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KNOWLEDGE, POLITICS AND EDUCATION

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Cover image: Detail from '*always carry a handkerchief*' by Tiffany Thornley, 1997.
Cartoon: Lesbian Studies by Florence Debray

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Contents

Editorial: Knowledge, Politics and Education

On a sunny, frosty Queen's Birthday weekend at the beginning of June nearly two hundred women gathered in Christchurch for the 2001 Women's Studies Association Conference. The theme for that conference was 'Knowing Women – Words, Action, Change'. This issue features a selection of presentations on that theme. They represent only a fraction of what was discussed in plenary sessions, papers, panels and workshops during the conference, but they indicate how some conference participants addressed the politics of 'knowing' and the relationship between words, action and change. Contributions to this issue explore challenges to women's studies programmes, the process of constituting oneself as a knower and the intersections of colonialism, sexuality and disability. They assert the necessity for interventions in formal education systems that will facilitate the production of 'knowing women', but also decentralise the place of formal education as a site for 'knowing'.

This issue of the *Journal* also includes a multi-voiced tribute to Elsie Locke, socialist, feminist, essayist, editor, family planning visionary, environmental and peace activist, critical historian and children's author – but also mother, wife, grandmother, mentor and family friend. She is remembered by women of several generations who talk about her as a source of inspiration in their lives. Elsie Locke demonstrated how women could intervene in the political process outside the context of formal educational institutions and political parties. She had a great love of words and produced many in her lifetime. Action and change were at the core of her existence. Her lively curiosity, quick wit, constant pursuit of information and ideas, and her capacity to communicate in diverse media are celebrated in this tribute to an outstanding woman.

Compiled less than six months after the conference, and before the publication of the conference proceedings, 'Knowledge, Politics and Education' includes papers that were initially prepared for oral presentation. Some of them are based on preliminary chapters of current doctoral work; others draw on verbal presentations directed at provoking debate and providing political challenge rather than the presentation of detailed research findings. Some contributions could

not be included in this issue because of the tight time frame for submission and editorial work. What is available is a series of diverse reflections on the politics of knowing, the challenges of sustaining innovative interventions in tertiary education, and the possibilities of being 'knowing women'. The words in this issue are complemented by lively artwork by Tiffany Thornley and Florence Debray that 'reframes' and comments wryly on the experience of women inside and outside academic institutions.

Graduate students and those who have recently taken up teaching or research positions at tertiary institutions were a significant source of almost 90 presentations at the 2001 WSA conference. This issue of the *Journal* attempts to showcase the work of feminist scholars at different stages of their careers, ranging from those holding professorial chairs or heading academic programmes to PhD and masters' degree students who are beginning their journey as critical knowledge producers.

The opening contribution to the issue is based on one of the keynote addresses given at the conference. In 'I got my PhD, but I still feel a fraud', Sue Middleton writes about her interest in the 'drama' of 'the human science' of Education. Her paper analyses the words of women who have pursued doctoral studies in this disciplinary field. Based on life-history interviews with 24 women and 33 men who acquired doctorates in Education at New Zealand universities, her paper examines how the women she interviewed began to construct themselves as scholars. Those interested in a more detailed discussion of the issues she addresses can access a recently published monograph *Educating Researchers: New Zealand Education PhDs 1948–1998* and a CD relating to PhD supervision advertised in this issue.

Jenny Coleman's paper examines the increasing vulnerability of Women's Studies programmes within tertiary education. She focuses in particular on recent attempts to disestablish the internal and extramural Women's Studies Programme at Massey University as part of a 'Repositioning Exercise'. She argues that the new managerialist approaches to tertiary education have had severe effects on the humanities generally, and women's studies programmes in particular. However, her story is also one of resistance to the closure of the Massey programme. Downsizing rather than disestablishment was the outcome of the 'repositioning' exercise, but this means that significant gains in the 1990s have been fundamentally undermined.

The decision to offer core Women's Studies papers only in the distance mode also limits student access to some of the pleasures and learning opportunities of face-to-face interaction.

While many scholars in Women's Studies programmes are struggling to retain their courses, others are embarking on new initiatives, sometimes accessing new sources of funding. One of these initiatives was the Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) 2000. Blossom Hart explores the vision of the ifu and the ways in which the pedagogical and organisational processes associated with this innovation in tertiary education undermined the achievement of its goals. This article draws on interviews she held with women from five different countries who participated in Project Area Body, one of the fields of study available to nearly a thousand women from all over the world who shared the experience of a pilot semester at this temporary, international, interdisciplinary, women-focused university.

The first three articles in this issue are focused on universities as sites for embarking on 'knowing' or constructing 'knowers'. The next two contributions explore knowing and the sharing of knowledge in other contexts. They are written by feminist scholars who look at interventions in communities as sites for knowledge production and as locations which involve women acquiring knowledge as well as speaking and acting as knowers. The circulation of personal and collective knowledge is at the core of both of the fields of work they explore – the rape crisis movement and community broadcasting. Both these researchers have been, or are, currently involved in the forms of community activism that are the focus of their research. Both use discourse analysis, but they adopt different styles in the presentation of that analysis.

Jean Rath's contribution to this issue is most innovative in its resistance of the voice of an authoritative knower. Her conference presentation used a variety of simultaneously displayed texts to explore the complexity of material generated during her research 'about' rape crisis counsellor training. Like Sue Middleton, Jean Rath draws on the discourse of drama and the theatre. She presents a 'script', a multi-layered performative reflection on a complex process of knowledge sharing and knowledge production. She 'performs' as presenter and re-presenter of text, but at the same time resists the conventions that legitimise academic claims to knowledge about a particular field. Her text resists being framed as an account of 'reality' and provides

an explicit challenge to taken-for-granted ideas about 'knowing'.

Like Jean Rath, Rowan Jeffrey is interested in the ways in which women working in a particular community intervention draw on certain discourses to describe their experiences and locate themselves as people who share and create knowledge, in this case through compiling programmes and bringing them to air. Of particular interest are the ways in which women volunteers working at Plains FM extend their knowledge through acquiring technical broadcasting expertise and interacting with others in the communities they represent. Many other papers presented at the 2001 WSA Conference also reflected on the ways in which women become knowledgeable in contexts other than the formal education system. They highlighted how women working as volunteers contribute to the creation and circulation of knowledge outside schools, polytechnics, colleges of education and universities.

In her commentary on colonialism, disability and sexuality, Huhana Hickey poses the question: 'Ko Wai Ahau? Who am I?' and asserts the importance of self-knowledge and self-definition for colonised people and for those with disabilities. She reflects on her multiple identities as Maori, as an adopted child brought up in a Pakeha family, a woman with a number of disabilities and as Maori Takataapui. This discussion paper seeks to analyse disability and colonisation as collective rather than individual experiences and explores connections between struggles for civil rights by indigenous people and those with disabilities. It is a springboard for future thesis research using the skills Huhana Hickey has acquired as a postgraduate law student at University of Waikato.

This issue of the *Women's Studies Journal* sits on the cusp of change in the editorship of this journal. Following the resignation of Lynne Alice and Lynne Star as editors of the journal earlier in 2001, guest editorship of this issue was assumed while a new Christchurch based editorial team was established. Stefanie Rixecker (Lincoln University) and Elody Rathgen (University of Canterbury) have agreed to be coordinating editors, commencing with Volume 18, Number 1 in 2002. A Christchurch-based Editorial Committee and a National Editorial Collective support the editors. Pat Rosier, who has worked tirelessly to consolidate the viability of the *Women's Studies Journal*, has been a vital source of support, advice and encouragement to the new editorial team, who have also had

significant input into this issue. The new editors have established a website for the journal and are planning open and theme/special issues for 2002 and 2003. They are enthusiastic about involvement in a journal that presents the work of feminist knowledge producers connected to Aotearoa/New Zealand for discussion, criticism and engagement by others in this locality and other parts of the planet.

ROSEMARY DU PLESSIS

The following people contributed to the production of this issue:
Joanna Cobley, Margaret Hawke (Administration, Department of Sociology and Anthropology), Phyllis Herda, Prue Hyman, Alison Kagen, Allison Kirkman, Alison Laurie, Kay Morris Matthews, Missy Morton, Katie Pickles, Judith Pringle, Jean Rath, Elody Rathgen, Katrina Roen, Stefanie Rixecker, Pat Rosier, Anne Scott, Cj Wells

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Front cover image detail from 'always carry a handkerchief', 1997, by Tiffany Thornley, DipFA, Canterbury (Printmaking).

I have been active in the feminist movement since moving to Christchurch in the 70s – and I have maintained my own working studio. I exhibit regularly – showing prints, paintings, collages and installations. I show in group shows and solo – I enjoy organising group shows with a theme. My themes are usually about women – our lives – domestic, the personal and political. I do abstract as well and I enjoy reflecting my world. I have been part of many collectives – Spiral, Women's Gallery, Christchurch Artist Collective, Women Artists Network – and I still work and draw with a group of women artists – we have shown together for many years.

'I got my Phd, but I still feel a fraud': Women Knowing

SUE MIDDLETON

It was a cold grey day in a strange city in 1998. This was one of the last towns I was to visit, as I neared the end of my fieldwork. Whenever I could snatch time away from teaching and administration that year I had taken to the road to do interviews for my research on the PhD in Education in New Zealand. Why this topic? As Foucault expressed it, 'If I do the analyses I do, it's not because of some polemic I want to arbitrate but because I have been involved in certain conflicts'.[1] I have been a teacher now for thirty years. My sites of educational activism have included teaching practice (including thesis supervision), policy committees (including post-graduate committees), and my research and writing. I have been grappling with issues around the PhD in Education for over 20 years – as a candidate in the early 1980s; as a supervisor and examiner since the mid-1980s; as a School (Faculty) postgraduate administrator throughout the 1990s; as a campus-wide policy-maker from the late-1990s; and, more recently, as a member of an international consortium on postgraduate supervision. Perhaps most significantly in motivating this project, I had found myself doing a lot of emotional work with students and supervisors when things went wrong. I wanted to find ways of making things better for the students and for their supervisors.

When I looked for local resources to help me, I found some local writing on the doctoral experience, including a few publications and ongoing projects on thesis supervision in general.[2] There were also some brief autobiographical essays on the experience of doing a PhD in education in New Zealand.[3] Several education books based on doctoral thesis projects include reflective accounts by New Zealand women on their PhD experiences.[4] However, little historical or empirical work had been done in this country on the PhD in education. How many Education PhDs had there been and at which universities? What proportion of these were women and had the gender balance changed over the years? Who were the students who had done Education PhDs and what brought them into doctoral studies? What were the topics, theories, methodologies and techniques employed in

their thesis research? What were their experiences of supervision like? And what can those who supervise and administer doctoral studies – and who are currently doctoral students – learn from these experiences?

As Fanon has argued, 'What are by common consent called the human sciences have their own drama'.[5] It was the drama of the 'human science', or academic subject, 'Education' – as enacted by its PhD graduates – that most interested me. To gain admission to this 'drama', I carried out life-history interviews – an approach that is now widespread in educational, and other social science (especially feminist) research.[6]

Normally I revelled in the freedom and stimulation of my weeks of interviewing away from home. But on that winter day in a bleak damp town I'd sunk into a malaise, felt tense and cold. That morning I was interviewing an older man – a senior academic – in his home. I felt nervous. 'Why are you doing this?' he asked me. 'Why are you researching this topic?' I said something about my seven years' work as an assistant Dean (Graduate studies) in Waikato University's School of Education and the work I was now doing as deputy chair of the university's central post-graduate committee. I was, I explained, wanting to make things better for thesis students and their supervisors. 'But', he insisted, 'Are you sure you haven't got unresolved issues from your own PhD?' I was taken by surprise, 'No, of course not', I answered, 'it was so long ago'.

But afterwards, as I walked through the windy streets back to my motel, a band of pressure tightened round my head. I felt dull, listless, had difficulty concentrating. Waves of nausea coursed through my stomach. I recognised that steel band; remembered the waves of nausea, the old night terrors – as echoes of old fears from my own PhD back in the early 1980s. Every interview I had done, I realised, had jolted these subterranean rumblings from my own unconscious. Back in my motel, I cried. It had been 15 years since I'd got my PhD. Yet the questions of this senior and authoritative man still had the effect of intimidating me. I had felt shaky during the interview. Why? I still felt a fraud.

This paper presents brief excerpts from the book-length monograph I wrote for this project.[7] The monograph itself explores the doctoral experiences and perspectives of 33 men and 24 women. In this paper based on my keynote address at the 2001 Women's Studies Association Conference, I shall explore what the 24 women

told me about coming to identify themselves, and to be identified by others, as scholars. How and why did these women enrol as doctoral students? Once enrolled, how did they learn what doctoral study meant? How did they learn to think and write at that level? And, at the end of the process, how did they experience and describe their sense of 'scholarly identity' as PhD graduates in Education?

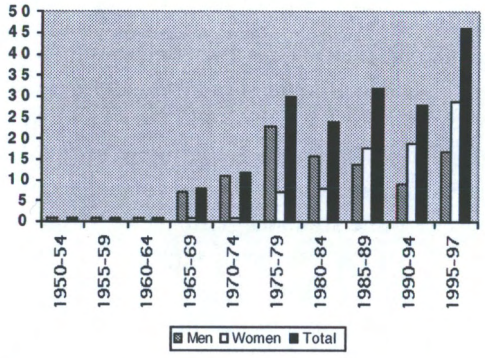
On the Subject of Education

The changing gender balance in Education PhD enrolments is illustrated in Figure 1. The first male graduated in 1953 and from then until 1964 there were only two more Education PhD graduates (both men). A further eight Education PhDs graduated between 1965 and 1969 – including the first woman, Marie Clay, in 1966. The five years from 1970 to 1974 saw 12 more students graduate with PhDs in Education (11 men and one woman) across the six universities. By the late 1960s and the early 1970s, universities were experiencing the full impact of the post-World War Two 'population bulge'. Education departments in universities saw unprecedented growth at this time[8] because of recruitment drives during the teacher shortages of the baby boom years and the upgrading of some teacher education programmes to degree status (four year BEd degrees began to be taught jointly by some university Education departments and teachers colleges from the mid-1960s).[9] By the 1980s, the growth in size and scope of 'Education' as a field of study began to be reflected in a growth in the numbers of Education PhD graduates. From 1980 to 1984 another 24 Education PhDs graduated (16 men and eight women).

