February 1997.

This paper is a very preliminary foray into a subject which I have only just begun to consider in any depth: the recent history of thinking and practice associated with child sexual abuse. As a field it draws my attention in part because of my interest in personal narratives and subjectivity – it is an area in which questions about self-representation, the cultural production of subjectivity and the politics of representation are critical. There are other questions, however: it is a field upon which some public meanings of 'feminism' have been played out, and an issue which confronts aspects of feminist thinking and practice with some difficult and important questions.

In this paper I look at two texts: *First Do No Harm* by Felicity Goodyear-Smith, an Auckland general practitioner, and an article by feminist journalist Camille Guy, 'Feminism and Sexual Abuse: Troubled Thoughts on some New Zealand Issues', which was published in the British journal *Feminist Review* in 1996.[1] I focus on *First Do No Harm*, but my framing and initiating question is with Camille Guy's defence of it. I address each text in a very limited way; there is more to be said about Guy's article in particular, for which I do not have space here.

First Do No Harm is a critique of the field of sexual abuse. It was published in 1993, twelve years after the first publication of Miriam Saphira's *The Sexual Abuse of Children* introduced to many New Zealanders the idea that child sexual abuse was a common phenonemon.[2] Since the early 1980s, in New Zealand as in other Western countries, the currency of child sexual abuse has shifted in public debate, with widespread acknowledgement of the problem, and a network of systems which ranges over a number of disciplines and professions has developed. Felicity Goodyear-Smith is one of a

number of local figures recently to express grave concerns about 'the sexual abuse industry', as she calls it, but the only one who has written a book on the topic.

'FEMINISM AND SEXUAL ABUSE'

I have mixed feelings about dealing with *First Do No Harm*. My reason for discussing it in any detail is the reference made to it and to Goodyear-Smith in Camille Guy's article 'Feminism and Sexual Abuse', a sceptical account of New Zealand feminism's handling of the subject of sexual abuse. In this article, and in an earlier one, Guy expresses concern at the tone and the practice of much feminist debate in New Zealand, identifying personal trashing, anti-intellectualism, and high moral grounding as characteristic. She traces this character to what she sees as domination by radical feminism.[3] 'Feminism and Sexual Abuse' covers a number of sexual harassment incidents and texts over the last ten or fifteen years, beginning with the Mervyn Thomson incident and concluding with a discussion of *First Do No Harm*.[4] Her critical reference point is Helen Garner's *The First Stone*, a controversial book about an allegation of sexual harassment at Melbourne University.[5] Following Garner, and recent discussions of sexual harassment by Alison Jones, Guy seeks a reading of 'sexual abuse' which would recognise sexuality as marked by 'complexities and ambiguities', and argues that by failing to offer such a reading, 'New Zealand feminism set serious limits on its own understanding of legal-sexual issues'.[6]

I both agree and disagree with Guy. I know that the trashing and so on does go on, but I see it as more circumscribed than she does. From the vantage point of the South Island and other feminist connections, I think that her characterisation of 'New Zealand feminism' depends on a too narrowly focused perspective, that it takes a part for the whole. However, and more to the point, I, too, think we need a more complex discussion of sexual abuse than we have so far had, one in which battle lines are not drawn before discussion commences, and in which the conclusions are not established before the work begins. Like Guy, I find myself attracted to Garner's *The First Stone*, primarily for its willingness to engage in exploration which is both doubting and self-doubting. My response to Guy arises, then, out of my agreement that we do need a more complex and self-critical understanding of sexual abuse. The concern I articulate here is not spe-

cifically to do with Guy's case, but rather with one of the intellectual alliances she seems to be making. I consider that she has made a serious misjudgement in her assessment of the book *First Do No Harm*, and that to argue from such a text is to risk confounding the debate.

Guy sees Goodyear-Smith, like Garner in Australia, as an 'outcast', and characterises *First Do No Harm* as 'partisan but carefully documented', presenting 'a serious and well-documented challenge'.[7] Her defence of *First Do No Harm* is the conclusion to Guy's article and effectively its punch-line; Guy has also written newspaper stories about the book and its author.[8] She sees Goodyear-Smith as offering the kind of debate which this issue needs, but she is concerned at what she sees as the failure of feminists to address the book seriously:

> *First Do No Harm* is a book to be reckoned with, presenting a serious and well-documented challenge to New Zealand sexual abuse workers. What, then, has been the feminist response to it? Largely it has been to deplore it, unread, and to refuse to engage with its author. Our women's bookshop refuses to stock the book. Goodyear-Smith says that whenever she has speaking engagements or university seminars, a sex abuse workers' organization writes to the organizers challenging her credentials and attempting to have the events cancelled. Several public debates have been cancelled because nobody was willing to appear on the same platform with her and represent 'the other side'.[9]

This very public call is the reason, and the only reason, why most of this paper will address *First Do No Harm*.

FIRST DO NO HARM

The subject of *First Do No Harm* is the development and character of the 'sexual abuse industry in the Western World', but it has a focus on New Zealand and is aimed primarily at a New Zealand readership.[10] The rise of the 'industry' and its direction are framed in a discussion of 'sex in the twentieth century'. It discusses the context of the development of the sexual abuse field – the historical underrecognition of child sexual abuse and the fact that many victims were not believed when they complained of it – and the context of social and cultural change during the last decade and a half which saw the rise of programmes to prevent and address it as a problem. It ex-

presses concern about an early influx of 'women with strong [feminist] political beliefs' into the field and a perceived emphasis among them on the need for 'redressing political concerns' to the detriment of attention to the needs of individual clients.[11]

It then discusses some areas of research bearing on issues within the field. It considers research on memory, pointing to findings which suggest that memory is not as accurate as is often believed, and particularly the ways in which it can be distorted by poor interviewing or therapeutic interventions such as hypnosis. It reviews the data on prevalence and discusses the difficulty of interpreting statistics where definitions of sexual abuse vary between studies, and, it is contended, are often problematic. A chapter on childhood sexuality points to the historical and cultural specificity of prohibitions on adult/child sex, and argues that harm can as readily come from therapeutic or other-adult reaction to such sexual encounters as from the encounters themselves.

The book then turns to its specific concerns about developments within 'the industry' and society. It reviews high-profile legal cases concerning day-care centres, satanic ritual abuse, alternative communities and child pornography rings. It discusses the incidence of false complaints in relation to custody cases, vengeful teenagers, pressure from others, the victim syndrome, and financial inducements (such as Accident Compensation payments). It discusses what it claims is the 'sexual abuse industry's' feeding of an 'epidemic' and the political motivations behind it, the detrimental effects of 'industry' practices, and the perceived failure of appropriate checks and safeguards.

The book concludes with an argument concerning 'victimocracy', asserting that feminism and associated beliefs are stuck in a commitment to the notion of male oppressor/female victim, and that instead of resolving these problems they replicate them. Its final section proposes an 'alternative model of female/male relationships' which rejects 'dualisms' and blame-seeking, emphasising instead love, holistic spirituality and the taking of personal responsibility for one's own emotional health.[12] Remedies of a more pragmatic nature, consisting of briefly sketched suggested changes to, for example, 'research', education, diagnostic practices, court procedures, treatment and the media, are included in the appendix.

There are legitimate questions around many of the areas raised in this book. For reasons which will become clear, I do not address

those issues here: my more pressing question has to do with the nature of the case which Goodyear-Smith presents.

I would like to begin by asking: what kind of book is *First Do No Harm*? Goodyear-Smith's own claims in the foreword, articulated against anticipated criticisms, hinge on its grounding in scientific literature:

> The arguments presented in this book offer what I believe is a scientific and rational perspective backed by substantial studies and research.[13]

> The detailed case studies and research papers I have accumulated over the years gives [*sic*] me a knowledge and understanding of the issues available to few others, and I believe it is important for me to share this publicly.
>
> What I have to say in this book is backed by a substantial body of reputable literature. I ask the reader to evaluate what I discuss on this basis. I know there are those who will try to use my personal associations and connections to discredit me and invalidate my assertions.[14]

> My training as a doctor has taught me to respect the scientific method in testing a theory or treatment. A new drug might appear to have exciting possibilities as a wonder-cure. Careful trials must be run, however, to determine its actual effectiveness and the possibility of harmful side-effects. Wherever possible, we must avoid disasters such as the Thalidomide tragedy, where a drug used to settle nausea in pregnancy resulted in the birth of a large number of seriously deformed babies.
>
> We must also beware pseudoscience, where opinions and theories masquerade as proven facts without the testing required to validate them.
>
> It is my contention that the sexual abuse industry operates on a number of untested premises and assumptions with regard to diagnosis and treatment of abuse. The ill-effects of some of these are having far-reaching and tragic consequences. I believe that these investigation and management protocols should be subject to the same evaluation as any medical therapy. Whenever any intervention is contemplated, the primary consideration should always be that which forms the basis of the Hippocratic oath: **first do no harm**.[15]

What interests me is the legitimating authority to which Goodyear-Smith appeals here: it is, above all, science: scientific method, reputable literature, and medicine. Evaluate what I have to say, she asks, on the basis of the 'substantial studies and research' put before you.