The mid-1980s saw not only a continuing growth in numbers, but also a reversal in the gender balance in the numbers of graduates. Of the 32 who graduated between 1985 and 1989, 14 were men and 18 were women. While this reflected a trend across the humanities and social science subjects for an increase in the proportion of female post-graduate students, it was particularly exacerbated in Education because of the 'feminisation' of the teaching profession more broadly and the fact that Education department staff in universities were often recruited from school teaching.[10] The trend for women to outnumber men in Education PhD graduate figures would be further exacerbated in the 1990s. From 1991 to 1994 another 28 students graduated, and of these 19 were women and only nine were men. In the three years from 1995 to 1997 (the final year for which comprehensive lists of

theses were available to me), another 46 PhDs in Education were awarded (29 women and 17 men). In total, by the end of 1997, there were 183 Education PhD graduates – 100 men and 83 women and, by the end of the millennium, well over 200 had graduated with New Zealand PhDs in Education.[11]

Fig. 1 Gender of PhD Graduates in Education 1950–97



While these numbers are interesting, to access the 'dramas' of the 24 women's sense of themselves as 'knowers', I need qualitative data. To help me to analyse the interviews, I find feminist post-structuralist notions of 'the subject' – or 'subjectivity' – useful. I use the term 'subject' in three, inter-woven, senses. First, it refers to Education as an 'academic subject' in the sense of a discipline, field of study, or 'discourse'. As Bernstein observed,[12] in formal education it is only at doctoral level that the 'mystery of the subject is revealed'. While academics often think of a discipline or 'subject' as an epistemological entity (or 'knowledge category'), within university bureaucracies the term 'subject' is sometimes used in the sense of an administrative classification – students enrol in a 'subject' and major in a subject. The term 'subject' is also used in relation to (but not entirely analogously with) 'the individual'. This 'individualistic' notion of the subject is double-sided. In the first sense, it is similar to the grammatical 'subject' of a sentence – the (autonomous) actor or agent. As the 'subjects of our behaviour',[13] we act upon the world. We choose our topics and methodologies and freely engage in doctoral projects. Conversely, the word 'subject' is also used in a passive sense – we can be 'subject to' the whims of our supervisors. As thesis students we are 'subjected' to authority, to degree regulations, to the

conventions of thesis-writing within a field, and to examinations.[14]

Judith Butler urges us to distinguish between the embodied individual (or human person) and the 'subject', arguing that the latter is 'a linguistic category, a place-holder, a structure in formation. Individuals come to occupy the site of the subject…'.[15] Examples of such 'linguistic categories' (or 'subject-positions') include those of 'competent doctoral student', 'linguistic philosopher', or 'independent thinker'. These categories pre-exist – and also produce – 'us' as students, philosophers, and writers. Subject positions 'exist' in university regulations, disciplinary (sociological, etc.) conventions, and interchanges between academics in journals and at conferences.

The term 'subjectivity', then, is useful in this inquiry because it draws together the 'discipline', those who engage with it (students and supervisors), and the regulations and conventions that govern it. As Bill Green and Alison Lee ask with respect to Australian education doctorates: 'What does it mean to be a postgraduate student in education – that is, to be pursuing advanced research training in education as a field of study? … What is involved in becoming, as it were, 'subject-ed' to education?'[16]

For doctoral students, the process of being 'subject-ed to Education',[17] is multifaceted – epistemological, organisational, and psychological. Becoming identified with the discipline in an epistemological sense involves mastering its content and methods. In its organisational, or administrative sense, it requires negotiation of collegial relationships, departmental resources, and professional networks since, 'to understand knowledge, it is necessary to understand the institutions in which it is produced'.[18] And, in the psychological sense, the process of coming to identify as an Educationist is both active and passive, since scholars are (autonomous) 'subjects of' their own behaviour and, simultaneously, 'subject to' surveillance and regulation. As Butler phrases it,[19] 'as a form of power, subjection is paradoxical. To be dominated by a power external to oneself is a familiar and agonising form power takes. To find, however, that what "one" is, one's very formation as a subject, is in some sense dependent upon that very power is quite another.' I have addressed the academic knowledge dimension – what the students produced in their theses – elsewhere.[20] This paper is concerned with the psychic dimension of 'coming to know' – a woman PhD student's sense of 'who or what she is', or her 'scholarly self'.

Becoming a Doctoral Student

Doctoral degrees were described by many as 'an apprenticeship', or a 'rite of passage'. To be 'hailed' or 'interpellated'[21] as 'Dr' is to enter the highest symbolic order of academe. As Emma, one of the younger and more recent PhD graduates, expressed it:

> I always viewed a PhD as an apprenticeship, something that you had to serve. If you're very lucky you might enter the club and that's why I guess that total feeling of when I'd passed my orals of entering the club and of my hand being shaken. They said, 'Congratulations, Dr! You're one of only four or five in New Zealand in your area.' It was amazing.

The title 'Dr' wins admission to a select group. 'To have a name', writes Judith Butler,[22] 'is to be positioned within the Symbolic, the idealised domain of kinship, a set of relationships structured through sanction'. The name, she argues, 'works as a politically invested and investing performative. To be named is thus to be inculcated into that law and to be formed bodily, in accordance with that law'.[23] Entering the long 'apprenticeship' or 'initiation' that is doctoral candidacy can be seen in this way – as an experience of 'recognition'; of recognising one's own reflection in the 'mirror' of others' proclamations that one is indeed 'doctoral material' and coming to describe oneself to oneself as such. How, then, did these New Zealand doctoral graduates come to so identify? By what processes did they come to see themselves as 'doctoral material'?

Coming to identify as 'doctoral material' was described by many in terms of the language in which 'authorities' addressed them. Elizabeth Ellsworth[24] writes that 'mode of address ... is one of those intimate relations of social and cultural power that shapes and misshapes who teachers think students are, and who students come to think themselves to be.' Only a few of those interviewed described proceeding from graduate to doctoral studies as almost 'automatic'.

The most commonly described experience of being 'hailed as doctoral material' was that of success at honours or masters level. For example, on completion of her bachelor's degree in the 1980s, Gina 'got a letter from the Dean at the school of education after I graduated saying, "I hope you're considering post-graduate study." And that was my first consideration of it.' Similarly, Dulcie (also in the 1980s) explained the impact of such encouragement on her decision to enrol in a doctorate:

> It sounds incredibly passive and at the whims of others but personal encouragement had an awful lot to do with it, making you think even of the possibility of going on, that you had the potential to do something like a PhD. I got a postgraduate scholarship from the university and this took the issue of finances out of the equation. They paid my fees and also gave me living allowances and so it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Mentoring – coupled with financial support – was described as crucial by nearly all of my informants.

Education doctoral students are usually 'mature' students, who are former schoolteachers who have since taken employment in universities, colleges of education, or polytechnics – employment in which a doctorate is expected. As former schoolteachers, Education doctoral students – perhaps to a greater extent than in any other academic discipline – tend to come from working-class or lower middle-class backgrounds.[25] As with many of the others interviewed, Rachel's working-class family and school background in the 1950s and 1960s had not provided her with the cultural capital[26] that made academic study feel 'natural' to her:

> Honestly, PhD! I didn't think of that at all even when I'd finished my Masters. Except that after I got the results one of lecturers said to me, 'Did you know that you can get a scholarship to do a PhD?' He said, 'A scholarship for a PhD is $12000, not $5000 or $6000. I thought, 'Shit!' Then he said, 'It's not taxed!' I just thought, 'WOW – that's fantastic!' To do what you wanted to do! I really liked it. But I don't think I ever really thought I'd finish a PhD 'cause I thought bright people did that.'

For others, such friendly mentoring was less forthcoming. Fiona was also working-class, and studied in a department, and at a time (the early 1980s) in which nearly all the academic staff were male. She had experienced little encouragement to proceed from her undergraduate work and in her interview explained this in terms of the complex interweaving of gender and class relations:

> Not one of those people ever – and this is my bitch about women in education – no, working class people in education that is what it is. It is not women, it's working class people – although there was a gender thing there too at that stage. Not one of those men that I was getting A++ in their classes ever said to me, 'You must do a Masterate'. Not one – ever. So I thought, 'I'm not good enough', because no one ever talked to me about that …

Similarly, at the end of her honours year: 'I had gone through first class honours with those guys in that department and not one of them had ever said, "You should be applying for UGC [University Grants Committee] Scholarships".' Her application for a doctoral scholarship had come about as a result of a chance meeting with a junior lecturer, who had taught her previously in one course in another department:

> She said, 'Come with me,' and she took me – it's like depending on the kindness of strangers, it is incredible really. She took me to the registry and got the form that was an application for the scholarship – no one had ever said to me, 'You should apply for a UGC.' It is incredible. Myra – she was a junior lecturer …

A chance meeting had also influenced Amy in the 1970s:

> It was actually a friend's husband who was a Professor in a different subject at that time. We were just walking through the streets of our suburb and he said, 'You know, you're doing so well, your academic record is going really well, and what's your topic going to be for your PhD?' And did I know that I could do a doctorate and did I know that I could probably apply for a scholarship etc. etc? This was an absolute bolt out of the blue, I hadn't got it in my sight, my mind, at all.

For some, experiencing the heady pleasure of success was, in and of itself, the main spur to 'carry on' to do a doctorate. Lisa had entered university as a mature student in the early 1980s:

> Well because they kept offering me, would you like a scholarship? … I was really successful. I was enjoying success frankly. I hadn't had any really. Not that I'd been bad at what I'd done [before university] but no one had said to me, 'Yeah you're great.' At university they said, 'You're wonderful', you know, and it felt really good, really affirming. So I suppose it gave me something that I hadn't had.

Similarly, Emma (a late-1990s student) ranked success as a primary motivator for doing her doctorate. 'I guess', she said, 'I did it because I found I could succeed. I had not believed that I could succeed. I'm a person who likes challenges and it was just amazing to find that I could pass. You pass once and you want to pass again – you want to just keep going for those goals and so I did.'

Many of the doctoral graduates used the metaphor of a journey or a pathway. Janet said, 'You keep following on.' Audrey had felt

that 'there was no strong other direction to take ... A lot of it was just falling into – it wasn't a rut, but a pathway.' And, for Andrea: 'It just seemed the next thing to do, just like going from school to university, going from M.Phil. to a Ph.D. It's just the next thing to do.'

Several had felt daunted by the length of time it would take to do a masters followed by a doctorate. For some, this pressure of time was exacerbated by the threat of financial indebtedness or by health or family concerns. Some had therefore bypassed the masters thesis and entered a doctorate straight from honours. In the 1980s Felicity had already developed a passion for research at honours level and upgraded her masters to a PhD thesis: 'It was just that I wanted to do research ... That's really important because I would never have seen myself as a person who would do a PhD. So the only way I could do a PhD would have been to be doing a masters that turned itself into a PhD.'

While, for many – particularly the younger students – the decision to 'do research' or to 'do a PhD' had preceded any full-time or tenurable academic employment, those who had done their doctorates in the period from the 1950s to the mid-1980s were often already holding university lectureships. In total, 21 of those interviewed (17 men and four women) had done their doctorates while holding full-time university teaching and research positions. Another 12 (nine men and three women) had held various limited term appointments (junior lectureships, teaching assistantships, etc.) that were designed to offer doctoral candidates work experience, financial support, and (at least in theory), the time and space to complete their theses within the allocated time-frame. Ten of those interviewed (four men and six women) had done their theses while employed full-time in teachers' colleges or polytechnics; two of the candidates had held other full-time employment; and 11 (all women) had depended on scholarships and casual work to sustain them.

Those who had won tenurable, or tenured positions during the years of rapid expansion in universities and in teacher education during the 1970s and early 1980s sometimes expressed a pragmatic approach to their doctoral studies, although women were under-represented in this group. A similarly pragmatic, career-oriented, approach was adopted by some of the younger interviewees (nearly all women), who had embarked on doctorates in the 1990s and were dependent on scholarships and casualised academic work in a contracting academic labour market. Kate and Emma were both in their thirties

when they graduated with their PhDs in the late 1990s. Both had decided, before they enrolled, that they wanted to become academics. Describing herself as 'ambitious', Kate – a former secondary school teacher with young children at the time – explained that she had decided on a doctorate:

> ... before I embarked on the masters, because in fact I was scheming to see if I could get into a university position even with a good Masters degree. That was my first notion because I couldn't envisage the five or seven years. It was a seven-year process as it turned out for me for Masters and Ph.D, but I couldn't conceive of that. I think if I'd had to plan for that and have no income or no decent income for that length of time I probably wouldn't have embarked on it. But because it was considered incrementally, it became achievable. So even then I wanted to be a university teacher because I loved research, I loved teaching, and that was the forum in which I could do both.

Similarly, Emma had set her sights on an academic career in her late twenties:

> I had laid my life out to do a PhD before I started the masters. I knew that there was no point in doing a masters if I wasn't going to do a PhD; that there would be no salary difference and career opportunities wouldn't be any different for me in teaching if I did a masters versus just a bachelors degree; and that you only did a masters' if you wanted to go on in those days. And so, in doing a masters', I knew then that I wanted to do – that I had to do – a PhD. There was almost no turning back. And I enjoyed research.

Her consuming desire to become an academic had meant resigning from a senior position in teaching, and undergoing a steep drop in income in exchange for a scholarship and casual work:

> I wasn't sure then as to where it would head. I was just focussed on learning to become a scholar, someone who had a critical mind and could articulate issues. At that time I actively sought out information about what academic life was like to see if I could be an academic – but I didn't believe that I *could* be an academic ... In those days I thought that an academic was a scholar, someone who produced, someone who was focused on research and putting out brilliant ideas – and also someone who provided a conscience for society, and who could safely speak up. I thought, 'Hey that would be a neat role to do! We need more peo-

> ple in my area to do that!' I've since found it's not that easy, not as possible as the ideals that I held up. But in those days, I guess, I saw a very rosy side of being an academic.

Learning How

Once enrolled, how did these students learn what was, and what was not, appropriate as 'doctoral level' research and writing? How did they learn what a 'doctoral thesis' was? Academic conventions and regulations require thesis students to 'locate' their work – research questions, topics and methods – in the discursive fields, or webs of conceptual resources, available to them at the time and place. But how do they learn how to speak and write in these coded academic 'languages'? How do they master the craft of thesis writing? 'Academics,' writes David Harvey, 'surely will ... recognise that how we learn is very different from what we write.'[27] Doctoral students learn their craft through both formal and informal means. The private, or domestic, dimensions of thesis work is addressed elsewhere.[28] Here I focus on the formal pedagogy, or official dimension to thesis study.

The formal teacher-student relationship in thesis pedagogy is known as 'supervision'. As Green & Lee have pointed out,[29] this term 'carries powerful overtones of "overseeing" (of "looking over" and "looking after") production and development.' It epitomises what Foucault called: 'a relation of surveillance, defined and regulated', which he saw as 'inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching.'[30] In the supervisor-student relationship,

> both the student (the 'candidate') and the dissertation are to be constructed under the authorised and authorising gaze of an already-established, hopefully active researcher-academic, as it were standing in for the field of study in question and for the Academy more generally. [31]

To graduate as a 'Doctor' is to be 'licensed', or 'authorised to speak' for the discipline. The process of *becoming* a 'Doctor' involves the mastery of knowledge (as evidenced by the production of an intellectually acceptable text) and the development of a scholarly identity through a certain 'mastery of the self'.[32] These twin dimensions – epistemological (knowledge-based) and psychological (personal) – are summarised by Lee and Green: 'the process of doctoral supervision is with regard to academic knowledge and identity.'[33]

'Hailed' or 'addressed' as 'doctoral material' at the time of

enrolment, the student struggles to produce something original and to meet the requirements of supervisors, examiners, disciplinary conventions, and university regulations. Even a ground-breaking original thesis must acknowledge and engage with the conventions, while challenging or attempting to alter them. In 'citing the law' of the discipline or field – by speaking its language and engaging with its stylistic conventions, a researcher/writer not only *produces*, but is also *produced* – as an educational psychologist, or curriculum theorist, or leadership authority, etc.[34]

As Green and Lee express this, 'what is at stake in doctoral work and postgraduate supervision, over and above the much-vaunted contribution to knowledge, is precisely the (re)production of an intelligible academic identity – a certain kind of (licensed) personage.'[35] Becoming a 'Dr' involves the psychic process of coming to identify – and be identified – as (a specific type of) scholar. As Judith put it, her doctorate had been a 'validation of myself and a validation of my thoughts. You know, "she's always got an opinion about something but she's also got a PhD!" You're allowed to have an opinion if you've got a PhD.' Now that she had her PhD, she said, her opinions 'counted' – she could speak as an academic authority in her discipline or subject.

Many women have written of their sense of alienation from the language of 'citation' and their struggles for 'permission' to write or speak with a 'natural' voice in doctoral writing.[36] Linda Christian-Smith wrote of this as a 'loss of self' that was 'mirrored in a loss of voice during class discussions and in the awkward style of my writing. For the longest time, it was as if some other person were writing the essays and dissertation.'[37] Similarly, Barbara Comber described how her 'new words hung on me like someone else's clothes.'[38] Even after graduating as Dr, to maintain an academic identity, scholars need continual, and repeated, recognition of their work. Tomothy Luke[39] describes the 'reputational capital' needed to sustain an academic career. While this is formally sustained through publications, informal measures are also significant in this. He discusses the 'reputational trading pits' of international conferences, where 'gossips gauge the merits of the "emerging star", the "has been", or the "never was"...'[40]

As Butler explained, academic 'identifications are never fully made; they are incessantly reconstituted and, as such, are subject to

the volatile logic of iterability.'[41] The comments of supervisors, difficulty with understanding academic language, or sheer stress and exhaustion, can all undermine a PhD student's shaky sense of competence. One of the interviewees felt as if her supervisor:

> ... didn't realise how much I didn't understand what was going on. I mean I couldn't really read the language most of the time. I really struggled with the jargon of that academic education for so long because it didn't mean anything to me. I was working in an area that was particularly starting to be jargonised ... new ways of talking about these things. I found it very difficult because, while I was a good reader, I had never had to deal with this very academic language before and I found that incredibly difficult.

Some of the students had started their doctoral studies feeling confident in their fluency with academic language. However, even these more confident students sometimes felt humiliated when they encountered difficulties with doctoral level language, or received candid feedback from their supervisors. For some, this felt like a 'fall' – for example, from the position of an 'A+' masters or honours student to one of novice, or from a relationship of collegiality to a relation of 'master and apprentice':

> It was a real confidence rocker for me at the time because I'd gone through a bachelor's degree and a master's degree and got really good grades. When I was studying [overseas] I had a very high grade point average and then I came back to do a PhD and I was suddenly sitting there thinking, 'I don't know whether I'm up to this!'

This was a male student, and highlights the sense of alienation from academic language, or 'loss of voice' that was particularly common amongst – although by no means limited to – those from working-class backgrounds. As Jonathon put it, 'the self doubting elements were always there. They are still there ... and that's why the Ph.D. mattered.' Similarly, Janine said, 'I used to lie rigid at night thinking, I think I'm a fraud! Lucy commented that: 'Only this year [after graduation] I can stand up and talk, feel good. I still feel a hell of a fraud.' And Sonia spoke of how she:

> ... didn't believe for most of the process of doing my Ph.D. that I could do it. I went crying around the department one day, saying I couldn't do it. I said, 'I cannot write a Ph.D., I've been found out!' This is an inter-

esting epistemology: 'I have reached the limits of my ability and now I have been found out and I can't do a Ph.D.'

This feeling of being 'out of place', however, while at times painful, could also provide the 'critical edge' that offers the 'marginal' identity (the working-class, Maori, etc. student) an oblique, and distinctive, view of the world. It is through the 'cracks and fissures' in what is normally taken for granted that critical theories (such as the various feminisms) and original ideas sometimes emerge. Said, for example, writes of: 'the pleasures of exile, those different arrangements of living and eccentric angles of vision that it can sometimes afford, which enliven the intellectual's vocation, without alleviating every last anxiety or feeling of bitter solitude.'[42] This can serve to 'awaken, to disclose the ordinarily unseen, unheard and unexpected.'[43]

Dee spoke of the emotional turmoil she experienced in facing what she had felt to be personal inadequacies in the 1990s:

> You have got to strip down to your bones basically and all the things that you don't know and all the things you need to learn and it is a very humbling experience. And, because of that, a painful, but incredible and fruitful, journey. It is both – bitter/sweet; pleasure/pain ambiguity. The whole process is a series of ambiguities. It is learning to relax in that ambiguity. It is learning to go with the roller coaster of emotions knowing that, sure, you might be hurtling downwards at the moment, but you will be hurtling upwards shortly and that will continue that amazing fascination. And that is normal!

She explained that 'Learning to take criticism in feedback is the big lesson of the PhD process' and told a story of her process of 'learning to take criticism and feed back.' Her chief supervisor was a colleague of hers:

> I had to give a class for him one night. We were walking back and discussing how it went and I said to him, 'Oh look while we're here I would like to talk about what is happening in our PhD process.' And he said, 'Oh sure, what do you want to talk about?' And I just burst into tears and said, 'I am just useless and you think I'm an idiot and I am just not getting anywhere.' I was really upset. And to my surprise, he was astounded and said, 'Well I am shocked. I had no idea that you felt that way and I think the opposite – I think you are doing extremely well.' I said, 'You have given me absolutely no indication of that. I've tried to

read and learn from you, but I have had no indication that in fact I was making the slightest bit of progress.' It was a classic culture mismatch – and I mean cultural in the broader sense of the term. He felt he could be really critical because he felt I was making such good progress and I felt he was really critical because I was so useless – we misinterpreted each other – we just had this incredible mis-communication. He thought he was just pushing me and challenging me and guiding me and he was, but in a way that I wasn't necessarily reading as such.

Authorised to Speak

As Comber has noted,[44] 'metaphors abound about the thesis experience'. The completion of the thesis was sometimes described in spatial metaphors: 'at the end of it you've reached the Zenith, you've reached a plateau. I don't know that I'll come to touch that again.' Like Comber, some of my interviewees compared the completion of the thesis 'with giving birth'.[45] Emma used this metaphor:

> The oral was a highlight in my life. When I look back on it, the only other time that I felt the way that I have with the orals is when I found out that I was pregnant for the first time. Apart from the pregnancy and orals I've never experienced the same feeling of total exhilaration and self-amazement that I'd managed to achieve such a thing. I did the orals and I realised that 'Hey! I do know something about this subject and I can defend it!' And I knew when I left that I had passed. I remember walking down the street and it was like I was looking at everybody down the main street, but I wasn't seeing them because I was just thinking, 'I don't believe it! I don't believe I've passed! All these years of work – I just don't believe it. And yet I've done it, I've got to believe it!' That moment of total exhilaration. It was lovely – I don't know if I'll ever get that experience again.

In contrast, others described a kind of 'post-partem depression'. Joan had felt: 'quite depressed for about three months. I thought, "Oh well, so what, who cares?"'

What does it mean to have a PhD in Education? In a much-quoted passage, Foucault describes academic and professional 'knowledges' (such as Education) as web-like and those who work within these webs as 'vehicles' of power:

> Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in

> the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.[46]

As 'vehicles of power', fully qualified Education academics have been granted 'permission to speak' as authorities in their field. They are also licensed to pass judgment on others – to review for professional journals, to supervise and to examine doctoral students; in short, to act as 'gatekeepers' for the discipline. In performing these acts, Educationists 'cite' or 'reiterate' the discipline's conventions or norms. In citing, referencing, authorising, examining, etc – we are (re)produced as academics. In Butler's terms, 'power that first appears as external, pressed upon the subject, pressing the subject into subordination, assumes a psychic form that constitutes the subject's self-identity'.[47] How, then, did those who were interviewed for this project describe their experience of coming to identify, and of being identified as authorised speakers for the discipline.

Many of the graduates spoke of a continuing sense of ambivalence in relation to their colleagues even after they had completed their doctorates. Several of those who had completed in the early 1980s explained that a culture of 'egalitarianism' in their work environments had pressured people to hide their achievements. Anna described this as characteristic of the 'leftist faction' of her university department during the 1980s:

> I never graduated and I didn't go to the graduation ceremony because in those days we didn't even put 'Dr' on our doors. [My chief supervisor] never had Dr, he always had his first name, because he was very egalitarian and democratic and we didn't believe in all this bullshit about hierarchies of the university and that kind of stuff. So I sort of copied him in a way. I wasn't going to walk around in these elitist gowns and pretend I was better than anybody else. I wasn't going to have Dr on my door and I never used 'Doctor' unless I absolutely had to. I never used it, like some people – the minute they got a doctorate they would go out booking train tickets for Dr so-and-so.

Conversely, others described how, when they had been staff members without doctorates, they had had some colleagues who had treated them as invisible. Lenore said that in the mid 1990s 'when I got my Ph.D. there were some colleagues in this Department who

spoke to me for the first time.' Others spoke of a sense that, as academics who had achieved doctorates, they were seen as having 'served their apprenticeship' and as new, fully initiated 'members of the club.' For some, however, this attitude was seen as undermining the achievement, and quality, of their thesis research. Felicity said:

> My doctorate was never a pretend piece of research! When I was photocopying the final document the HOD came down to the photocopier. He said, 'Oh, is that your doctorate? Oh, nobody ever reads those!' And I said, 'Well I don't think of mine that way.' He said, 'They never make a difference. You'll hate it by the time you finish it.' I said, 'I love my doctorate. It's just the beginning!' And I had a vision for these further studies.

As Scott expressed it, departments are 'more than administrative units; they also institutionalise the intellectual values, cognitive structures and social practices of academic disciplines.'[48]

Gaining their doctorates was described by some as leading to 'a lot more work'. This was especially highlighted by the Maori and Pacific Islands PhD graduates, who found themselves in demand as 'ethnic representatives' on multiple committees: 'in terms of trying to survive within institutions, being the only one with a PhD was very tough. We had three Pacific academic staff and there was a high expectation for you to be involved. I was a member of the Academic Board, a member of that because you're Pacific with a PhD.'

Dana, a young late-1990s graduate seeking work in a contracting academic labour market lamented that: 'At darker moments I see it as a thing that actually shuts off employment possibilities. I have this view that if you say to people that you've got a PhD if you're applying for work outside of universities and so on, then they might see me as being over qualified.' Similarly: 'I used to believe that it was important but I don't think this is an age where doctoral knowledge counts for anything in teacher education.' And, as one university staff member put it, 'In terms of how society values PhDs – I don't think they do terribly much. It is certainly not reflected in salaries or other forms of recognition.'

Others were more positive about how the title 'Dr' was regarded in the wider public arena. Several of the women found the title 'always useful being a girl. "Is that Ms?", no, you know, "it's Doctor".' It enabled them to avoid the 'Miss, Mrs or Ms dilemma'. More

facetiously, several commented that: 'It has led to me being upgraded from tourist class on airline flights, to first in one case and business class in perhaps a couple more, all because of the "Dr".' Another described the status of the title as follows:

> Because you've got a PhD, people do – you may be saying exactly the same thing as somebody else who hasn't got one – but people actually respect it more. It's something that shouldn't really happen, but it is a fact of life. And it's meant that doors have opened in ways that they possibly don't if you don't have a PhD. I think we live in a society that respects titles, whether or not it's the right thing to do.

The doctorate was also described by some as a gift to their immediate and extended families: 'My parents were both very chuffed … I'm the first direct line in my family, I think, to have even graduated from university. I sometimes think, 'Well there we are – semi-literate Scottish farm labourer to PhD is probably a lot of New Zealand families' stories.' And, for another student: 'My Mum just cried and cried and I said, "why are you crying?" She said that she never thought that a daughter would ever get a PhD and be working at university. And my father's response was, "This is a blessing for the family".'

Readings writes that 'Thought is necessarily an addiction from which we never get free.'[49] Like all addictions, research and writing hurtle us through rollercoasters of emotion. At one moment we may feel the rush of success – of solving the problem, finding the words, convincing the reader. But a moment later we can once again feel like trembling children quaking at the voices of authority: 'What would you know?' 'Who do you think you are?' Excavating the multiple layers of women's narratives about our research and writing experiences can help us 'to learn to what extent the effort to think one's own history can free thought from what it silently thinks, and so enable it to think differently.'[50] Those of us who do such work will surely endorse the following sentiments:

> As to those for whom to work hard, to begin and begin again, to attempt and be mistaken, to go back and rework everything from top to bottom, and still find reason to hesitate from one step to the next – as to those, in short, for whom to work in the midst of uncertainty and apprehension is tantamount to failure, all I can say is that clearly we are not from the same planet.[51]

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Notes

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Lesbian Studies by Florence Debray (2001)

FLORENCE DEBRAY *is a cartoonist and feminist (also anti-militarist and anti-nuclear) author who publishes in France and elsewhere. She founded the feminist, anti-militarist association 'XX FILLES' peace solutions. She is currently teaching cartooning in Paris, and also leading cartoon workshops, including workshops for women only, as she did in New Zealand when she used to stay and live here six months a year between 1996 and 1999. Florence introduced the very first cartooning course at the Christchurch Polytechnic, taught French and cartooning in a Maori school in Phillipstown, had exhibitions and collaborated as far as she could with feminist and women activists in Christchurch. She says that, '... it's great to keep on doing it through mail now – Aotearoa and its people mean a lot to me'.*

Disciplining Women's Studies: Repositioning feminist education in Aotearoa/New Zealand

JENNY COLEMAN

Past Visions, Current Realities

For the past decade, the application of a market model to university-based education in Aotearoa/New Zealand has resulted in inadequate funding and increased competition from a range of private tertiary providers.[1] Consistent with trans-Tasman and international trends, the humanities and social sciences have been barraged by cutbacks engendered by a dogged adherence to a 'demand and supply' ethos. In a commitment to end competitive models of tertiary education, the 1999 Labour Government announced the establishment of a Tertiary Education Commission to develop and implement a coordinated strategic direction in the tertiary education sector. For marginalised university programmes such as Women's Studies, however, this promised change in direction may prove to be too little too late.