It is on this basis that I approach *First Do No Harm*. This is not to say that I don't have some questions about Goodyear-Smith's positioning in this debate: I do. However, in this paper I shall take the book on the terms it claims for itself.

What kind of book does it claim to be, then, and who is it written for? It purports to be an account of the development and current state of a field, and a report on current international scientific research which bears on that field. It is not a book for scientists, however: as the back cover tells us, it is written in 'language you can understand' – for readers who are not specialists. It states clearly that it presents a perspective, to counter prevailing views. However, as the foreword indicates, the book's readers can be assumed to be relying on its representation of the research to evaluate its case.

The question arises, therefore, whether *First Do No Harm* presents its readers with an adequate representation of the literature. Let us take Chapter 4, on memory, as an initial sample. As Goodyear-Smith tells us:

> In the past two to three decades there has been considerable research in the field of memory.
>
> Much of the scientific debate about memory appears in the more academic psychological and sociological journals not read by social workers, counsellors and therapists.[16]

The account which Goodyear-Smith offers of 'the scientific debate about memory' does not square particularly well with the literature in this area. I'd like to take one forthcoming review of the research on children's memory as a reference point for comparison. Its authors, Mel Pipe, Karen Salmon and Gina Priestley, are research psychologists involved in a large ongoing study of children's memory at the University of Otago. The results of this programme are usually published in major international psychology journals, but this review will appear as a chapter in a New Zealand collection on psychology and family law.[17] It reviews research from the 1970s until the present, almost all of which would have been readily available to Goodyear-Smith.

Goodyear-Smith's chapter is entitled 'Can Memories Always be Believed and Trusted?' If we were to take on trust the representation of the literature the chapter offers, the answer would be 'No, memories, especially those of children, can seldom be believed and trusted'.

One consequence of such an answer could be to eliminate what is often the only evidence in allegations of child sexual abuse. The question, and the response to it, are therefore important, and have been a matter of ongoing debate both in academic journals and in the mass media.

Goodyear-Smith's report of the 'scientific debate about memory' covers a number of areas which are subject to ongoing research. Her report can be summarised thus: childhood memories, she argues, are frequently inaccurate, especially when longer time periods have elapsed before testimony is given. Inaccurate memories can be produced by subsequent misinformation such as misleading questions, and such new inaccurate 'memories' can be strongly believed in, especially if provided by someone trusted by the subject. Interviewer expectation can also distort memory, particularly where interviews are long or repeated. Thinking or writing about memories, and discussing them with others, can also distort them. Very young children can have difficulty separating reality from fantasy, and 'harmless' experiences in childhood can be reframed retrospectively as bad or harmful in later years. Hypnosis tends not to produce accurate memories.[18]

The emphasis of the review by Pipe, Salmon and Priestley is somewhat different to that of Goodyear-Smith: indeed, a comparison between the two chapters points to the extent to which Goodyear-Smith diverges from the accepted practices of representing scientific literature. Goodyear-Smith's title question implies a negative answer, and gets one: she provides, however, only evidence which, at least on her representation, points to the unreliability of children's memories. Pipe, Salmon and Priestley's opening questions are: 'How much credence should we give to what children tell us? Are young children indeed unreliable, prone to fantasy and distortion as characterised at the turn of the century? Or can we rely on them to accurately recount their observations and past experiences?'[19] Following scientific convention, they proceed to present and assess research findings which offer support to both sides of the debate, so that their response is not an unqualified assertion of the accuracy of children's memories, nor does it offer an unqualified 'yes' or 'no' to any of these questions. Their approach, instead, is to attempt as good an assessment as is currently available from psychological research on children's ability to remember accurately and to report memories. They cover a number of issues also raised by Goodyear-Smith, and their report raises con-

cerns about her account. They are, however, a great deal more cautious and specific.

The question of whether inaccuracy of memories increases over long delays, for example, is discussed: the research which Pipe *et al* cite suggests inaccuracy does increase over time (the claim made by Goodyear-Smith), but they also note that:

> The effects of long delays may, however, depend on the nature and content of the questions asked; for example, Goodman, Hirschman, Hepps, & Rudy (1991, Experiment 4) found that children's responses to misleading questions relevant to child abuse cases ('abuse questions') remained reasonably accurate over a 4-year time period. It is also possible that children remember salient, personally-experienced events over extended periods of time better than more neutral events.[20]

In contrast to Goodyear-Smith's assertion that 'mentally shocking events actually cause poorer recall of details' Pipe *et al* conclude that there has as yet been no clear relationship established between stress associated with an event and recall.[21] They also discuss the issue of 'errors of commission' (reporting events which did not occur) arising from interviewing, either because of the child's desire to please the interviewer by providing the 'right' answer, or because the child has been asked misleading questions and incorporates information from them into her memory. Pipe *et al* report on studies which show that certain kinds of question tend to support accurate recall, and other kinds may lead to errors, especially if they include misleading information or if direct questions are asked repeatedly, and if a 'misleading' interviewer is trusted (all points noted by Goodyear-Smith). They also report that:

> There is evidence, however, that young children, including preschoolers, can resist even strongly misleading suggestions under some conditions (Rudy & Goodman, 1991; Saywitz, Goodman, Nicholas, & Moan, 1991). This may occur where the child has been a participant in the event, rather than a bystander, where the event is highly relevant to the child, or where he or she has experienced the event many times. Under these circumstances, the event may be more likely to be recalled and thus the memory may be less susceptible to the misinformation effect of misleading questions (Goodman & Reed, 1986; Rudy & Goodman).[22]

This last point, which describes the conditions of much child sex abuse and is therefore clearly important in the debate, is not noted by Goodyear-Smith.

There are a number of issues upon which a similar kind of comparison could be made between these two chapters. The outstanding and underlying differences between the two, however, are that one (Pipe *et al*) adheres to the scientific convention of presenting and evaluating a range of evidence, and seeks to establish and demonstrate as nearly as possible the conditions under which children are likely to be able to be accurate, and those under which they are not. The other (Goodyear-Smith) does not adhere to that convention, and presents only the information which points to the unreliability of children's memory. Goodyear-Smith's account is skewed and oversimplified.

Goodyear-Smith's chapter relies heavily on a few researchers who are primarily aligned with criticism of the sexual abuse field, although Goodyear-Smith does not identify this bias. For example, frequently cited is Elizabeth Loftus, who, although her research in this area is highly regarded, is subject to controversy because of some of the claims based on her findings. Goodyear-Smith's report gives no inkling of this debate.

A researcher less highly-regarded in the field who is cited several times in Goodyear-Smith's chapter is Ralph Underwager, who has, according to Juliet Broadmore, testified for defendants in two hundred child abuse prosecutions, to the point that one judge has questioned his credibility.[23] Broadmore notes that Underwager is the most frequently cited researcher in *First Do No Harm*. Most of the references to his work come from the journal *Issues in Child Abuse Accusations*, the title of which strongly suggests its commitments. In Australasia it is held in only one, relatively obscure, library and, again according to Broadmore, it is not subject to peer review. In themselves, of course, the points I have made about Underwager and *Issues in Child Abuse Allegations* do not disqualify the cited research: my point is that they do not put these sources into the category on which Goodyear-Smith claims her book stands: reputable science. Nor, according to the standards she claims, is her own representation of the literature acceptable practice.