Women's Studies programmes have never enjoyed a secure status within the tertiary environment in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As Jackie Matthews has noted, Women's Studies has been subjected to 'silent indifference' as well as to 'hostile rhetoric from both the Old and New Right and the Old and New Left outside and inside the University'.[2] Almost a decade ago, the editorial in a special issue of the *Women's Studies Journal* noted that it was a critical and pivotal time for Women's Studies in New Zealand. The mood at that time was cautiously optimistic. For the first time there were Women's Studies posts in all New Zealand universities. New challenges were identified in a changing discipline: post-structuralist theory questioned the bases of feminist arguments, and a new, younger generation of women students were entering the academy with different perspectives and political priorities. What might this institutionalisation of Women's Studies herald? Could Women's Studies transform the other disciplines or would Women's Studies itself be de-politicised?[3]

Some of the issues identified in the 1992 Special Issue of the

Women's Studies Journal were to prove almost prophetic, others a sobering reminder of the speed at which hard-won gains may be lost. Anna Yeatman offered a vision for Women's Studies at Waikato University. The University of Waikato was hailed as different, innovative and, by its commitment to biculturalism and to women, as breaking with the traditional cultures of universities. Moreover, it had demonstrated a 'pioneering confidence in the academic potential and significance of Women's Studies' by creating the first Chair of Women's Studies in Australasia. Only eight years later, the BA Women's Studies major was withdrawn and the Women's and Gender Studies programme at Waikato University was severely downsized. In another article in the 1992 collection Kay Morris Matthews identified the nature of the curriculum and programme resources as the key factors impacting on the future of Women's Studies in New Zealand universities. She concluded that unless 'greater tenacity and creativity' were demonstrated, along with pro-active measures to secure external funding, Women's Studies programmes would 'remain a vulnerable entity in a patriarchal hierarchy [...] dependent on the goodwill of a few liberal administrators'.[4] Despite much tenacity and creativity on the part of feminist educators in the tertiary environment, women's studies programmes in the early years of the twenty-first century are marked by an increasing vulnerability.

Global Trends ...

Current concerns about the future of academic women's studies, and indeed of the humanities and social sciences in general, are by no means limited to the national arena. Recent years have seen a proliferation in special issues of feminist journals and conferences grappling with issues around the future of feminist education and the changing shape of feminism in the twenty-first century.[5] The 2001 Conference for the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) in the United States, for example, was organised around issues that questioned the future of Women's Studies in an age characterised by globally scaled political economies and cyber-age technologies.

British academic Helen Crowley (1999) described the academic history of Women's Studies as marked by ambiguity and uncertainty in the face of persistent institutional opposition to Women's Studies as a field of scholarship. Citing British, European and US examples,

Crowley concluded that the survival of many women's studies programmes was dependent on the committed defiance of students and staff. She suggested that the continued marginal status of Women's Studies was inevitable given that its very existence challenges the fundamental coherence of the academy.[6] For Australian academic Terry Threadgold, the continued survival of Women's Studies and Gender Studies as autonomous fields of inquiry is inextricably linked to the continued survival and autonomy of the Humanities. She notes that, despite the fact that feminist scholarship has impacted on virtually every discipline in the humanities and social sciences in the past three decades to the point where gender is now on the agenda of all the disciplines within these fields, the autonomy of the now-feminised humanities is radically at risk from 'an economic and corporate culture determined to prove its own aggressive masculinity'.[7]

... Local Examples

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the effects of a masculinist economic and corporate culture have had a severe impact on the academic discipline of Women's Studies in recent years. Of the six Women's Studies and Gender Studies programmes based in universities,[8] two have been significantly downsized and no longer offer undergraduate majors, one has lost its entire postgraduate programme, and two remain under the shadow of review. At recent conferences of the Women's Studies Association, the future viability of the *Women's Studies Journal* and of the Association itself has been questioned.

As a means of exploring the issues that currently impact on the future of feminist education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, this article offers a case study of the Women's Studies Programme at Massey University. Since 1978, when the first undergraduate paper was offered, Women's Studies at Massey has developed into a fully fledged stand-alone interdisciplinary programme offering a full range of undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. As a result of restructuring within the university over the past four years, however, the autonomy of the programme has been eroded to the point where its continued existence is tenuous, to say the least.

A brief descriptive overview of the programme and a chronology of significant events in its development are presented. This is followed with a more detailed discussion of the changes that have taken place

since Massey University embarked on a 'Repositioning Exercise' in March 2000. The implications of these changes in terms of student options, staff workloads, feminist scholarship and graduate supervision are then considered within the wider context of market-driven models of tertiary education. The article closes with some comments on the challenges this offers for those of us committed to feminist pedagogy and feminist scholarship within the tertiary academic sector.

A Case Study: Women's Studies at Massey University

The Women's Studies Programme at Massey University consists of a core of interdisciplinary papers taught by staff appointed to the programme within a larger multi-disciplinary framework of contributing subject areas. Massey University differs from most other New Zealand universities in its multi-campus, multi-mode delivery. A key distinguishing feature of Women's Studies at Massey University has been the focus on extramural delivery and the opportunity for students to complete their degrees by distance education. First-year Women's Studies papers have been taught in internal mode under the Conjoint Agreement at Taranaki Polytechnic in New Plymouth, Eastern Institute of Technology in Napier, and Tairawhiti Polytechnic in Gisborne. All undergraduate and postgraduate papers have been offered in both internal mode (on campus) and in extramural mode (by distance education). Since the undergraduate major was established, on average about four out of five Women's Studies students have been studying in extramural mode. The typical profile of a Women's Studies student is female, aged between 35–50, studying part time in extramural mode, enrolling in one or two Women's Studies papers as electives toward a BA major in the humanities or social sciences.[9]

A Brief Chronology

The first Women's Studies paper, (Women in Society), was taught by Dr Ephra Garrett in the Sociology Department in 1978. In 1987 a postgraduate diploma was established and in 1990 Masters and PhD studies became available. At this time Nicola Armstrong was the part-time coordinator of the programme, working from within the Sociology Department. In 1994 Women's Studies was granted stand-alone status as an interdisciplinary programme and a full-time Director was appointed

(Dr Lynne Alice). An officially constituted Women's Studies Advisory Board was convened to provide advice and direction on development of the programme. An undergraduate BA major in Women's Studies was approved and offered in 1995. Two new staff positions were created in 1996 (taken up by Dr Catherine Bray and Dr Jenny Coleman) and at the end of 1997 a fourth position was filled through an internal transfer within the university (Dr Lynne Star).

In 1998 there was major organisational restructuring at Massey University that resulted in Faculties and Departments being replaced with a College and School-based structure. At this time, the Women's Studies Programme amalgamated with the Sociology Programme and the Police Studies Programme to form the School of Sociology and Women's Studies within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Directorship position was down-graded to a Programme Coordinator position and the Women's Studies Advisory Board was disbanded. In November 1998, Dr Lynne Alice resigned as Programme Coordinator and Associate Professor Brian Ponter, who was Programme Coordinator for Police Studies and Acting Head of the School of Sociology and Women's Studies, became Acting Programme Coordinator for Women's Studies. At this time it was announced that a broad review of the Women's Studies Programme was to take place. This was superseded in January 2000 when the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (Professor Barrie Macdonald) announced that the School of Sociology and Women's Studies would be reviewed under the university's five-yearly review exercise. This review, was, in turn, superseded in March 2000 when the Vice Chancellor (Professor James McWha) announced that Massey University was to undergo a 'Repositioning Exercise'. As a result of this repositioning exercise, on 1 January 2001 the School of Sociology and Women's Studies was merged with the School of Social Policy and Social Work to become the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work.

There are a number of key points to note in this chronology of changes to the Women's Studies Programme at Massey University. First, since 1987, the leadership of the Women's Studies Programme has changed from a part-time Coordinator to a full-time Director, and then to a full-time Programme Coordinator position. Second, a full undergraduate degree programme only became available in 1994. Given that part-time extramural students generally take ten years to

complete their undergraduate degrees, the fact that an undergraduate major in Women's Studies only became available in 1994 has significance for the graduation rate of students with Women's Studies majors. Third, between November 1999 and November 2000 there was no appointed Programme Coordinator; during this period the (male) Acting Head of School assumed an Acting Programme Coordinator role. And fourth, Women's Studies has been under the shadow of review since November 1999.

'Repositioning' at Massey University

Massey University heralded the new millennium with the announcement that it was to engage in a 'Repositioning Exercise'. This was to have far-reaching implications for the future of Women's Studies. Although it was not clear at the time what the 'Repositioning Exercise' would involve, its announcement sent shock waves through the university. It was generally accepted that 'repositioning' was yet another euphemism for restructuring, which, in turn, had become a euphemism for cutbacks and retrenchment.

The specific reason given for the development of a proposal for repositioning the university was 'To ensure that the University's staffing complement matches student demand for papers and qualifications, and to protect the University's financial position by controlling costs'.[10] The initial message sent from the Vice Chancellor cited three main reasons for embarking on this exercise: (i) changing student demands for papers and degrees had led to a decline in enrolment in some traditional areas of study, (ii) shifts towards different methods of delivery and geographical locations, and (iii) changing demographics in the Manawatu region had resulted in a substantial decline in the number of school leavers qualifying for university entrance. The Pro Vice-Chancellors of each of the then four Colleges (Business, Education, Science, and Social Sciences and Humanities) were to lead this process by identifying areas for change and making recommendations on specific papers and programmes. The proposal sought to 'identify non-viable activities with the intention of realigning resources to areas that are both economically sustainable and academically and strategically important, for various reasons including research'. It was stressed that throughout this process 'It is important that we maintain programme integrity, teaching and research quality, breadth of

offerings and the development capacity of the University as well as fiscal responsibility'.[11]

The Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences was charged with developing strategies that would result in a saving of $1.56 million against the previous year's actual expenditure. In developing these strategies Professor Barrie Macdonald was requested specifically to: (i) Identify non-viable papers, majors and programmes as a basis for re-aligning resources to areas that are both economically sustainable and strategically important; (ii) Consider the strategic direction and priorities of the College in light of the current budget and enrolment situation; (iii) Make recommendations to [the Vice Chancellor] on a redistribution of resources within the College to ensure that programmes that are economically viable in their current form are appropriately supported. That is, ensure that savings do not detrimentally impact on the University's ability to generate revenue and hence support its core activities; (iv) Re-evaluate the proportion of College budget committed to salaries of on-going staff positions; and (v) Consider appropriate/necessary structural changes as a result of the above guidelines.[12]

Initial Repositioning Proposals for Women's Studies

The 'Proposal for College Repositioning and Cost Saving Document' for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences was released on 23 May 2000. All staff were sent individual letters outlining how the proposals, if accepted in their current form, would affect their staffing positions. The letters received by each of the four permanent academic staff in Women's Studies stated:

> If this proposal remains in its current form and the recommendations are ratified by Council, it is with regret that I must advise that the position which you currently hold will no longer exist.[13]

The main recommendation with respect to the Women's Studies Programme in this May 2000 Proposal was that:

> Greater efficiency would be achieved through the disestablishment of the current programme and related staff positions, reliance on the mainstreaming of Women's Studies across the College, and an exploration of the potential for the development of a more broadly-based programme in gender studies in relevant disciplines and from existing sources.[14]

Many individuals within the wider women's studies community played a part in what happened in response to this proposal to disestablish Women's Studies at Massey University. Of a total of 200 submissions received in response to the College's repositioning proposal, 78 related directly to the Women's Studies Programme. Submissions were received from present and past students, from all Women's Studies staff, from staff from other departments at Massey University, and from universities in New Zealand and overseas. Local, national and international groups as well as individuals wrote in support of the continuation of the programme. Later, in his revised Proposal document, the Pro Vice-Chancellor commented dismissively on these submissions, stating that 'Even the passion of some submissions, and the argument that there is strong demand for the programme, does not overcome the basic reality that current enrolments cover no more than 45 per cent of out-goings and that enrolments have dropped steadily' over the past four years.[15]

These submissions were part of a widespread campaign to rally support for the programme on a local, national and international level. There were letters to the local newspaper (the *Manawatu Evening Standard*), a protest rally outside the University Registry Building,[16] and the Palmerston North Women's Centre called a public meeting on 25 July 2000 to oppose the proposed cuts.

After a period of 'consultation' that consisted of the opportunity to present submissions, a Revised Repositioning Proposal was released on 26 July 2000. A number of issues were highlighted in this document, notably, that enrolments in Women's Studies core papers had declined by more than 40 per cent since 1997 and that most students enrol in Women's Studies papers as electives, with few choosing to complete either a major or a diploma. The document held that the development of papers in Women's Studies in programmes across the College, and concurrent developments in the College of Business, meant a reduced need for a programme focus of the present kind. It was noted, however, that there might be a future in an extramural programme offering a limited range of papers that had demonstrated viability.

The revised proposals represented a fundamental shift from disestablishment of the programme and associated staffing positions to a significant downsizing of the programme. There were three major recommendations: (i) Women's Studies be reduced to a concentration

of undergraduate extramural papers that would provide minimal but sufficient papers for any majoring students to complete their Women's Studies major, (ii) the postgraduate programme be restricted to core papers and postgraduate supervision, and (iii) staffing positions be reduced from four to two. It was also recommended that the College explore the potential for the development of a more broadly based programme in gender studies in relevant disciplines and from existing resources and that the College seek a closer relationship with relevant programmes in the College of Business.[17] The final recommendation was that Women's Studies be reviewed in two years.

Current position of Women's Studies at Massey University

The current 'post-repositioning' position of the Women's Studies Programme at Massey University is as follows. In terms of organisation, Women's Studies is one of five programmes within the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work.[18] There is a full-time Programme Coordinator who is directly responsible to the Head of School. The Head of the School (Professor Robyn Munford) was a member of the earlier Women's Studies Advisory Board and is a strong advocate for the continuation of the programme.

There are currently two full-time equivalent academic staffing positions in the programme. Following release of the revised proposal document in July 2000, Women's Studies staff were required to apply for the two positions available. Only one of the previous four staff chose to engage in this process.[19] Two Sociology staff members, redeployed to teach part-time in Women's Studies and part-time in Sociology, have filled the second position.

The current undergraduate programme consists of seven core papers[20] and a further 17 papers on the approved list that are available toward the BA (Women's Studies), the Graduate Diploma in Women's Studies and the Graduate Diploma in Arts (Women's Studies). The most significant changes are that no new enrolments are currently being accepted for a BA Women's Studies major and all core papers are offered in extramural mode only. First-year papers continue to be offered in internal mode at Eastern Institute of Technology and Tairawhiti Polytechnic under the Conjoint Agreement.