A perhaps minor related point, but one worth noting, is the way in which Goodyear-Smith cites the book *The Courage to Heal*, by

Bass and Davis, as an 'abuse textbook for workers in the field'. It is in fact a US self-help book written for women who have been, or think they may have been abused; it is subtitled 'A Guide for Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse'. It is not 'an abuse textbook', and is currently (and deservedly) subject to much criticism. To describe it as a textbook allows unsubstantiated claims such as the following to be made about the sexual abuse field:

> the mainstream sexual abuse industry ... are teaching therapists that memories of abuse are usually repressed, and that most women will deny or not remember that they were abused as children. Abuse textbooks for workers in the field claim that many women do not remember they were abused until they undergo therapy (Bass and Davis, 1988). It is claimed they can gain their memories through regression therapy, hypnosis, or from dreams. It expected [*sic*] that memories will get more and more detailed with time.
>
> Counsellors are instructed to believe their clients have been sexually abused, even if they doubt it themselves. If a client is unsure that she was abused but thinks she might have been, the counsellor should work as though she was. If she denies it, she should be asked again later.[24]

This passage is apparently based on the arguments of *The Courage to Heal*. It conflates the book's position with that of 'the mainstream sexual abuse industry' (which is not specified any more precisely than this). No source other than *The Courage to Heal* is offered; no evidence or explanation is given to support the conflation.

This brings us to a further dubious practice, characteristic of this chapter as well as of the book as a whole: the sporadic character of its referencing. While some assertions are referenced, giving the book the initial appearance of thoroughly referenced research, important claims are made with no source cited. One claim made, for example, is that:

> The rapid growth of the sexual abuse field meant that a fairly small group of people were responsible for training and educating the others. Networks quickly developed, and those writing about sexual abuse based their work on the theories of those initial workers. Most of the huge body of literature now available has this same base.[25]

This assertion is one of the major claims of the book. It is a potentially very interesting and important line of inquiry, and of course similar arguments have been made about other professions and fields:

this is the stuff of intellectual history. At this stage of my own inquiry, it is a question which I would regard as worth pursuing. But in *First Do No Harm* it is never supported in any way other than by an account from 'personal experience'. No attempt appears to have been made actually to do the research on this question, despite its centrality to the book.

Let us now look beyond this chapter to address further Goodyear-Smith's claim to adhere to 'scientific' practice. A number of articles cited by name in the text do not appear in the bibliography, so the account of them given in the text cannot always be checked. The accounts given of articles which *do* appear in the bibliography might give rise to suspicion of these omissions. Amongst the material I did not know, I selected two references and looked at them in some detail. They were the first two I chose. The first is an article by Douglas Besharov, which interested me because of the way his position is used to lend authority to an argument. If I may quote in some detail, first from *First Do No Harm*:

> Although many authors claim that false allegations are rare (Rush, 1980; Summit, 1983; MacFarlane, 1986), extensive studies by researchers such as Besharov (1985), the former director of the U S National Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect, has [*sic*] indicated that about 65% of suspected child abuse cases are unfounded. The incidence of false reports has increased markedly where mandatory reporting has been introduced. Anonymous telephone hot-lines are similarly exacerbating the problem.[26]

The text makes a point here of asserting the authority of Besharov and his previous position, a move which strengthens the truth-value of his 'findings' as against those of Rush, Summit or MacFarlane. Note, however, that there is a slippage from 'child sexual abuse' (the topic of book, chapter and the previous paragraph), to 'child abuse'. It would not take a particularly careless reader to miss the absence of the word 'sexual'. In the source, although Besharov does not immediately make a distinction between physical and sexual abuse, it is clear from the article that child abuse in general, not specifically child sexual abuse, is his topic. Furthermore, all his examples concern the over-reporting of *physical* abuse, suggesting that this is his particular concern. This suggestion is supported by the categorisation and the emphasis in his concluding section on remedies for over-reporting:

> First, we need a more realistic definition of child abuse. We regularly hear that there are upwards of a million maltreated children (including those that are not reported). This is a reasonably accurate estimate. But the word 'maltreatment' encompasses much more than the brutally battered, sexually abused, or starved and sickly children that come to mind when we think of child abuse. A federal study found that only 3 percent of these 'maltreated' children are physically abused to the extent that they require professional care. And only about 7 percent are sexually abused. The remainder are either victims of unreasonable corporal punishment, emotionally abused (mainly 'habitual scapegoating, belittling and rejecting behavior'), or neglected (mainly educational neglect and emotional neglect, such as 'inadequate nurturance' and 'permitted maladaptive behavior'). Recognizing that these other serious but in no way life-threatening problems are lumped under the term 'child abuse' would go a long way toward reducing current hysteria.[27]

From this I think we can infer that he considers that 'sexual abuse' should generally be placed in the more serious category, rather than in the 'over-reporting' category.

The passage from *First Do No Harm* also suggests a further manipulation of evidence. Goodyear-Smith slips from 'unfounded' to 'false reports', the word 'false' hinting towards a problem of *malicious* reporting. But Besharov never uses the term 'false reports', only 'unfounded reports', and he points specifically to confusion, not malice, as the primary motivation for over-reporting: 'Few of these reports are made maliciously; most involve an honest desire to protect children coupled with confusion about when reports should be made'.[28] I think it can be said, therefore, that Goodyear-Smith's representation uses Besharov's status to authenticate a point, and a broader account, which his article does not support.

The second source which I followed up was chosen because it is a reference to Kate Millett, and represents an infrequent example in *First Do No Harm* of a feminist source. It occurs under the heading 'Children's Sexual Rights'. I'd like to discuss the passage it occurs in more generally first. The section begins by stating that 'there is a power differential in all relationships', and 'the potential for exploitation of a child is particularly high' in sexual relationships and between children and adults.[29] It then proceeds to discuss groups labelled 'radical', such as the Paedophile Information Exchange, the Rene Guyon Society and the North American Man/Boy Love Association:

> These organisations largely expressed the belief that what was important was whether the child was willing to take part in the activity in question, and that unwilling children should never be subjected to sexual acts. There was no need for the child to know the 'consequences' of engaging in harmless (especially non-penetrative) sex play, simply because it was exactly that: harmless.
>
> As would be expected, these societies have mostly been disbanded or outlawed in the sexually repressive 1980s and 1990s.
>
> The concept of children being able to consent to sexual activity has also discussed [*sic*] by less radical groups and individuals, however. Even feminist writer Kate Millett (1991) believes that one of children's essential rights is to express themselves sexually. Dutch judge Edward Brongersma (1988) claims that consent does not require understanding but rather willingness that something should take place.[30]

My first point is the odd transition of identification, from the opening disclaimer of the section (on the potential for exploitation) and the first paragraph of this quotation (where the ideas are presented as those of the organisations), to the second paragraph, when it becomes clear by implication that these societies are seen as 'liberatory', as against the repressiveness of the 1980s and 1990s which causes them to be disbanded. This suggests a somewhat stronger authorial identification.[31]

The third paragraph is more intriguing. The reference to Millett is sandwiched between two sentences which make claims about consent. The discussion of consent is not actually attributed to Millett, but the placing of the sentence implies that she does support the idea. Let's see what we find if we go back to the interview with Millett. We do find her saying, literally, 'Certainly, one of children's essential rights is to express themselves sexually, probably primarily with each other but with adults as well'.[32] But to my mind at least the interview then becomes a lot more interesting, as the interviewer, Mark Blasius, and Millett get more and more at odds with each other. Blasius clearly has it in mind that Millett should say it is oppressive to children not to let them have consensual sex with adults, and his questioning repeatedly tries to elicit such a response. Millett insists, repeatedly, that you can't think about sexual relationships between children and adults without taking inequalities into account, and she points to the locus of interest in contemporary debates. She goes on immediately to say 'Children are in a

very precarious position when they enter into relationships with adults not only in a concrete material sense but emotionally as well because their personhood is not acknowledged in our society'.[33] A little later, Blasius asks:

> *Blasius*: Don't you think that age of consent laws are barriers to exploring possibilities for non-exploitative cross-generational relationships and, more importantly, serve to further deny the right of youths to sexual expression?
>
> *Millett*: Well, they were originally meant to protect the child from exploitation. But what's interesting is that the right to child sexuality is not being approached *initially* as the right of children to express themselves with each other, which was the issue in the '30s with the early sexual liberationists. Instead, it's being approached as the right of men to have sex with kids below the age of consent and no mention is made of relationships between women and girls. It seems as though the principal spokespeople are older men and not youths.[34]

I would have thought this might prompt some reflection by Goodyear-Smith about the interests at stake, the operations of power circulating around the question of adult/child sex, and in particular some critical attention to who's asking for what. But Millett is quoted only as supporting children's rights to sexual experiences: nothing else. The citation therefore constitutes a further 'authentication' of a point which the source does not support.