The postgraduate programme continues to offer a full range of postgraduate degrees including the Graduate Diploma in Arts (endorsed in Women's Studies), the Postgraduate Diploma in Arts

(endorsed in Women's Studies), the MA, MPhil, and PhD. There are currently 15 papers available at postgraduate level, of which four are from the core programme and eleven from the approved list toward the Graduate Diploma in Arts (endorsed in Women's Studies), the Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (endorsed in Women's Studies), the MA and the MPhil. Although this represents a significant decrease in the postgraduate core paper offerings (from nine to four papers) this is as a result of a review of academic programmes that targeted papers with low enrolments which took place concurrent with the repositioning exercise in 2000.

Repositioning Women's Studies – At What Cost?

Four years of restructuring and revision of academic programmes at Massey University have resulted in significant changes to the Women's Studies Programme. These changes have serious implications for student options, staff workloads, feminist scholarship and postgraduate supervision and impact on a programme, college, university and national level.

The withdrawal of paper delivery in the internal mode at Turitea campus serves as a case in point. At its simplest level, withdrawal of face-to-face teaching presents reduced student options for mode of study. It also presents significant shifts in feminist pedagogy. One of the key challenges faced by feminist educators teaching in distance education mode is the lack of opportunity to develop mutual respect and trust within a classroom situation. Interactive teaching practices, in which students and teachers alike become active and engaged learners in dialogue with each other, can only ever be partially recreated in the virtual classroom. The opportunities for students to make connections between their own experiences and the theoretical perspectives in course materials are substantively different when studying in isolation. This shift in the learning process is most keenly felt for those students who are studying on campus but who no longer have the opportunity to engage with other students and staff in discussing issues that arise from course materials in a classroom situation. After only one semester there is a noticeable increase in demand from on-campus students for one-to-one contact with paper coordinators. As a result, more hours are being spent in student consultations than were previously spent in lectures, tutorials and office hours combined. The withdrawal of internal teaching also

signals a significant change in staff workload in that there is a greater emphasis on administration of papers rather than on teaching. This, coupled with the ongoing devolution of administrative responsibilities to academic staff, has the effect of academic staff becoming increasingly office-bound.

The reduction in staffing positions immediately impacts on the workloads of remaining staff, which, in turn, has flow-on effects for students. The loss of specialist areas of expertise has particular implications for postgraduate supervision and for future programme development. The loss of institutional knowledge and a reduced research and publication profile for the programme has consequences at the school, college and institutional levels. There are also issues around the differing relationships to the programme of appointed staff and staff redeployed from other disciplines.

The loss of the undergraduate major, coupled with the withdrawal of face-to-face teaching, reduces the opportunities to develop a strong Women's Studies culture within the University. It also takes away the only opportunity for a BA Women's Studies major through distance education in New Zealand. The loss of the undergraduate major also impacts on subsequent enrolments at undergraduate level that also has a flow-on effect at postgraduate levels of study.

Disciplining Women's Studies – Who Pays?

The fundamental defining characteristic of Women's Studies has been its interdisciplinary nature. During the 1970s and early 1980s, when Women's Studies was becoming established in universities throughout Britain, the United States, Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand, feminists were questioning the accuracy and efficacy of defining Women's Studies as a discipline in its own right. The 'integration/autonomy debates' which emerged during this period questioned the radicalising potential of Women's Studies in the academy and the extent to which Women's Studies itself may be disciplined by the compartmentalising of knowledge that was a defining feature of the academy. What characterised these debates was both the fear that feminist scholarship may be ghettoised within the academy as an enclave for 'special interests' and the assumption that it was the content of Women's Studies, in particular the way that feminist theory challenged the assumptions and distribution of knowledge within the disciplines, that posed the greatest threat to the institution itself.

It is tempting to claim that these early debates were inwardly focused on issues of the politics of knowledge, the strategic positioning of Women's Studies, the academic integrity of feminist pedagogy and scholarship, and the relationship between feminism inside and outside the academy and that wider issues such as the continued existence of the liberal arts within the university did not feature in the equation. This was not the case. In the 1983 collection *Theories of Women's Studies* edited by Gloria Bowles and Renate Klein, Bari Watkins noted that it had become commonplace that the humanities were in serious trouble in US universities. She confidently hailed feminist scholarship as a model for teaching and learning that could provide a solution to the dilemmas facing the liberal arts.[21]

The extent to which feminist scholarship has spread throughout the disciplines is immediately evident on consideration of the range of disciplines that offer papers as part of a Women's Studies degree. In Aotearoa/New Zealand these include: Anthropology, Art History, Biology, Criminology, Drama, Education, English, Film Studies, Geography, History, Human Resource Management, Linguistics, Management and Employment Relations, Maori Studies, Media Studies, Music, Nursing, Philosophy, Political Science, Professional Studies, Religious Studies, Social Policy, and Sociology. In terms of the continued existence of autonomous Women's Studies programmes, however, the extent to which feminist scholarship is available in separate disciplinary areas can be a two-edged sword in the hands of senior management. Massey University senior management's reference to the possibility of future potential in 'a broad based programme in gender studies with existing resources' suggests that feminist/gender courses in a range of disciplines undermines the justification for a core Women's Studies programme. This illustrates the competitive logic of current market-based management discourses; the very 'successes' of feminism within the academy are used to question the need for core cross-disciplinary feminist teaching, research and writing within the academy. Interdisciplinary Women's Studies has clearly been disciplined in both senses of the word.

Restructuring – The Never-ending Story

The 'Repositioning Exercise' undertaken by Massey University sought to 'identify non-viable papers, majors and programmes as a basis for re-aligning resources to areas that are both economically

sustainable and strategically important'. The rhetoric of 'market-speak' within the daily management practices of the academy is inescapable. The single-most damaging aspect of the EFTS-driven model within tertiary education is that it shifts the focus from academic integrity to economic viability. The underlying premises of such models inherently disadvantage all broad-based liberal programmes within the humanities and social sciences. To evaluate the changes wrought by this market-driven competitive model in terms of 'viability', 'economic sustainability' and 'strategic importance' serves to reinforce the assumptions that have fuelled this devaluation of the liberal arts in the first place. As Mary Poovey has pointed out, the language of the market place operates on a tautological logic. She explains:

> The means/ends logic of the market is tautological because, by measuring means solely by their ability to achieve the end the market defines in advance, it undermines the credibility of any alternative definition of value. [...] Instead of accepting the idea that the market defines value, we have to suspend the market model entirely in favour of an alternative system that defines value differently.[22]

That the 'logic' of market-place rhetoric is self-perpetuating was all too evident at Massey University when, in March 2001, the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences signalled a further review of the Workload and Academic Portfolio of the College. Citing 'growing concerns over the increasing workload of academic staff and the need to ensure the equitable distribution of responsibilities', Professor Macdonald outlined a formula approach for justification of continued paper offerings. He stated:

> I appreciate the need to maintain student choice and concerns to protect programme integrity, but we must also address issues of staff workload and resource allocation. Following repositioning, we have fewer staff in some areas which also poses the question of whether existing papers can be sustained.[23]

Prior to the Repositioning Exercise, increasing workloads as a result of an increase in the number of papers that had been offered were somehow implicated in the steady decline in government funding per student over the past decade. That Massey University senior management had approved a 62 per cent increase in extramural papers

over a five-year period, in which enrolments had risen only 4 per cent, was not mentioned as a significant contributing factor to the current situation. Post-Repositioning, however, saw a heuristic manoeuvre, in which the Pro Vice-Chancellor presented repositioning outcomes as justification for further retrenchment.

The Future of Women's Studies: Is it Feminist?

In the light of ongoing feminist debates around the politics of 'women's studies' and 'gender studies', it is worth noting that at Massey University senior management has expressed a willingness to consider a programme in Gender Studies, although possibly at the expense of a programme in Women's Studies. Currently, three of the six women's studies programmes in Aotearoa/New Zealand are designated as Gender Studies programmes, two of these also retaining Women's Studies within their programme title. An analysis of the content of the core programme undergraduate offerings in each of these universities (based on the paper descriptions in their respective current University Calendars), suggests that, for the most part, the current programme titles reflect the main emphases within these programmes. Those programmes with Women's Studies in their titles have a strong focus on women's experiences and a more overtly feminist orientation whereas those programmes with Gender Studies in their titles have a stronger emphasis on cultural theory.[24] The increasing focus on methodologies and perspectives associated with gender studies and cultural studies within women's studies programmes, while not necessarily indicative of a lack of attention to feminist theories and methodologies, does suggest that women's studies in Aotearoa/New Zealand is developing in a direction that has the potential to marginalise scholarship that focuses specifically on women's experiences and uses explicitly feminist perspectives. This potential was evident in discussions at the 2001 Annual General Meeting of the Women's Studies Association where the reversal of current WSA policy to only accept submissions to the *Women's Studies Journal* from women was debated. This move was strongly opposed by some members of the Association who considered that a change to this policy was a fundamental challenge to the founding philosophy and aims of the Association. As a result of the decision to continue this policy, some women withdrew their offer to contribute to the editing of the *Journal*.

The increasing support for programmes and opportunities for scholarship in gender and cultural studies within Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the implications for this emerging focus on the future of Women's Studies programmes, prompts a requestioning of the role of Women's Studies as the intellectual arm of the women's movement. For those of us committed to feminist teaching in the tertiary academic sector, the current climate of restructuring and EFTs-driven delivery of tertiary programmes poses additional pressures on how Women's Studies programmes might remain demonstrably committed to explicitly feminist political agendas. The recent Massey Women's Studies experience offers some important strategic lessons.

The threat of disestablishment provided a timely reminder of the importance of feminist networking on a local, national and international level. In these days of pressured workloads and increasing administrative responsibilities, it is all too easy to forget that the roots and the life blood of academic Women's Studies is in the integrity and relevance of the programmes offered. The importance of ongoing networking, of fostering and developing old and new links within the women's and feminist communities and within the wider academic community are a crucial part of ensuring programme integrity. As feminist educators, we cannot expect to reach out for support only in times of crisis. We also need to think seriously about how to return to our feminist activist roots by realigning theory and practice.

In response to the bitter pills we have been forced to swallow from the most recent round of restructuring, Women's Studies at Massey is undertaking a number of new initiatives. As a means of fostering an information and contact network between Women's Studies students, staff and the wider women's studies and feminist communities both locally and nationally, a 'Women's Studies@Massey' newsletter is being produced. The Women's Studies Programme has also set up a Women's Research Database of research at Massey University that focuses primarily on either women's issues, gendered perspectives, and/or uses a feminist methodology or analysis. As well as profiling this research within the university, the database aims to facilitate networking within these research areas and to identify potential research supervisors and examiners. To facilitate the networking of academic women on campus, the programme has begun to organise regular informal lunchtime meetings. Longer-term initiatives centre

on reconvening a Women's Studies Caucus to advise and strategise around the future development of the programme. All of these initiatives are premised upon an understanding of the strategic role of Women's Studies in the academy as a focal point for the support and advancement of feminist scholarship and the interdependence of the core Women's Studies Programme and those involved in feminist pedagogy and scholarship in the various disciplines.

On another level these initiatives represent an internal self-disciplining of the programme, in that they seek to develop best practice models informed by feminist principles of collective decision-making, inclusivity and accountability to feminist communities. For Women's Studies programmes to stay alive, we need to develop a wide base of support and cooperation both within and beyond the university. We need strong advocates within the university and we need papers and programmes of study that are relevant and meaningful. Above all – and what is perhaps the greatest challenge – we need to achieve this in a way that does not compromise our feminist integrity.

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Notes

[1] An earlier version of this article was presented at the panel 'Staying Alive: The Future of Feminist Education' at the Women's Studies Association (NZ) Conference, Christchurch 1–3 June (2001).

[2] Jackie Matthews, 'Reflections and Recollections of a Retiring Woman', *Women's Studies Journal*, 8, 1, March (1992) pp. 1–2.

[3] Editorial, *Women's Studies Journal*, 8, 1, March (1992) p. vii.

[4] Kay Morris Matthews, '"For and About Women": Women's Studies in New Zealand Universities, 1974–1990', *Women's Studies Journal*, 8, 1, March (1992) p. 28.

[5] See, for example, 'Women's Studies on the Edge', Special Issue of *Differences*, 19, 3 (1997); thematic articles in *Australian Feminist Studies*, 13, 27, April (1998). For an evaluation of Women's Studies programmes at European

Universities, see Rosi Braidotti, Ellen de Dreu & Christine Rammrath, 'SIGMA Synthesis Report Women's Studies in Europe' (Centre of Women's Studies, Antwerp, Belgium, 1995) (http://women-www.uia.ac.be/women/sigma/synthesis.html).

[6] Helen Crowley, 'Women's Studies: Between a Rock and a Hard Place or Just Another Cell in the Beehive?', *Feminist Review*, 61, Spring (1999) pp. 131–150.

[7] Terry Threadgold, 'Gender Studies and Women's Studies', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 15, 31 (2000) p. 44.

[8] The six programmes are: Women's Studies Programme at University of Auckland, Women's and Gender Studies at University of Waikato, Women's Studies Programme at Massey University, Women's Studies Programme at Victoria University of Wellington, Department of Gender Studies (formerly Department of Feminist Studies) at University of Canterbury, and Gender and Women's Studies at University of Otago.

[9] This profile corresponds very closely to that of the 'average extramural student' as described in a recent article in *Off Campus*, the magazine of Massey University's Extramural Student's Society. See 'A winner at last', *Off Campus*, 6, 2, June (2001) p. 4.

[10] Email from James McWha to Massey staff, 15 March 2000.

[11] Correspondence from Professor James McWha to Professor Barrie Macdonald, 15 March 2000.

[12] *ibid.*

[13] Correspondence from Professor Barrie Macdonald to Dr Jenny Coleman, 25 May 2000.

[14] Barrie Macdonald, 'Proposal for College Repositioning and Cost Saving', Massey University College of Humanities and Social Sciences, May (2000) p. 11.

[15] Barrie Macdonald, 'Revised Proposal for College Repositioning and Cost Saving', Massey University College of Humanities and Social Sciences, July (2000), covering memo, p. 9.

[16] See *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 18 July (2000) p. 1.

[17] This was a reference to the Centre for Women and Leadership, which is administered within the College of Business. The mission of the Centre is to promote leadership opportunities for women through education, research consultancy and community activity.

[18] Other programmes are the Sociology Programme, the Social Policy Programme, the Social Work Programme, and the Police Studies Programme.

[19] Namely, the author who is currently the only full-time appointment to the programme and is also the Women's Studies Programme Coordinator.

[20] This is only one less core undergraduate paper than in 2000.