A final point concerns the 'Dutch judge' Edward Brongersma, and Goodyear-Smith's reference to his claim that 'consent does not require understanding but rather willingness that something should take place'. Broadmore observes that Brongersma is on the editorial board of the pro-paedophilia journal *Paedika*.[35] *First Do No Harm* does not provide this information, which might enable readers to contextualise the evidence presented.

What I have tried to do so far is to point to some of the ways in which *First Do No Harm* fails to adhere to the methods and practices of 'science' to which it has nailed its colours. I suggest that its claim to the practices of 'science' and 'reputable literature' is open to serious question, especially given the lay readership at which the book is largely directed. Indeed, I have approached the material I have discussed so far as a lay reader, and have attempted to demonstrate, by looking at specific examples, the difference that opens up between

Goodyear-Smith's representation of her sources and the sources themselves once they are followed up. But, and this is a particularly odd characteristic of the book, the legitimating authority of science is *already* unsettled in the book by quite a different kind of legitimating claim. For despite the claims in the foreword and elsewhere that 'science' and rationality are the book's reference points, in the very first chapter it proceeds to explain that 'What is actually observed in a scientific study is not nature itself but the interplay between nature and the observer'.[36] Indeed, a large section in the first chapter, headed 'The Subjective Nature of Reality', sets out the historical and cultural specificity of beliefs and practices.[37] As the book proceeds, it relies sometimes on the claim to the authority of empirical science and at other times on a kind of constructionism. This points to a major impediment to a serious criticism of the book: it is something of an epistemological stir-fry. I suspect, however, that an analysis of the pattern of shifts between these legitimating authorities would have at least some curiosity value. To take only one example, the assertion that science is not unbiased is followed almost immediately by a claim beginning 'Studies have shown ...'.[38]

Even if we were to take the appeal to constructionism on its own terms, however, there would be problems. If anything, Goodyear-Smith is more out of her depth in these waters. For example, a brief and manifestly inadequate case for constructionism is followed by the bald claim that because in telling stories we make sense of our lives, 'By changing the stories we can change our social realities'.[39] The notion that 'social realities' can be so readily manipulated runs directly counter to constructionist arguments. The misrepresentation of sources also continues, although here it appears more frequently to be a function of unfamiliarity. The following quotation, for example, falls significantly short of characterising Marx and Foucault:

> Revolutionary writers such as Karl Marx and deconstructionalists [*sic*] such as Michel Foucault have examined the social, political and economic forces which have created modern moral beliefs. They recognise that power grabs and conspiracies often shape the social definitions of reality.[40]

To turn to the 'history' presented in the book: it is transparently selective, reductive and slight to the point of nonsense. Goodyear-

Smith appears to have little familiarity with what constitutes evidence in the humanities, or with the modes of argument in the fields in which she is attempting to operate. In chapters one and two ('The Politics of Sexuality' and 'Sex in the 20th Century'), series of cliched examples are presented as if they amount to argument. These chapters are notable for a couple of points at least: first, the parallel implied between current 'repressive' attitudes to child sexual abuse and the 'repressive' Victorian prohibition on masturbation.[41] This is a curious analogy once we recall that masturbation in this context cannot by definition entail a relationship of power between persons. The fact that this analogy is used more than once is therefore perhaps revealing of the kind of erasure happening in *First Do No Harm*.[42] Second, here and elsewhere in the book the 1960s and 1970s are characterised as periods of sexual liberation and 'freedom', and the 1980s and 1990s, by contrast, as an era of 'anti-sex', or 'repression'.[43] This assertion is accorded the status of fact without any case made for it or evidence presented, though I would have thought it arguable. Similarly, the 'women's liberation' of the 1960s and 1970s is regarded as encouraging women's sexual expression, but feminism of the 1980s and 1990s is represented as a simplistic and limiting belief system which produces women as victims. Again, evidence is lacking (the only citation is of Camille Paglia).[44] Nor, again, is the notion of expression/repression treated at all critically here, despite the book's deployment of Foucault and of *The History of Sexuality* in particular.

The chapters on sexuality and the sections on women are also remarkable for the almost complete absence of reference to feminist writing, despite the fact that it constitutes one of the largest contemporary literatures on these topics. Even the chapter entitled 'The Politics of Sexuality' does not cite feminist authors, although, oddly enough, it makes use of historical material which would suggest at least an indirect debt to feminist historians. Some feminist writing might, however, have been most useful for the arguments of *First Do No Harm*. For example, Gayle Rubin's famous article 'Thinking Sex' is a very cogently argued case for what Goodyear-Smith seems to be attempting to argue with regard to sexuality. Rubin argues that 'modern Western societies appraise sex acts according to a hierarchical system of sexual value. Marital, reproductive heterosexuals are alone at the top of the erotic pyramid.' Then

in descending order, she argues, are progressively more stigmatised sexual practitioners, who may be unmarried, homosexual, non-procreative, promiscuous, commercial, and so on, but 'lowliest of all [are] those whose eroticism transgresses generational boundaries'.[45] There is much in this article which would support Goodyear-Smith's position – indeed it is critical of other feminist perspectives on sexuality – but it is not referred to.

One of the few exceptions to the absence of feminist sources is the reference to Kate Millett, mentioned earlier. If I can come back to it briefly, I would like to make one more point:

> The concept of children being able to consent to sexual activity has also discussed [*sic*] by *less radical groups and individuals*, however. *Even* feminist writer Kate Millett ...[46]

It is hard to think of a term which better describes Millett to a feminist mind than 'radical', and radicalism in a loose sense is a term generally associated with feminism. What is going on here? What is the importance to this text of characterising contemporary feminism as uncategorically conservative?

Here's one possible explanation. If it acknowledged that feminists think and write about these questions in the way that Rubin for example does, *First Do No Harm* would be robbed of one of its most powerful rhetorical tools: the opposition between the forces of feminist repression and the pro-sex innocents who have become caught up in the fury of their crusades. The argument of *First Do No Harm* cannot allow for complexity and difference within feminism: it depends on an underlying interpretation of feminism as an inflexible dogma dominating attitudes to sexuality and the field of child sexual abuse.[47]

In summary, therefore, I do not agree with Guy's characterisation of *First Do No Harm* as 'well-documented'. I think it constitutes 'a serious challenge' only insofar as it is plausible to a lay readership, but the possibility that it might have some credibility in that context is a matter of concern: it could do harm. I am worried by the fact that Guy defends the book: I think it risks this debate being precipitated into an old puritan *versus* libertarian split which will not take us far at all. More worryingly, it disturbs me deeply to contemplate the possibility that the debate over child sexual abuse could continue at the level of *First Do No Harm*. I would have preferred to

argue over the ideas rather than the quality of the scholarship. Given the quality of the scholarship, however, the kind of commentary which I have done becomes the only one possible. At present, New Zealand researchers in a number of fields are doing important work on areas which bear on child sexual abuse. I am most familiar with the two large Otago projects on prevalence and long-term effects, and on children's memory, but I know there are others around the country. Chris Atmore's is the most serious local work from feminist theory as yet, but she now works in Australia.[48] I think we need ongoing, careful, well-founded and nuanced discussion from within Women's Studies and feminist scholarship, and I think that now we must entertain critical questions about many of the areas of concern which *First Do No Harm* addresses. This may seem something of a turnaround: what I am saying is that I do not think Goodyear-Smith does an adequate job, and that I think her agenda is dubious, but nevertheless, I *do* think that many of the questions in the book need to be explored, if not on her terms.

I say this especially because in my admittedly limited and relatively recent dealings with clinicians and researchers, and in my discussions with the feminists I spend much of my time with, I have had a different sense than Guy's of discussions about critical questions in the field of sexual abuse. For me, these critical questions include such issues as memory, interviewing, the authority of personal experience, child sexuality, the historical and cultural specificity of age and incest taboos, the complexity and fluidity of relations of power, the issue of satanic ritual abuse, and the specificities of such circumstances as custody cases and compensation payments, as well as the way that all these issues have been dealt with in the media. When I talk about them with clinicians they are interested, not defensive, and they address them with a complexity which speaks familiarity with the dilemmas of working with uncertainties. For example, the clinicians I have spoken to have a strong sense of the need for a high standard of training and very careful interviewing. A couple of them expressed strong reservations about the establishment of courses which train counsellors in sexual abuse work only. I have talked with clinicians and researchers about the notion, promoted in some media, of a specific and inevitable outcome of damage, and listened to their criticisms of that narrative.