[21] Bari Watkins, 'Feminism: A Last Chance for the Humanities?', in Gloria Bowles & Renate Klein (eds) *Theories of Women's Studies* (Routledge, London, 1983).

[22] Mary Poovey, 'The Twenty-First-Century University and the Market: What Price Economic Viability?', *differences*, 12, 1 (2001) p. 8.

(http://ipujournals.org/differences/dif12-1.html).

[23] Email from Pro-Vice Chancellor to College of Humanities and Social Sciences staff, 15 March 2001.

[24] The notable exception would be the Women's Studies programme at the University of Auckland that has a very strong emphasis on gender and cultural theory as reflected in paper titles such as 'Gender and the Culture of Everyday Life', 'Representing Women', 'Introduction to Feminist Theories: Sex, Gender, Power, Meaning', 'Sites of Performance', 'Reading Sexuality', 'Bodies on the Brink: Technologies of Gender and Sexuality', 'Body Politics', 'Gender and Colonialism in the Pacific', and 'Femme Fatale: Rethinking Film Noir'. The current undergraduate offerings in Women's Studies at Victoria University of Wellington appear to focus equally on women's and gender studies, whereas the current undergraduate offerings in Women's Studies at Massey University focus on women's and feminist studies.

Constructing a Women's University: An assessment of the innovation of the *Internationale Frauen Universität* 2000[1]

BLOSSOM HART

For the last thirty years feminists have worked, both inside and outside academic institutions, to develop women's studies, feminist studies and gender studies programmes that foster critical debate and innovative research and use feminist theorising and critical pedagogy. Many of these programmes were institutionalised in tertiary education institutions in the 1980s and since that time have had to struggle for their continued existence. In 2000 the *Internationale Frauen Universität* (*ifu*) embraced an alternative vision – the establishment of a women-only university that offered the women attending an opportunity to engage in the type of women-focused international, interdisciplinary academic work that has often been associated with the project of 'women's studies'. I was a student at the *ifu* for the pilot semester and participated in what *ifu* organisers described as 'a bold innovation by, for and about women'.[2]

This paper examines how this new programme in women's education was constructed for participants and how they responded to its challenges. I draw on my own participation and the words of women from five different countries who also participated in the Project Area Body – one of the options available at *ifu* during its pilot semester. My discourse analysis of the experiences of these five women is informed by Adrienne Rich's essay 'Toward a Woman-Centered University'.[3] It is nearly thirty years since Rich articulated her vision of women-centred university education, however, her aspirations for feminist pedagogy provide a useful framework for exploring this attempt at innovation within the university system.

I focus particularly on interviewees' comments on the learning experiences available to them at *ifu* and the internationality and interdisciplinarity of the programme. My aim is to offer a critical assessment of *ifu* as an interdisciplinary and international initiative in the field of women-focused education. The issues raised by participants in this programme are relevant for many feminist educators engaged in strategic interventions within tertiary education.

Introducing *ifu*

From 15 July to 15 October 2000, in conjunction with the World Expo 2000, the pilot semester of the *Internationale Frauen Universität* (*ifu*) or International Women's University was conducted. Drawing on an international pool of approximately 950 postgraduate participants (students), *ifu* aimed to offer an international, intercultural and interdisciplinary curriculum and experience and integrate 'virtual' technologies into the research and teaching process at several locations throughout Germany.[4] *ifu* presented its 'fundamental features' as follows:

> INTERNATIONALITY
> At the International Women's University there will be teachers and students from every continent. Internationality will be a basic principle of *ifu*, governing the choice of topics and issues to be addressed and questioning traditional western-oriented views and research perspectives.
>
> INTERDISCIPLINARITY
> The six project areas WORK — INFORMATION — BODY — MIGRATION — CITY — WATER will address highly controversial problems in the 21st century, problems which cannot [be] dealt with in terms of existing research disciplines.
>
> INTEGRATION of ART and SCIENCE
> There will be a productive and provocative interaction between scientific and artistic approaches and working methods. The dialogue between women artists and scientists will give interdisciplinarity a new exciting dimension. Artistic strategies combined with feminist research in the project areas will provide new scope for experimentation, thus fostering innovation.[5]

ifu's self-presentation, including these fundamental features, created an image of an event reminiscent of Adrienne Rich's vision of a woman-centred university.

Participants included academic postgraduates, and postgraduates who were also artists or activists, individuals with significant experience working in institutions like NGOs (non-governmental organisations), professionals such as doctors, specialists and engineers and women who were already teaching and lecturing in their home institutions; several were professors. Structured as a non-profit 'company', which sourced funding from both the public and private sectors, this venture provided scholarships for many of its participants, particularly those attending from 'developing' countries. Each

participant was required to apply for one of the six Project Areas and explain in her application how she would make use of the area chosen.

Researching Participants' Experiences of *ifu*

During my attendance at *ifu* I chose to research the experiences of participants in the Project Area Body. I approached potential interviewees from a diverse range of geographical areas, approximately representative of the general participant body, with information about my study. Volunteers were informed that the aim of the study was to explore significant aspects of their experiences during their semester at *ifu*. Time and resource limitations meant that I interviewed only five participants. Due to controversy surrounding the observation of participants in *ifu*, including media observation over which participants were not consulted, I decided that taking field notes or conducting participant observation would not be appropriate. Interviews provided a clearly demarcated space within which participants could offer me their experiences and to which participants could consent with a clear understanding of my intentions.

Interviewees identified as originating from the African continent, the Indian sub-continent, Germany, Western Europe and Eastern Europe. They were all able to speak and understand fluent English. One of the interviewees considered her participation at *ifu* to be in the role of an activist, one interviewee identified as a professional, one participated as an artist and two of the interviewees identified as academics. At the time of the interviews one interviewee was physically unwell. One interviewee identified as lesbian and single, one as celibate, two as heterosexual and single and one as heterosexual and married.

I interviewed each of the five volunteers individually using open-ended semi-structured interviews, similar in technique to prior research.[6] I followed two of the interviewees through their time at *ifu* by interviewing them twice, once initially during the first two weeks of term and again during the final stages of the *ifu* term, when the remaining three interviews were also conducted. Initial interviews opened with the question: 'Can you tell me about a day at *ifu*?' All the other interviews opened with the question: 'How have you experienced *ifu*?' I then explored issues pertinent to the interviewee. Interviews were conducted in a variety of quiet locations convenient to the interviewees including tutorial rooms and participants' accommodation. The duration of the interviews varied from 50 to 90

minutes. Interviews were transcribed and sections of text were coded into categories relating to the key issues or experiences that the interviewees expressed.[7]

Each of the interviewees' experience of *ifu* was unique. Although they often responded in similar ways to my questions, there are occasionally significant differences between their responses. Rather than eliminate these differences, the analysis process[8] was designed to preserve them. The analysis presented below reflects these differences. This analysis also gives prominence to the interviewees' voices. I decided that this was particularly appropriate given that *ifu* did not provide any form of participant representation within its institutional structure, and as the analysis unfolded, it became clear that my interviewees' considered that *ifu* did not provide adequate avenues for feedback to the organisers.

Introducing Project Area Body

For the approximately 150 participants in the Project Area Body, the learning experience was divided into a number of different session formats. Each day, Monday to Thursday, comprised a lecture session, including a morning tutorial and discussion with the guest lecturer, a two-hour afternoon tutorial, a two-hour workshop, which included the bodywork workshops, a two-hour evening lecture and extra curricular activities from 8 pm. Plenary discussions were held on Thursday afternoons and Fridays were devoted to 'Open Space'[9] performances and activities.

Project Area Body participants also made two excursions to other parts of Germany – a two-week excursion to Bremen two weeks after their arrival and a second excursion two weeks later to an event chosen from those offered by *ifu*.[10] The final two weeks of term were devoted to discussion and plenary forums on issues that arose from participants' time at *ifu* and the presentation of participants' work. This time was organised by committees which were run by two tutors and which included a number of participants.

For the Project Area Body, 50 per cent of the available assessment credits were based on attendance at morning lectures. Workshop and evening lecture attendance accounted for 27 per cent and study projects accounted for the remaining 23 per cent of the 22 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) points available. Study projects were required to be a piece of research unique to the participant's time at *ifu*.

Formal Pedagogies

The *ifu* placed particular emphasis on the role of guest lecturers:

> The *ifu* semester session is conceived around outstanding persons, not concepts. The personal acquaintance of our students with exemplary scholars that have given shape to questions about the contemporary 'somatics' in women's studies is as important as the grasp of the specific subject of the guest's two lectures.[11]

Many of the lecturers functioned as role models for the interviewees, providing inspiration through their 'strength'[12] and 'vision'. Interviewees found it particularly rewarding when lectures contained ideas that applied to their lives, had implications that they had not previously been aware of and prompted them to go through a process of reassessing where they stand. These challenges offered interviewees 'new horizons'.

The possibility of spending individual or small group time with the lecturers was one of the most unique and promising opportunities interviewees felt *ifu* offered for active participation and academic growth. Ida[13] described her time in one such group as follows: 'She came and offered to discuss her lecture and each question you posed her was further sooner or later responded to with "and what are you working on, oh very interesting, oh tell me, oh what do you think" and so suddenly we were encouraged, and that was one of the very, very rare situations that we were approached to be adult researchers ourselves'. In these rare situations I believe a reshaping of the 'mother-daughter relationship' which Rich[14] describes as a necessary component to a woman-centred education began to take place. Interviewees experienced a sense of intellectual guidance and a sympathy for the processes they were engaged in as part of their own academic growth. Individual or small group work with guest lecturers was not afforded any formal time or specific space and was not valued within the assessment structure, and therefore such events disrupted the general structure of the Body programme. Access to guest lecturers was available only through informal contact, consequently interviewees commented that they felt they were pressing lecturers personally. In my view, this structurally imposed distancing of guest lecturers from participants instantiated these women as Rich's 'required exceptions'.[15]

Rich suggests that the traditional university treats women as

objects or means rather than ends in themselves,[16] they are infantilised and exploited. Within the context of *ifu*, the interviewees said that being categorised as 'students' defined them as objects, an audience for guest lecturers and subject of the *ifu* experiment. Conversely, being an 'adult researcher' meant having a voice and being independent, personal, critical, political, and reflective. Tutorials, and those workshops which were not small lectures, occasionally provided an environment where this was possible. Ida described one workshop as follows: 'you had to sit together in different small groups several times in just four hours and discuss "what are my principles, what are my beliefs, what do I think, what is necessary to talk about in our context regarding that issue" and that's what I really liked'.

Tutorials provided a structured environment in which interviewees gained a sense of each other and of 'what it means to be in an intercultural place'. Two major challenges interviewees faced were learning how to practise tolerance and how to communicate respectfully and effectively. Meeting these challenges took time, encouragement and a willingness to assess the assumptions and expectations each individual brought to the group. When tutorials were functioning well, participants 'stuck with the group' but when tension was high participants started to distance themselves. Being able to address the human aspect of their time at *ifu* by talking about individual problems, participants spoke about basic issues like 'how are you, how did you spend your day?' and 'going out together in the evening' as a tutorial group made participants more comfortable with the tutorial setting and the everyday experience of *ifu*. Tutorials provided a forum in which interviewees who were not comfortable speaking in lectures or plenary sessions could formulate their thoughts, feel encouraged, and get feedback. Tutorials were also 'instructive' in the 'sense that you learnt how differently people can "read" or listen to the same lecture'. Tutorials and workshops encouraged exploration and creativity and allowed participants to involve their subjectivity and personal styles. I believe these fora began to offer participants the kind of participatory style of classroom dialogic Rich suggests[17] should be adopted throughout the university.

Maria identified the central issue at stake and raised questions that need to be addressed in the following comment: 'Academic life is very detached from women's lives. It is a separate entity, separate career and I can't understand why it should be like that. I understand

why it is structured this way, there is a power game again, but why should we play that, how can we undermine these structures?'

Rich comments:

> I have been talking about the content of the university curriculum, that is, the mainstream of the curriculum. ... More invisible, less amenable to change by committee proposal or fiat, is the hierarchical image, the structure of relationships, even the style of discourse, including assumptions about theory and practice, ends and means, process and goal. ... The university is above all a hierarchy.[18]

Rich also points out that, when pursuing changes in tertiary education, it is necessary to choose what parts of existing structures, curricula, disciplines and professions to retain, what to omit and what to adapt, since the structure of an institution has an enormous impact on the life and work of its participants.

> ... it should be one of the goals of a woman-centred university to do away with the pyramid itself.[19]

The dismantling of hierarchies is necessary, Rich argues, because the forms of interaction and teaching that best serve women, and indeed anyone, are not possible within the structure of a strongly hierarchical institution. She questions 'whether this male-centered, male-dominated structure is really capable of serving humanity'.[20]

Rich claims a woman-centred university will need to change the 'centre of gravity of the institution'.[21] To do so we need to examine the 'very nature of the professions as practiced by men'.[22] According to Rich, we will need to consider on what basis we 'wish to join that procession',[23] what we will accept and what we need to do away with, 'consciously and critically select what is genuinely viable and what we can use ... as we possess ourselves of the knowledge, skills and perspectives that can refine our goal of self-determination with discipline and wisdom'.[24] The key to addressing these issues seems to be the ability to provide fora whereby participants in feminist programmes can have access to the experience of their mentors and share their own experiences without these interactions becoming exploitative for any of the parties concerned. This will require examining what existing pedagogical forms will best accommodate our needs, what forms require alteration and what new forms are necessary.

Informal Interactions

My interviewees contrasted the formal structures discussed above with informal, personal interaction. *ifu* stated:

> In order to meet the objectives of the *ifu*, it is of paramount importance to facilitate a cross-cultural dialogue amongst the participants.[25]

By gathering together such a globally diverse group, members of whom were dislocated to varying extents from their everyday lives, *ifu* offered its participants an environment rich in 'personal stories' and, relatively speaking, an unusual 'freedom' to share these 'personal' histories. Maria commented: 'every person has a personal history and because we are here in a certain situation where maybe we won't see each other ever again it means that in many ways these women have been more open, compared to in their own country... here you have this freedom to share certain things of your life that maybe you won't have ever, haven't had ever before or maybe will never come again and I think that, ah, we haven't had enough of that... through these personal stories you can learn very many different strategies. How women cope with things, how they deal with various issues in their lives'. In this way participants were able to 'tap the kinds of power and knowledge that exist – buried, diffused, misnamed, sometimes misdirected – within women'.[26]

As Maria suggests, this possibility for exploration did not come to fruition in the sense that it did not meet the interviewees' expectations. This objective was not afforded any formal time or space and was not valued within the assessment structure. Consequently, this exchange of personal stories mainly took place outside of the structure of the Body programme.

Despite these limitations, participants spoke with enthusiasm about sharing personal experiences, learning how to approach people and how to communicate interculturally, learning about each others' different backgrounds and finding women with similar interests with whom they could exchange knowledge. They suggested that these informal encounters fostered the development of concepts for their own work, led to the formation of friendships on an intellectual level and an emotional level, sometimes with women from opposite ends of a political spectrum. They spoke about discussing topics 'from a global and a ... regional point of view', learning from other participants about the history of other cultures and countries, the habits

in other places in the world and 'experiencing Europe together'. It gave interviewees a way to see 'the extraordinary in the ordinary', a sense of excitement and satisfaction, and was something Chikwee felt she 'wouldn't have learnt from anywhere in the world'. It seems to me that this is precisely the kind of reciprocal education Rich envisions in which women can discover and explore their connections with other women.[27]

Independent, personal, critical, and political discussion allowed participants to come to an appreciation of their differences and consider how these differences shaped their own and others' understandings. In such discussions, Ida felt it was important: 'to realise where we go together and where not and with what this has to do. ... there were also moments where we, being from India, Turkey, South Africa, and Italy, had all read the same book, we were referring to it and in that combination it will be impossible to meet again and to discuss again, it was such an experience of international feminist thinking. We were together and ... we were digesting it with all our backgrounds'.

Interviewees wanted to keep their differences as they found these differences instructive. Ida commented: 'I have had an experience of how you can depoliticise differences where they should be politicised'. She continued by commenting: 'I expected a high sensibility for the fact that we are from different parts of the world, also a sensibility to which background is important and when'. Ida felt that 'nationalism', as a form of 'racism' in its own right, was not questioned at *ifu*. This nationalism tended to diminish the visibility of participants' differences and similarities.

Sexuality was a particularly contentious topic for the interviewees. One of the interviewees was 'shocked' and 'amazed' to hear people coming out as lesbian. That they embraced this identification represented a real strength to her that she admired. The interviewees were also aware of clear instances of homophobia and were critical of the way sexuality was handled within the lecture programme. They claimed that heterosexuality was represented as the only acceptable norm, that homosexuality was treated as a marginal identity, and that celibacy was rendered invisible.

Sharing personal experiences was another avenue through which all participants could have a voice and contribute their own knowledges. Chikwee commented: 'my contribution wasn't an academic contribution, it was out of my experiences as a woman and

as (ethnic identity), if I had to say anything I had to say something from my experience … from my family background, the way I live and how much I can relate that which I live to what was being talked about. I couldn't place it anywhere in my academic field … so I contributed from personal experience more than anything else'.

Internationality, Interdisciplinarity and the Integration of Art and Science

The interviewees appreciated the opportunity to interact with women from many different countries at *ifu*. They indicated that the most valuable learning they gained at *ifu* derived from personal interactions with an internationally diverse group of women. A number of the interviewees, however, felt that this internationality was not adequately reflected within the curriculum itself. Interviewees observed that, although the Project Area Body attended to global centenary issues, these were presented in the main by academics, the majority of whom resided in 'the West' and worked within a 'western academic paradigm'. Maria commented: 'What I understand is that the Western academic tradition is one tradition, there can be other traditions and maybe they cannot be combined, I don't know, but maybe if you want to stress the word international at least you try'. Just as Rich shows the university to present a man-centred curriculum as a 'sexually neutral world',[28] it seems that the *ifu* presented a methodologically West-centred curriculum as a culturally neutral world. This marginalised other perspectives and promoted the exclusivity of Western perspectives.

In well-structured discussions the interdisciplinarity of the Body programme and participants produced 'challenging' conversation. Chikwee described: 'often times we found ourselves talking about any topic from so many different angles and that was the beauty of it; because we had so many ingredients for making the same cake that it came out better than it would have, baked from one perspective'.

More often these exchanges happened 'informally' outside of structured class time during 'self-organised'[29] meetings and debates reminiscent of Rich's 'conversations in small private groups and larger coteries'.[30] The interviewees valued these exchanges above lectures as the 'unique opportunity' *ifu* offered them to 'connect' and 'actively engage' with each other so as to break down their individual 'bubbles'. In contrast, interviewees regarded lectures as 'passive' and 'impersonal'.

Maria commented: 'I mean, lectures are fine things but they're very structured, you can often read this kind of information'.

ifu presented some major objectives as follows:

> Other major objectives of the project are to bring together scientists, practitioners and artists in a common endeavour and to make gender and gender relationships an integral part of international research. This combination will produce new research prospects, unorthodox solutions, diverse synergies and a new international networking of women.[31]

Interviewees attempted to take up the ifu's aim to promote internationality and interdisciplinarity, and attempted to engage with its objective to promote coordination between artists and scientists by creating a 'synergistic effect' in their project work. They perceived working in this way as a means through which they could network with women with similar interests and place gender at the centre of their work. To do so they aimed to work individually or with others to combine the diverse academic, professional, and artistic forms of expression they felt they had to offer *ifu*. The interviewees, however, experienced significant difficulties in securing 'support' for such work. Participating as an artist, one interviewee commented: 'I think that again there was an attempt made, because if we think of the projects you had quite a choice, what to do. On the other hand, in some ways it caused anxieties because ah, you felt that there were no supportive structures. Like if you wanted to do an art project then there are lots of things that you need, either in terms of space, some basic materials ah, certain time'. The difficulties, such as time constraints and a rigid assessment structure, caused significant frustration. If project work was adequately supported this could be a means through which participants could contribute to the university rather than just absorbing the insight of guest lecturers.

Some of the women interviewed also described a lack of support in undergoing what they described as 'translation work', which was required in order to 'cross gaps'. Examples of this included 'crossing' between different learning environments several times a day, 'crossing' between the content of lectures on different topics presented from different disciplinary backgrounds, translating from the content of the lectures to their own thesis or project work, 'translating' between their personal backgrounds and the Western academic tradition and translating between the disciplines of the presenters and the disciplinary

background with which the participants themselves were familiar.

Participating as an academic, one interviewee described her 'translation work' as follows: 'I'm generally at a stage where I try to relate my own interests to what's being taught at *ifu*, I'm always sort of going by this idea, you know, trying to find out is it relevant to the topic I'm looking at or is it not and do I find it convincing also'. Given that *ifu* focused on postgraduate attendance, it is perhaps surprising that there was not more room for this particular example of 'translation work'.

Coming from a professional background, another interviewee found this 'translation work' relatively straightforward. She found the process both satisfying and transformative: 'I've learnt so much within these 3 months which I couldn't have learnt anywhere, and I think it has in a way broadened even what I know in my field, ... now I know where I want to focus my (professional) knowledge, now I'm even contemplating on taking up a career of doing research in (topic) or women's rights. It's something that I never thought of really before coming here ... and it has helped me broaden my knowledge and it has also helped me focus on new avenues which I never thought of before'.

Clearly *ifu* intended to disrupt the disciplinary boundaries which Rich claims fragment knowledge[32] by developing Project Areas, each containing an interdisciplinary curriculum, and by recruiting participants from a wide variety of disciplines. The majority of the *ifu* timetable, however, was devoted to the formal pedagogies described above, which focused on delivering this curriculum to 'students' rather than providing the resources for 'participant' interactions in which participants could negotiate the pre-existing disciplinary boundaries they brought to *ifu*. Participant interactions of this form are necessary for successful synergistic project work and the 'translation work' described above. Clearly there is a need to build opportunities for such participant interaction, whilst balancing this with sufficient collective experience to prompt such discussion and collaboration.

Resources

Throughout their time at *ifu* participants were accommodated at numerous locations, mostly in private rental accommodation or with host households. A small number were accommodated in student hostels. Interviewees commented that this arrangement made them feel very scattered, dislocated, out of place and isolated. They required

a place where they could be together to get to know each other and belong to a community. Receiving a scholarship 'made every difference' for one of the interviewees, who otherwise would not have been able to attend. Once she had received her scholarship she commented: 'it was like I'm already here ... I could see myself among *ifu* women. It was great. I was very happy'.

With comments such as: 'you can look forward to an ambitious, high-quality and highly diverse teaching and research programme,'[33] interviewees expected *ifu* to be an opportunity to pursue both classroom learning and research. Three specific resources in which interviewees identified a lack of concrete support, however, were library access, computer facilities, and childcare.

Sandra felt unsupported when she arrived at *ifu* to find that 'no babysitting' had been organised for children her child's age and that she would 'have to pay' or raise funds from other students for the minimal childcare that would later be organised. She commented: 'you saw in the application that they encouraged mothers with children to apply[34] ... and in the application there was space for babysitter with a day-care centre and I filled that space in ... with this paper and this document they selected me'. She continued: 'when I arrived I found the schedule was very tight, it is not for the mother ... I was lost because I need to take care of (my child), I need the credit also'. Seventy-seven per cent of *ifu*'s assessment was attendance-based. In Rich's discussion she devotes considerable effort to examining the inequities and 'creative and intellectual holding back'[35] a lack of childcare perpetuates. She claims that until such facilities are available within the community, it will be the university's responsibility to provide them. Given the relocation *ifu* required of its participants and therefore their lack of access to existing community facilities, I believe that this was particularly crucial.

Not having full borrower status at Hanover University libraries and thus not being able to take books home from the Hanover University or *ifu* collections restricted interviewees' ability to do concentrated study and significantly impinged on the quality of their project work. Since these libraries were open for only restricted hours, interviewees often felt they had to choose between their project work and other classes.

Three months is an ambitious timeframe in which to expect students to complete original research. Such a project requires

organisation and preparation. *ifu*'s self-presentation drew attention to the need for such preparation: 'In general, it will be necessary to do some preparatory work before coming to *ifu*'.[36] Prior to attending *ifu*, however, participants were not provided with guidelines regarding this preparation, nor supported in their efforts to do so. A number of the interviewees corresponded with *ifu* in an attempt to clarify this expectation, but did not receive replies. During the three-month term the aims and assessment requirements for participants' projects and attendance also changed. As a result, interviewees felt unprepared when they arrived and found it very difficult to gain a sense of satisfaction from their project work. Sharing limited access to approximately fifty slow computers with the approximately 450 *ifu* students located in Hanover was extremely difficult and affected interviewees' ability to communicate with family and friends throughout their time at *ifu*.

What was absent at the *ifu*, despite its promises of intellectual and material support for students, was access to a 'brilliant and creative woman teacher'[37] with the power to give not only intellectual guidance, but also concrete assistance and support. This resulted in interviewees sometimes experiencing *ifu* as an exploitative hierarchy, the type of tertiary institution which Rich critiques.

ifu and Feminism

Participants had come to a university that described itself as 'a bold innovation by, for and about women',[38] a university that claimed that 'a background in women's and/or gender research will constitute a plus'[39] and that 'the findings and demands of women's and gender research are an important point of reference for the scientific work'.[40] In the light of these claims, several of the interviewees expected that *ifu* would demonstrate an awareness of feminist thought in the following respects: that it would attend to feminist political challenges and foster debate on feminist political issues, and that it would demonstrate a sensitivity towards feminist principles within its organisational structure.

Ida commented: 'I expected that we will discuss actual feminist and political, and that's what I mean with feminist, political issues … I expected also, because of the announcements and promises and the booklet with the application form, to meet other feminist researchers, scientists, artists, activists, social workers et cetera … well at the

beginning I had, first of all, to realise that it wasn't a feminist project at all, on the level of contents but also on the structural level'. Coming to *ifu* as a feminist activist, Ida felt that there was little opportunity for her to develop her political awareness. To her mind, the understanding of gender and the representation of Women's Studies promoted within the curriculum and institutional structure of *ifu* were very restricted and prohibited political action. She commented: 'it is very difficult to increase the life quality of women and girls as a common interest but that doesn't exclude us from discussing what is meant with "woman", what is meant with "girl", and also what are the differences in us *ifu* participants, thought of as being a homogeneous group because we belong to the same gender'.

Maria expressed a similar concern in terms of research strategies and the undermining of hierarchy. She said: 'well if we think of feminism in terms of different research strategies, like different approaches, and these undermining hierarchies, then it was not feminist. There was an attempt, because we were on first name terms with our Dean and with our tutors and it was in some ways very informal and friendly. On the other hand, we still had to fight for those credit points ... the roles were very ambiguous'. Barbara related these difficulties to time restrictions: 'what I have said right from the start and this gets now clearer and clearer to me is that it's really very crucial to just have more time and space in a feminist encounter for actually discussing or coming up with solutions'.

Ida linked these absences to the fact that the World Expo 2000, which she identified as a neoliberal organization, was amongst *ifu*'s principal sponsors. 'They (*ifu*) had also to set up a programme with which they could raise more money, they knew that and I think that there are moments where we make compromises and we saw them'. Ida claimed that this relationship also contributed to *ifu*'s refusal to endorse the 'open letter for our sisters in Afghanistan', which questioned political developments affecting women. When asked how this had come about Ida commented: 'because it (the letter) is a political resolution and *ifu* is not a political institution but an academic one. That is a separation, which you can find everywhere on the structural level of *ifu*, that I don't agree with'.

Rich comments that 'a university responsive to women's needs would serve the needs of the human, visible community in which it sits'.[41] Clearly this community includes all the participants within

the university itself. Community in this sense presented *ifu* with the challenge that its participant community spanned the globe and therefore so did their concerns. Rich suggests that[42] a feminist activist should understand her political responsibility to other women to be inseparable from her responsibility to herself. Its commitment to internationality meant that, as a university, the *ifu* required a global political consciousness, one in balance with its sense of geographical locality. Participants were not convinced that it had actually achieved this internationality.

Self-presentation and the Challenges of Feminist Pedagogy

My aim has not been to offer a definitive or representative interpretation of the experience of those participating in *ifu*. Indeed, there are as many diverse interpretations and representations possible as there were *ifu* participants. I suggest, however, that the critiques offered by my interviewees trouble *ifu's* self-presentation and throw into question the opportunities that *ifu* claimed it would provide its participants. These disruptions should be viewed as productive and innovative.

The epistemological basis underpinning the *ifu* engages with feminist social and political analyses, such as the analysis of women-centred education offered by Adrienne Rich. This feminist foundation, however, is not explicitly articulated within *ifu's* self-presentation. *ifu* fell short of its innovative potential to integrate feminist epistemology and pedagogy into the curriculum, processes and implementation of the programme.

Clearly represented in *ifu's* self-presentation are many innovative and progressive intentions. However, the organisers needed to pay more attention to how these ideas could be implemented. Teaching methods and institutional structures were often in tension with *ifu's* intentions as articulated in publicity material. I suggest that the pilot term of *ifu* shows the importance of creating learning processes that embody such organisations' stated innovative and progressive aims so that those ideas can be successfully achieved.

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Notes

[1] Portions reprinted from '*Corporealities: In(ter)ventions in an Omnipresent Topic*', Bodybook Editorial Collective (Eds) (in press) by kind permission of Ulrike Helmer.