Whenever I tell other feminists about what I'm starting work on,

I have a long conversation – much more than with any other research I have done. My critical questions are addressed with considerable interest as genuine difficulties, areas of real uncertainty which pose epistemological and ethical dilemmas to clinicians, researchers, volunteers and courts – and to feminist thinkers. I think that many feminists do talk – endlessly – about these issues, and in a variety of ways, although usually privately. This raises the question, however, of why it is that these debates are for the most part kept to the level of the informal.

One of the more obvious conclusions, though I don't think it is the only one, is that, because any contrary opinion on the child sexual abuse debate is so risky, so liable to be reappropriated, it is an issue on which critical feminist debate in public is particularly guarded and circumspect. We have only to think of the way in which Goodyear-Smith cites Millett, or to remember the series of misrepresentations perpetrated on Miriam Saphira and Hilary Haines for years after the Telethon debacle.[49] Doubts are generally expressed privately for pretty good reason. Feeding into this tendency, of course, is the routinely unsubtle media interpretation of what 'feminism' stands for. It's no use pretending that these questions can be aired in a political vacuum – and of course, this constitutes another of the 'critical questions' which requires exploration. Obviously, another point to be made here is one point Guy is making: that 'breaking ranks' leaves a critical voice open not only to misappropriation but to ostracisation from within feminism. Yet, and I think that this is important, the relative absence of debate leaves public perception of 'the feminist attitude to child sexual abuse' in a currently unfortunate state, and open to precisely the kind of account which *First Do No Harm* is purveying. It could be argued that feminist anxiety about the child abuse debate may in a sense have allowed this kind of representation; that there has been a critical vacuum which *First Do No Harm* has been able to occupy. It seems almost to replicate the clinician's dilemma: there is harm potentially attached either to believing or not believing a child's story.[50] For feminists, the question is whether *not* to give searching, open, critical attention to some of these issues is as risky as to criticise.

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NOTES

1 Felicity Goodyear-Smith, *First Do No Harm: The Sexual Abuse Industry* (Benton-Guy Publishing, Auckland, 1993); Camille Guy, 'Feminism and Sexual Abuse: Troubled Thoughts on Some New Zealand Issues', *Feminist Review*, 52 (1996) pp. 154-68. A broader response to Guy's article than I offer here, by Chris Atmore, is forthcoming in *Feminist Review*.

2 Miriam Saphira, *The Sexual Abuse of Children* (Mental Health Foundation, Auckland, 1981).

3 The earlier article is Alison Jones and Camille Guy, 'Radical Feminism in New Zealand: from Piha to Newtown', in Rosemary Du Plessis et al (eds), *Feminist Voices: Women's Studies Texts for Aotearoa/New Zealand* (Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992) pp. 300 – 316.

4 For another discussion of the 'Mervyn Thomson incident', in which a university lecturer was tied to a tree as a reprisal for alleged sexual harassment, see Chris Atmore, '"Branded": Lesbian Representation and a New Zealand Cultural Controversy', in D. Bennett (ed), *Cultural Studies: Pluralism and Theory* (University of Melbourne, Department of English, Melbourne, 1993).

5 Helen Garner, *The First Stone: Some Questions about Sex and Power* (Picador, Sydney, 1995).

6 Guy, p. 162.

7 Guy, pp. 165, 167.

8 Camille Guy, 'Mind Bending', *New Zealand Herald*, 30 October 1993; and 'Think About It', *NZH* 8 October 1994.

9 Guy, p. 167.

10 Goodyear-Smith, p. 5.

11 Goodyear-Smith, p. 7.

12 Goodyear-Smith, pp. 127-37.

13 Goodyear-Smith, p. 5.

14 Goodyear-Smith, p. 6.

15 Goodyear-Smith, p. 13

16 Goodyear-Smith, p. 41.

17 M-E. Pipe, K. Salmon and G. Priestley, 'Listening to Children in the Court Room', in M-E. Pipe and F. Seymour (eds), *Psychology and Family Law: A New Zealand Perspective* (University of Otago Press, Dunedin, in press).

18 Goodyear-Smith, pp. 40-53.

19 Pipe, Salmon and Priestley.

20 ibid.

21 Goodyear-Smith, p. 52; Pipe, Salmon and Priestley.

22 ibid.

23 Broadmore discusses his positioning with regard to the child sexual abuse field at some length in her review, 'False Concerns About Sexual Abuse Allegations?: A Review of "First Do No Harm – The Sexual Abuse Industry"', *New Zealand Family Physician*, 22:3 (1995) pp. 107-109.

24 Goodyear-Smith, p. 50.

25 Goodyear-Smith, p. 41.

26 Goodyear-Smith, p. 107.

27 Douglas J. Besharov, 'An Overdose of Concern: Child Abuse and the Overreporting Problem', *Regulation: AEI Journal of Government and Society* (11) Nov/Dec 1985 pp. 25-28.

28 Besharov, p. 26.

29 Goodyear-Smith, p. 70.

30 Goodyear-Smith, p. 71

31 It strikes me, in passing, that it was one thing to support those views in 1980 (when the Millett interview first appeared), in the pre-AIDS era, and a somewhat different thing to be presenting them rather uncritically now.

32 Kate Millett, interviewed by Mark Blasius, 'Sexual Revolution and the Liberation of Children', in Daniel Tsang (ed), *The Age Taboo: Gay Male Sexuality, Power and Consent* (Alyson Publications, Boston, 1981) pp. 80-83. Goodyear-Smith does not give a full reference; I have used an earlier reprint of the interview.

33 Millett/Blasius, p. 80.

34 Millett/Blasius, p. 81.

35 Broadmore, p. 108.

36 Goodyear-Smith, p. 17.

37 Goodyear-Smith, p. 15.

38 Goodyear-Smith, p. 17.

39 Goodyear-Smith, p. 18.

40 Goodyear-Smith, p. 17.

41 Goodyear-Smith, pp. 22-23.

42 Goodyear-Smith, pp. 22-23, 33.

43 Goodyear-Smith, pp. 28-30, 22.

44 Goodyear-Smith, p. 32.

45 Gayle Rubin, 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality', in Carole S. Vance (ed), *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Boston, 1984) pp. 279, 281.

46 Goodyear-Smith, p. 71 (my italics).

47 For example, see Goodyear-Smith, pp. 7-8, 22, 25, 110-111.

48 Chris Atmore, 'Essential Fictions, Fictional Essences: Some Recent Media Constructions of Child Sexual Abuse in Aotearoa', *Women's Studies Journal*, 7:1 (1991) pp. 29-54; 'Conflicts over Recovered Memories – Every Layer of the Onion', *Feminism and Psychology*, 7:1 (1997) pp. 57-62.

49 Inaccurate child sexual abuse statistics used in the advertising campaign for the 1988 Telethon, a national fund-raising event, became the focus for quite intense media scrutiny in that year; a series of magazine articles focused attention not on the advertisers responsible for the mistake but on lesbians involved in the sexual abuse field, particularly Saphira and Haines. For example, Carroll du Chateau, 'How the Mental Health Foundation is Trying to Drive us Mad', *Metro*, October 1988. Haines' own response to the furore gained little attention: 'Research in Focus', *Mental Health News* (August 1988) pp. 21-23. Atmore, 'Essential Fictions, Fictional Essences', discusses the media handling of this controversy.

50 This, of course, is the dilemma which the title of *First Do No Harm* critically fails to recognise.

Book Reviews

THE STORY OF SUZANNE AUBERT
Jessie Munro

Auckland University Press and Bridget Williams, Auckland, 1996. $49.95

Suzanne Aubert was the founder of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion. In Wellington, where they have run a general hospital, a large inner-city creche and a soup kitchen since the turn of the century, their name is synonymous with the care of the most needy in society. They are the Catholic Church's only surviving New Zealand - founded female religious congregation.

While *The Story of Suzanne Aubert* will hold particular interest for Catholics, Jessie Munro has produced a superbly researched contribution to the social history of New Zealand, that meets the best academic standards. The bonus is that she writes in a style which hooks readers, academic and non-academic, from start to finish. Aubert's story could have been (and has been elsewhere) produced as a pious piece of hagiography, but this is biography par excellence.

Suzanne is portrayed as a truly heroic figure, nonetheless heroic for her all too human faults. She had a tongue like a razor. Short and plain, she had extraordinary stamina, and scant sympathy for those of her Sisters whose strength did not match her own. She was a formidable woman to cross, name-dropped shamelessly, and cultivated society men and women to achieve her ends. The younger Suzanne would have been a confoundedly uncomfortable woman to live with.

The towering moral, spiritual and personal stature of Mother Aubert, her significant influence on the New Zealand Catholic Church and the wider society of her time are done full justice in Munro's biography. We have a three-dimensional portrait of a determinedly independent, highly intelligent, educated young Frenchwoman who resisted an arranged marriage, but fell for the practised charms of Bishop Jean Baptiste Pompallier. Pompallier was seeking missionaries for his romantically pictured diocese at the end of the world. Also influenced by the spirituality of the mystical Curé of Ars and his predictions for her life, Aubert eloped from her family in 1860 to join Pompallier's party of New Zealand-bound missionaries.

In the course of her vocation to love and care for the most marginalised in New Zealand society, Suzanne was both greatly assisted and greatly hindered by men in positions of ecclesiastic authority. Her experiences were similar to other founders of nineteenth-century women's religious congregations: Catherine McAuley, Mary Potter, Mary MacKillop and Euphrasie Barbier. All were subjected to oppressive clerical control of their work and, in contrast, some splendid support and encouragement which enabled their institutes to survive and then flourish in the Church. As with most of the women who founded active (as opposed to contemplative) religious institutes, Suzanne would have preferred to keep her congregational governance flexible. Pressure from the hierarchy led to the imposition of semi-monastic structures and canonical protocols ill-suited to the demands of their pastoral work.

I found the dramatic clashes between Aubert and Bishop O'Shea (Wellington) and Bishop Cleary (Auckland) extraordinarily revelatory. The story of Cleary's effort to make her quit foundling care because it could be misconstrued by Protestant bigots, is an eye-opener, especially for someone, like myself, raised on the bedtime stories of Lunky Lee, Cleary's pseudonym. Suzanne, long before her time, had a philosophy and a practice of child care which stressed that discipline should be loving. 'The Sisters shall love the children' was the oft-repeated injunction. Sisters were expressly instructed not to slap or 'give any signs of impatience or severity'. Aubert's decision to continue and expand her care for orphaned or unwanted children also brought her into conflict with government authorities who favoured individual fostering to institutional care. Their motives were ideologically progressive; her motives were pragmatic and consistent with her lifelong support for powerless women. She aimed to offer alternatives to infanticide, the refuge of the desperate and the destitute. Fostering sickly or handicapped babes proved difficult. The Homes were a vital social service.

In another generation, Suzanne would surely have qualified in medicine. As it was, she learned from her Maori women companions and became a renowned dispenser of a range of herbal medicines, plus a skilled bone-setter. When it came to the founding of her hospital in Wellington, she was determined her Sisters should qualify as state-registered nurses, and despite her years and frailty, successfully fought bureaucracy to achieve it.

At an age when most founders of institutes could look back and bask in their achievements, Aubert was faced with her greatest trial: the take-over of her property and works by the Bishop of Wellington. She used her high-class lawyer (later a Chief Justice) effectively to stave off immediate take-over, then left for Rome – the last resort – in 1913, aged 78, powerless and penniless. Caught by the outbreak of war, she nursed fourteen-hour shifts in slum hospitals and sought the necessary Papal injunction to thwart episcopal control. The process was byzantine: the time in Rome stretched to a six-year separation from her Sisters. But the work went on, and Suzanne wrote constantly to buoy them up. Finally, with the decree in her pocket, she made for home in 1919 where, now well into her eighties, she pursued her vision of a general hospital for the poor. Aubert died in 1926, five years before the hospital and training school opened. The work and the vision live on in her 'Daughters' today.

Mother Aubert was a woman of phenomenal achievements, totally committed to a 'preferential option for the poor' generations before it became a theological cliche. A prophetic ecumenicist in an age of denominational bigotry, she embraced the language and the culture of the tangata whenua at a time of culturally destructive Christian evangelism and attempted political assimilation. Jessie Munro has delivered a definitive portrait, rich reading and food for thought.

PAULINE ENGEL, *Office of the Vicar of Education, Catholic diocese of Auckland*

THE INTERNET FOR WOMEN
Rye Senjen and Jane Guthrey
Spinifex Press, North Melbourne, 1996, $34.95

Rye Senjen and Jane Guthrey set out in *The Internet for Women* to provide a woman-friendly guide to the Internet. It is their belief that the Internet has a lot to offer users in terms of low cost, fast and efficient communication and information, and that women should be availing themselves of this new technology for feminist activities. 'We believe it is vital for women to help shape the Internet so that we can create a place where women feel a sense of belonging. We need to take ownership of a technology that has immense potential for

social change.' (p. x) To this end, throughout the volume, the authors select examples which will appeal to feminists and also provide an interesting chapter which outlines the role women have played in the development of computers. I also must admit that I found the surfing witch who negotiates the Internet waves as you flip through the book a fun addition.

By and large Senjen and Guthrey succeed in their aims for the volume. *The Internet for Women* is written in accessible language which explains cyberspace and computer jargon in plain English – a welcome change from the array of available Internet manuals. These include those which are written in a computer-speak jargon which require translation into English as well as those patronising manuals allegedly published for non-experts, which also assume a less than average level of reader intelligence. Instead, the authors carefully craft a how-to manual which takes the reader on an intelligent and useful journey through the most commonly used features of the Internet. These include: email, mailing lists, Usenet News groups, the World Wide Web, Internet Relay Chat programs, Multi-User Dimensions and commercial on-line information services. Aiming at both beginners and experienced Internet users, Senjen and Guthrey provide advice on how to acquire Internet access inexpensively, sensible questions to ask a potential provider, pointers on setting up commonly used programmes for both DOS and Macintosh computers as well as instructions on setting up a home page on the World Wide Web and locating FTP sites. They also discuss issues surrounding security and privacy on the Internet, with special concern and helpful instructions for women working in sensitive areas or groups which may be subject to surveillance. Sensibly, the authors block off direct instructions for implementing the various tasks they describe in separate shaded areas and provide email addresses and web site locations of individuals and organisations they mention. In addition, they employ a technique of marking important messages and warnings with animal icons. Undoubtedly, these simple but effective stylistics increase the usability of the volume as a companion computer manual.

On the down side, some of the information provided is rather superfluous and could easily have been edited out. For example, do we really need to know that Barbara Ann O'Leary, founder of Virtual Sisterhood, 'lives with her husband in a 130-year-old former farmhouse' (p. 24) or that Jo Sutton and Scarlet Pollock who publish

Women'space, have 'three dogs, seven cats, ten goats, four cows, three sows and an assortment of ducks, geese and chickens' (p. 29)? Similarly, the chapter on sexual harassment on the Internet, while clearly an important topic, labours the point after making the very sensible argument that harassment on the Internet is very much like harassment elsewhere in the world and that this should certainly not stop women from employing the technology for their own ends. It is also a pity that the authors feel the need to denigrate the woman who wrote *Netchick* without an adequate description of what the book is about: 'Carla and her admirers appear to have embraced the new technology in order to be outrageous, to shock, and to ultimately behave in the same ways that men do – and they imagine they're being radical' (p. 30). I have not looked at *Netchick* and may, in the end, have agreed with Senjen and Guthrey about its dubious creativity and lack of usefulness, but in an otherwise very positive volume, their criticism seems out of place. These are, however, minor detractions from an otherwise appealing Internet volume which novice and regular Internet users should find interesting and valuable.

PHYLLIS HERDA, *Women's Studies, University of Auckland*

HER WORK AND HIS: FAMILY, KIN AND COMMUNITY IN NEW ZEALAND, 1900-1930
Claire Toynbee

Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1995. $34.95

'Woman Knitting' is the caption for the photograph on the cover of *Her Work and His*, the anonymity of the woman reflecting the wider invisibility of women's work in the past. Clare Toynbee set out to remedy this deficit through an oral history project exploring the domestic work of women, men and children in the years 1900 to 1930. The oral histories are examined through a sociological framework, considering issues of class, gender and geographic location. The study pays particular attention to the way domestic work was differentiated in urban and rural communities and argues that there was a shift from patriarchal family forms towards 'masculinism', an economically driven ideology which defined women as 'perpetually alien in the market-place' while regarding

them as the moral guardians of the household (p. 89).

The book is clearly written and will be useful for those who want a guide to sociological concepts concerning the family. The author's aim 'is to fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge about Pakeha family and kin relationships in New Zealand in the twentieth century' (p. 9). Oral history is her main source and this has been used carefully to ensure that the sample included sufficient numbers of rural and urban dwellers and covered respondents from different classes.

Toynbee's respondents make clear the authority of parents in the early twentieth century. Children's work was often indispensable if families were to be economically viable. It is no surprise to learn that the work of girls and boys was differentiated in the expectation that boys would go on to become 'cherished breadwinners' while girls would become housewives. Housework was time-consuming and arduous, some husbands shared the daily burdens but most made their contributions outside the house in the vegetable garden. Relations between fathers and children could be distant: Toynbee cites the example of the father who would not acknowledge his son in the street. Mothers, on the other hand, were considered by many of the working class respondents to be 'unequivocally the boss' (p. 163). The most constrained lives were perhaps those led by eldest daughters, expected to care for siblings when young and elderly parents later in life.

By the early twentieth century, Toynbee suggests, 'Individual men, who had grown accustomed to controlling their wages, were now required to take more responsibility toward the family' (p. 167). The evolution of the 'respectable family man' is asserted rather than explained. From the time of European settlement men had always had a statutory duty to provide for their families. What appears to have changed are the aspirations of these families: couples aimed to have fewer children and more material possessions. Home ownership was a key aspiration and may well have been a mark of masculine independence securing the man's position as 'head of the household'. What is masked, of course, was men's dependence on the domestic work of women through individual men (and children) were well aware of the centrality of the housewife's budgeting and domestic work.

Toynbee's evidence, while charting the allocation of work in families, rarely touches on this question of aspirations. Some questioning of respondents about their views of other ways of life (how did urban

dwellers view rural dwellers, and vice versa?) might have given some insight into the transition to an urban society beyond a purely economic explanation. Perhaps the nineteenth-century dream of the independent farmer gave way to different aspirations as the realities of working the land sank in. Large families were useful in a rural setting with the myriad of farm tasks to be done. Yet just as few children had as large families as their parents, perhaps they also had different ideas of the good life. The delights of rural life might have faded in the face of the bright lights (at least the possibility of electricity supply existed) and more regular, less strenuous working hours and more dependable pay packets of the town. Toynbee has executed her brief and filled some gaps. We look forward to her next work, using the data on 'Growing Up', which will, no doubt, address the question of generational change more fully.

BARBARA BROOKES, *History, University of Otago*

EUGENIA
Lorae Parry

Victoria University Press and The Women's Play Press, Wellington, New Zealand Playscripts

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> Mrs. Bassani: He was the most beautiful woman I ever knew. He knew how a woman liked to be treated.
>
> Violet: She was the most romantic man I ever knew.

In 1996 Lorae Parry's play was performed at Taki Rua Theatre, Wellington, and The Watershed, Auckland, with the two main roles acted by Parry and her partner, Madeleine McNamara. In February 1997 it will be performed with the same two leads at the Belvoir Street Theatre, Sydney, as part of the annual gay and lesbian Mardi Gras. Set in Wellington, partly in 1916 and partly in the present, it tells the story of an Italian woman, Eugenia, who has lived her adult life as a man and is accused of murdering her wife. In the present, interlaced with this plot a secondary school drama teacher is constructing a play about Eugenia. There is sexual tension between her (played by the actor who also plays the wife Violet) and the deputy

principal (played by the actor who also plays Eugenia). The pupils recreating Eugenia's story become involved to the point of obsession, and the Board of Trustees refuses to allow the play to be performed. This section, because of the time constraints on a play, remains sketchy and the characters underdeveloped. The emotional heart of the play is in the story of a passing woman in 1916.

In the brief introduction to the playscript Parry states: 'In writing Eugenia, I have created a fiction, yet the play has been inspired by the lives of several women, throughout history and in the present day; women who have crossed the lines of gender and who have lived and loved as men'. She acknowledges the influence of the story of Brandon Teena, a young Nebraskan woman, born Teena Brandon, a cross-dresser who lived as a man and who was raped and murdered in 1994, and of Suzanne Falkiner's 1988 book *Eugenia: A Man*. Falkiner, an Australian journalist, records the life of Eugenia Falleni who lived her adult life as a passing man. Born in Italy in 1875, brought to Wellington aged two, she was the oldest of 17 surviving children out of 22 births. As a youth when Falleni was prosecuted for impersonating a man, her employer at the brickfield, 'testified that she could work as well as his best worker'. The real Falleni moved to Sydney where she had a daughter as the consequence of being 'violently used' on a ship where she was working as a cabin boy. She fostered the daughter out with an Italian family and continued to work and pass as a man, Harry Crawford. In 1920, aged 45, she was sentenced to death for the murder of her wife in 1917. By 1920 she had remarried. Her second wife did not know she was not a man and at the time of her arrest thought she was pregnant to Crawford. 'An exhibit', which Crawford described as 'something I have been using', presumably a dildo, was displayed at the trial. Falkiner writes: 'Harry – had apparently evolved a technique that only the sexual mores of the day could have made possible; drawn blinds, an extinguished light, and in the darkened bedroom an assumption of modesty – so that his wives and mistresses never saw him unclothed or uncovered'. Falleni was released in 1931 and lived the rest of her life as a woman.

It's a fascinating story, even as told in Falkiner's factual repetitive prose. The Fallenis' relationship was said to be unhappy, and the 'accused was abusive'. Falkiner hypothesises that Falleni/Crawford adopted all the macho characteristics of a working class man of the period and was a heavy drinker, violent and uncommunicative. Par-

ry's play is only loosely based on Falleni's story. Her Eugenia is young and dashing, speaks a charming broken Italian-English, plays the mandolin, sings Italian love songs and she and Viola are in love. Parry's Eugenia is loved by women because, as the opening lines state, he was romantic and knew how to treat a woman. (Also, as one of his lovers, Mrs. Bassani, says, she suspected he was not a man because: 'The first night we were together, we made love for many hours – She was the best man I ever knew'.) The women respect and love Eugenia knowing her sex, it is the men who persecute and abuse her. And the love scenes are both sensitive and sexy with characters who are anachronistically outspoken about sex. Parry creates a macho heavy-drinking male competitor for Violet's favours, who the play suggests was the murderer. So, the play is as much a love story as a portrayal of a woman who thinks she is a man in a woman's body. And it is a love story told from a lesbian-feminist perspective. After Violet discovers that her husband is not a man, she begs Eugenia to come away and live with her as a woman: 'People would think we were friends, they'd think we were sisters even. They'd never know anything about our private ways. Aye. That's the answer. That's the way we can be together. That way you can be yourself.' Eugenia, who thinks of herself as a man, refuses: 'You cannot know what it is like, to be born in the skin of the wrong sex. To lie is the only way to live my truth.' But then, when Eugenia comes back and finds Violet dead she screams: 'I am a woman. Io sono donna. Io non sono piu homo.'

Parry's first published play, *Frontwomen*, about the development of a relationship between a closet TV presenter and a married woman, was New Zealand's first lesbian play. In its interest in transgender, Eugenia is very much of the queer nineties. In the same year that *Eugenia* was first staged, a play about a Fa'afafine, *A Frigate Bird Sings*, was a smash success in Auckland. In the States books have appeared such as Leslie Feinberg's 1993, *Stone Butch Blues*, an autobiographical fiction about growing up a butch lesbian in the sixties, passing as a man in the seventies and, finally, becoming a spokesperson for transgender people. Feinberg's 1996 book, *Transgender Warriors: Making History from Joan of Arc to RuPaul*, is an account of those people, who like Eugenia Falleni, have not conformed to our culture's unproblematic association of gender with biological sex. Feinberg writes: 'You probably already know that those of us who cross the cultural boundaries of sex and gender are paying a terrible

price. We face discrimination and physical violence. We are denied the right to live and work with dignity and respect.' The play has the intent of making us sympathise with Eugenia, and it does it with panache, energy and style. It's an important New Zealand play.

AOREWA MCLEOD, *English, University of Auckland*

THE WOMEN'S PARLIAMENT: THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND, 1896-1920
Roberta Nicholls

Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1996

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN IN NEW ZEALAND
Dorothy Page

Auckland University Press with Bridget Williams Books and the National Council of Women, Wellington, 1996

Published separately with assistance from the 1993 Suffrage Centennial Year Trust, these two books commemorate the 1896 formation of the National Council of Women. Although they may be seen as competing publications they are, in fact, complementary. *The Women's Parliament* is an in-depth study of the early National Council of Women, its decline and revival in 1918. Page's book is the official history of the NCW, and covers its fortunes from 1890s to the 1990s, with a postscript by the most recent president, Janet Hesketh. Its longer time span provides a fascinating study of an organisation over time, its relationship with the state, and the influence of different leadership styles.

The history of the NCW is co-terminous with 'first-wave' feminism in New Zealand, drawing together organisations which had been formed to fight for suffrage and others with more specific social targets. At its early meetings were representatives of organisations as seemingly diverse as the Fabian Society, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Vegetarian Society and the Salvation Army. *The Women's Parliament*, with its chapter-by-chapter survey of the Council's conventions, shows the varied and sometimes inconsistent interests of its members. Throughout, however, the early NCW was attuned to the progressive role of the state, seeking state intervention

on the side of justice and equality. Both books attempt to assess the influence of the NCW on governmental policy, Nicholls concluding that the absence of entrenched community and private organisations made the impact of the NCW and its individual members stronger than might have been the case with equivalent bodies in older white societies. Watered down versions of many NCW resolutions made it onto New Zealand's statute books, though, as Page points out, the Liberal government had decided how far it intended to go, and Seddon, the Premier, could be both dismissive and patronising of women's deputations – even while praising women's influence for overseas consumption. Generally speaking, both the *National Council of Women* and *The Women's Parliament* show links between feminists in New Zealand and those overseas during this first phase of the NCW, give clear, serviceable accounts of the main themes and concerns of successive conventions, and supply valuable portraits of NCW leaders – Nicholls provides especially useful coverage of Lady Anna Stout's activities both in New Zealand and in Britain, where she joined that country's fight for women's suffrage. Both books make the point that women continued to work for women's and children's welfare even when the NCW had gone into recess, suggesting that earlier depictions of the post-1904 period as one of decline in the women's movement may have been overdrawn.

Nicholl's coverage of the NCW goes up to 1920, but she ends with a useful survey of similarities and differences between 'first' and 'second-wave' New Zealand feminists (which will, no doubt, be mined by students set this perennially popular essay topic). Painting on a broader canvas, Page takes the revived NCW into the 1920s and beyond, concluding that it was more conservative and its annual conferences more prosaic than those of its predecessors. Women of a radical bent tended to be drawn to the new Labour party, while the more democratic affiliate structure put in place after 1918 tended to temper radicalism and result in compromise – as Page notes, the passion and verve of the 1890s was muted in this later stage by the slow process of consultation and democracy. Even in its more conservative form, the NCW nonetheless provides a barometer for women's issues over the decades: we come across the discussion of the 'white slave traffic', eugenics, jury service, women police, contraceptive slot machines, equal pay, the environment, biculturalism and the Cartwright Inquiry, to touch upon just a few of the multitudinous

issues canvassed by the NCW over time. Discussion boxes give biographical portraits of successive NCW presidents. Delicately incisive, they give an intriguing insight into the varied backgrounds and personalities of generations of liberal feminists, whose common characteristic seems to have been enormous energy and social involvement across a wide sphere.

The National Council of Women is written with elegance and a quiet wit. As a commissioned history, it obviously operates within certain constraints. The author of a commissioned history myself, I know that these constraints tend to be more self-imposed than otherwise, and they reflect the fact that history is not simply something back in 'the past' – it reflects and affects the present. There are always recent issues which can only be referred to obliquely, and which require the distance of time for a fuller (though not necessarily any more 'objective') analysis. The question of audiences is also a difficult one for writers of such histories to gauge. Except for specifically targeted text books (for which academic authors, who are also course controllers, can guarantee a market), New Zealand books need to appeal to the broader public. A commissioned history is not written simply for other historians and cannot, in general, be permeated by the postmodernist thrust and uncertainty which characterises some academic feminist historiography. A good story, well told and illustrated is what is usually required, and this is what is delivered in both *The National Council of Women* and *The Women's Parliament*. The publication of histories is one way in which an organisation positions itself in the present and substantiates its claim to a voice in public life. Of course, in the 1990s where change is exalted in itself, claims based upon length of existence, experience and consistency of purpose may count for little. While the NCW remains the single largest women's across-the-board lobby group in New Zealand, both books raise sobering questions about the relevance of its approach to present-day politics.

Page and Nicholls have provided excellent supplements to a developing body of published material on the history of feminism in New Zealand, extending Pat Grimshaw's early *Women Suffrage in New Zealand*, such recent publications as *Women Together*, edited by Anne Else, Charlotte Macdonald's *The Vote, The Pill and The Demon Drink*, and *The Suffragists*. Students will find their bibliographies and lists of references a useful resource for future research (though Nicholls has a rather irritating tendency to attribute information in

references to the editor of books, such as *Women Together*, rather than the actual authors of the essays). Page's broader survey will ultimately be the more useful for the non-historian, but those with an interest in first-wave feminism in New Zealand will want to have both books on their shelves.

MARGARET TENNANT, *History, Massey University*

MONEY-GO-ROUNDS: THE IMPORTANCE OF ROTATING SAVINGS AND CREDIT ASSOCIATIONS FOR WOMEN
S. Ardener and S. Burman (eds)
Oxford/Washington, 1996, £14.95

This 300-page book of 16 new papers and an extremely valuable facsimile reprint of Ardener's 1964 'state-of-the-art' article which started them all off, is a very welcome addition to the literature on gendered finances. Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (henceforth, as in the book, ROSCAs) are found world-wide, in numerous variants on the basic theme of regular contributions to a common fund which is, then, disbursed to one of the contributors. They are part of informal 'alternative banking' systems, perhaps of special use to those societies in which interest is unacceptable as a banking practice; to those who are so poor that mainstream banking neither meets their requirements nor will lend to them, especially in social crises; and to those seeking to keep their financial affairs from the knowledge of tax collectors.

The papers in this collection will, perhaps, be of little direct interest to those with a research focus on Oceania, for none deals with this part of the world. Six deal with Africa (South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana and – two – Cameroon), four with Asia (Indonesia, Japan and – two – India), and five with 'diasporas' of migrants (South Asians in Oxford, making an interesting comparison with the section on Eritrean women in the same UK city which is built on Almedom's paper on Ethiopia; Northern Somali women in London, Koreans in Los Angeles; Turkish women in Northern [Turkish] Cyprus; and the Caribbean diaspora both in the Caribbean and overseas – notably the USA and UK). Clearly, although the geographical coverage is wide, it leaves much open space for comparative material from Europe, the

Americas and Australasia, in both 'traditional' cultures and diasporas.

Ardener's introductory chapter is an admirable summary of the main findings, and addresses important points of comparative definitional detail. However, I did not read it as attempting to move beyond the 'stock-taking' focus of her path-breaking 1964 paper. Indeed, I was disappointed in the lack of theory in all but one of these papers. Their main value lies in the new ethnographic evidence they provide on the importance of ROSCAs to women, and of women to ROSCAs. The sole exception, Mike Rowland's very thought-provoking and most appropriately entitled 'Looking at Financial Landscapes: A Contextual Analysis of ROSCAs in Cameroon', undoubtedly has relevance well beyond Cameroon probably to all contemporary patriarchal states struggling with the problems of uneasily hybridised societal foundations based on both kinship and bureaucratic ideals, where men and women do not trust one another financially, even (perhaps especially!) within marriage.

The theme of gendered financial distrust is reflected in many of the other papers too, with appropriate cultural variations regarding both cause and manifestation. And a few do begin to address the wider economic contextualisation, both national and international, which is necessary to understand the financial rationality of this organisational form, especially among professional and/or middle class women and those self-employed men and women responsible for the finances of family businesses. Jane Khatib-Chahidi's data reflect a sophisticated understanding among Turkish-Cypriot women of inflation and how to limit its impact on savings in a economy suffering from high inflation, but mercifully free of exchange controls; and useful questions are asked by Linda Mayoux and Shri Anand about the role of ROSCAs in providing gender-differentiated start-up capital for small silk-reeling enterprises in South India.

It would seem to me that to 'theorise' female involvement in ROSCAs, there will have to be substantial future co-operation between anthropology and economics: for in this collection the aims of predominantly anthropological analysis have not looked beyond issues of classification, and the one sociological paper begs more methodological questions than it tries to answer. And yet, anyone interested in gender and money should read this book, even if they do not buy it!

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