[2] Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) (2000a): Welcome to ifu (printed pamphlet), pp. 8–9.

[3] Adrienne Rich (1973)'Toward a Woman-Centered University', reprinted in: '*On Lies, Secrets & Silence*' (Virago, London, 1980).

[4] Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) (2000b): www.vifu.de (printed pamphlet), Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) (2000c): http://www.vifu.de/ snapshot March–April 2000, Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) (2000d): International Women's University: Technology and Culture (printed pamphlet), Internationale Frauen Universität (ifu) (2000e): Course Programme (printed pamphlet).

[5] ifu 2000d.

[6] Blossom Hart & Victoria Grace, 'Fatigue in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome', *Health Care for Women International*, 21(3), (2000), pp. 187–201.

[7] Jonathan Potter & Margaret Wetherell, *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour* (Sage, London, 1987).

[8] *ibid.*

[9] *ifu* presented Open Space as follows: 'OPEN SPACE is *ifu*'s public forum. On eight Fridays during the *ifu* semester, students from all six project areas will meet together with an international and local public. The venue for the Open Space events will be the Culture and Communication Center Pavilion in Hanover'. (ifu 2000c).

[10] *Internationale Frauen Universität* (*ifu*) (2000f): Excursions (printed pamphlet).

[11] ifu 2000c.

[12] In this paper I have placed keywords, phrases and quotations from the interviewees in 'quotes'.
[13] All names used to refer to interviewees are pseudonyms. These have been omitted where the total information contained in the article could make the interviewee identifiable.
[14] Rich (1973) p. 139.
[15] *ibid.* p. 127.
[16] *ibid.* pp. 135, 140.
[17] *ibid.* pp. 143–144.
[18] *ibid.* p. 136.
[19] *ibid.* p. 138.
[20] *ibid.* p. 133.
[21] *ibid.* p. 128.
[22] *ibid.* p. 131.
[23] *ibid.* p. 131.
[24] *ibid.* p. 134.
[25] ifu 2000c.
[26] Rich (1973) pp. 133–134.
[27] *ibid.* pp. 145, 151.
[28] *ibid.* p. 134.
[29] 'Self-organised' is the term interviewees used to refer to events or actions organised by *ifu* participants in their own time and with their own resources.
[30] Rich (1973) pp. 125–126.
[31] ifu 2000a pp. 8–9.
[32] ibid. p. 143.
[33] ifu 2000a pp. 8–9.
[34] This statement was included in the 'Welcome to ifu' document participants received after their acceptance: 'The special needs of accompanying children will be considered as well. (ifu 2000a p. 13)'.
[35] Rich (1973) p. 147.
[36] ifu 2000c.
[37] Rich (1973) pp. 139, 145.
[38] ifu 2000a pp. 8–9.
[39] ifu 2000c.
[40] ifu 2000d.
[41] Rich (1973) p. 152.
[42] Rich (1973) p. 154.

'Fractured and Authentic': A layered account of rape crisis pedagogy

JEAN RATH

This written text cannot recreate the lived experience of this article as conference paper. For the conference I employed readings from differently coloured papers with the simultaneous display of text on overhead projectors, which were not 'talked to' in the usual style of conference presentation. For this written version, I have fashioned a piece that includes, variously throughout the paper, texts that were necessary for the conference performance. The text is structured in 'layers' that are scripted together to form a single tale that retains inviting spaces for the active reader. There is a clear narrative providing a critical approach to research writing and to generation of a printed text arising from hypertext. There is also a variety of layers relating to the rape crisis movement in the United Kingdom. This includes direct quotations from interviews with rape crisis counsellors and trainee counsellors, texts from rape crisis publications, poems arising from the research process and reflections regarding the process of research and the production of text. I invite readers to work with this juxtaposing of textual layers to create their personal readings.

> Although we usually think about writing as a mode of 'telling' about the social world, writing is not just a mopping-up activity at the end of a research project. Writing is also a way of 'knowing' – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it.[1]

This paper is performative, it unsettles the 'science'/'art' interface. It is a script for/of/arising from a research process. It is re-presented by the juxtaposing of various genres, which serve to structure the unfolding of a story of 'The Research'. It recognises that *each* written word and *each* spoken word is performative, and not just those elements that could be labelled as 'experimental'.[2]

And yet ...

I need to emphasise now that this paper is experimental. It is offered not as a proof or assertion of truth but as a trial or test.

THE RAPE CRISIS 'MOVEMENT'
There are over one hundred Rape Crisis Centres in the UK.
The centres provide services for women and children who are survivors of sexual violence.
Most centres offer telephone crisis counselling, and a variety of other services, e.g. long term counselling; advice on specialist services such as HIV testing, legal procedures.
This is achieved mainly through the use of unpaid volunteers with a small number of paid staff.
Traditionally rape crisis centres were founded by local women in response to needs of the local community.
1996 saw the establishment of federations for rape crisis centres in England and Wales, and for Ireland and Scotland.

I have A Thing about layered texts. At the touch of a button my computer spews forth pages of onion-skinned texts. Layers and layers of brittle transparency. Peeling and peeling until there is nothing left.

Layered texts are a cage in which I sit.

Layered texts are an aeroplane in which I fly.

Layered texts are the nozzles through which I extrude my, so-called, research 'findings' into The World.

And yet … I am twelve thousand miles from 'home'. Those other conference papers are now left behind. Nobody in this room has ever seen this trick before … my trick. My regular-performing-dog-clever-clever-walking-on-the-hind-legs-of-my-own-tongue-trick-

I imagine how it will be …

RAPE CRISIS TRAINING
Most centres provide initial training internally for volunteer workers
Some outside expertise is provided by external speakers
All workers receive on-the-job instruction

There is great variation in the time spent on initial training

- 30 to 420 hours for paid staff
- up to 500 for volunteer staff
- average 97 hours for paid staff
- average 61 hours for volunteer staff

My research is 'about' the stories women tell about personal change when asked to recollect initial rape crisis counsellor training. It is also 'about' the development of a collaborative, context-bound, approach to feminist qualitative research that takes into account Patti Lather's[3] call for feminists to 'get smart' about research practices within the postmodern.

As a feminist I am committed to the production of research-based texts that do justice to the complexity and uniqueness of the stories that I have been told. However, I am also aware of the need to take into account the *crisis of representation* facing qualitative research, and to acknowledge the inscriptive difficulty of producing such a text with/in the current climate of educational theorising.

people make their own discoveries

(Because I wouldn't describe myself as a trainer, I would describe myself as an enabler)
you've just got to be there
the second you hear something,
sense something,
see them look at something,
see them listen to something,
see them hear something.
So that you say 'yes'
and help them on

This paper takes the form of a 'layered account'[4] arising from electronic hypertext that in its turn arises from qualitative research generated materials. A layered account is a postmodern ethnographic reporting technique. It is an attempt to focus on the complex ambiguities of power, language, communication and interpretation at the intersection of researcher and research participant. The layered account seeks to interweave the different voices of the researcher and the research subjects throughout the text. In the layered account taken-for-granted-meanings are questioned and the reader/listener is invited into the text to fill the empty spaces which are deliberately left for her to construct her own interpretations.

The layered account seeks to undo the scripting of the research text as a report of information about 'reality'. It highlights the 'slipperiness' of the research endeavour once it has been re-focused, practices are viewed as inscriptions of legitimation, which are to take

into account the productivity of language. Here research practices are viewed as inscriptions of legitimation, which are intimately related to the politics of what constitutes 'knowledge'.

TYPES OF TRAINING CARRIED OUT AT UNITED KINGDOM RAPE CRISIS CENTRES[5]
Counselling skills - 98%
Issues training - 93%
Sexual violence and sexuality - 93%
Racism - 55%
Feminist theory and practice - 52%
Legal discrimination - 50%
Other - 57%

safety stuff

I can still feel the instances
Either you cop out
or open your big mouth.
Stick your head over the parapet.
Somebody says run.
You start running
You get half way
and you're being fired at.
I wanted to run back.

In crafting this paper I am aware of my ethical responsibilities. I am poised between the postmodernist impulse to interrogate the author and challenge distinctions between fact and fiction, and the feminist impulse to give voice to those who have been silenced. I am concerned to develop what Laurel Richardson[6] calls a 'progressive-postmodernist rewriting' that lessens my authority over the stories of others, but retains the responsibility of authorship.

This tale moves to discover knowledge about the stories told by research participants, and to recover and value knowledges that have been suppressed by existing social science epistemologies (for example as with Trinh's[7] use of proverbs and stories). As the writer of this text, I am ethically charged to ensure that all participants recognise those aspects that concern them as valid within their own perceptions. That is to say, I wish to respect stories through privileging not their 'accuracy', but rather their ability to represent that which the

respondents wish to be told. I am interested in developing ways of accounting for rape crisis pedagogy by employing means accrued by 'individual women'. This writing/reading/scripting of participants' stories is a way to fulfil responsibilities to the women involved without retreating into a patronising sentimentality. Yet, I realise that in order to do this I have to risk the 'necessary invasions and misuses of telling other people's stories'.[8] This tale inevitably foregrounds the lack of confidence that any researcher must have in telling any story.

MY RAPE CRISIS CURRICULUM VITAE	
1984	Train and then work as a counsellor for a pro-abortion choice telephone help line, share offices with a Rape Crisis Centre consider training as a Rape Crisis counsellor.
1985	Move to a new area. In response to an advertisement in the local newspaper, attend a Rape Crisis information evening.
1985–86	Train as Rape Crisis counsellor; begin counselling; join management group.
1986	Move back to previous area return to abortion counselling.
1987	Move again; rejoin Rape Crisis Centre as counsellor and collective member.
1989	Cease counselling as birth of first child approaches.
1989–92	Not actively counselling but carry out some training work and occasional telephone support for counsellors.
1992	Accept paid work as Rape Crisis co-ordinator. This involves administrative, counselling and training duties.
1992–93	Member of Rape Crisis national federating group.
1995	Leave paid Rape Crisis work to accept post at Warwick University. Continue to be involved in collective and facilitate aspects of the training course.
1996	Run workshop on survivors in remote and rural areas at Rape Crisis Federation for England and Wales launch in Manchester.
1997 onwards	Continue with Rape Crisis training work and collective work focusing on future developments.

you get to that stage
then the antipathy begins
because you have to encourage them to understand
it isn't
anything to do with reason
there is no rationality
perhaps the antipathy comes because
they have to look at themselves

I am in my office sorting through old files. I come across the most amazing find, a set of notes that I must have written when I was telephone counselling at the Rape Crisis Centre. It was a long and complicated call. I must have needed notes to help me keep track. Nothing identifies the caller's identity – in fact, I don't think that I ever knew her name. I have been working for nearly three years on the evocative presentation of research texts – could I craft something from these notes? Or perhaps my question needs to be *should* I craft something? This closely packed scrawl names no names, but it is nonetheless intimately revelatory. This is an intimate document of the negotiated meaning formed by the dialogue between the two of us. This tight package of words and doodles is my filtering of her spoken words – my script of her enunciations.

'Part of you is your mum and dad saying:
"Oh well she was a tarty trollop no wonder it happened to her."
You're not necessarily thinking that, it's just there in your mind.
Influencing how you think.'

I want a text that presents the doing-ness of rape crisis work. This is a vital position from which to understand the building of this research. If I craft a text from these notes it will carry an emotional charge *for me* that resonates with the doing of Rape Crisis work. In a very important way this is what the training is for. The training helps women to prepare for these moments of listening to a survivor. As a counsellor I listened to this woman, I attempted to create a safe space for her to talk of and to her experiences. When we spoke I wrote notes because I needed a text to help me hold on to what she was saying. I had no intention of using these notes for any other purpose. What right do I have to re-present this text here? I am not the first researcher/writer to find myself facing this dilemma. Michelle Fine[9] uses her five-hour conversation with a rape survivor,

'Altamese Thomas', whom she saw in her capacity as a volunteer rape counsellor, to structure her arguments about the appropriateness of individualistic ways of coping with sexual violence. When I read Fine's text I had a 'gut feeling' of ethical discomfort. I wondered what it would be like for Altamese to stumble across Fine's words and, perhaps, find herself there.

Yet, I *will* craft something from these found notes of a long past counselling session – but that does not mean that I am comfortable doing so.

> no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew.[10]

I PRAYED 'Please God, stop this happening. Just let me die.'
I just want to be held for it to be appropriate – I just want to be held without having to offer purity.
I don't feel like a woman anymore.
And suicide would be an off button.
My sister's anger is like a wall that I can't break through.
I feel like they're all watching me. Waiting for me to be a 'victim.'
I dream about him and when I wake up I can smell him in the house.
I don't know how to solve myself anymore.
It's come into everything.
Parts of that night are always there. Freeze-framed in my mind.
I can still smell him, alcohol, vomit, body odour, a staleness. I can almost taste him.
It makes it worse telling people – it makes him real again.
It was an ordinary day. I decided to walk home.
I can only react to what he did, rather than think about what happened.
He said that he would find me again and kill me.
Somehow I still believe that he will kill me. He won't be in prison for ever.
I can still feel his hand over my mouth.
There's this fear inside me just growing.
I can hear his voice smothering me.
Did I signal to him that I'm a lesbian? Is that why he did it?
They let me look at the forensic pictures. That verified that it was that

awful. That was how he saw me.
The photos they just represent pain. They're not me, they're not a person.
I can't remember what life was like before.
I was just a vehicle for his rage.
I can't remember if I was quiet.
I remember feeling scared, then terror.
It was so physical. I bit my tongue, then there was blood in my mouth.
There was light at the end of the tunnel – but I couldn't see it I couldn't get to it.
And all the time his smell.
Nothing is automatic anymore.
When I sit down to eat I think of what he did.
I've lost my body.
It's not getting any easier.
I'm screaming but I'm not making any sound.
I'm looking for somewhere to get under – like a dog does.
It's a place I'll never get out of.
I feel like a sponge that soaked him up.
I'm two people now.
I'm totally contaminated.
He owns the space I stand in.
I keep feeling him here now.
I feel like reacting to this rape is all I've ever done.
I want to connect to myself but I keep connecting to him.
I am a powerful woman and I can silence his voice.
I just can't push the words out far enough.

> (T)he exploration of new complex subjectivities and problematising of the subject in contemporary theory can be best carried out through poetical language – as long as poetical language is not equated with a mere aestheticising tool nor practised as a place to consolidate a 'subjective' self. In poetry, the 'I' can never be said to simply personify an individual.[11]

There is a great deal of experimental writing going on in qualitative research. Including poetry, dramatic performance, new journalistic techniques and auto/biographical works. I work with the layered account and the multiplication within it as a way of structuring a research process that arises from working with texts within an electronic medium.[12] This is not to say that this is the only form of

text that could arise from the hypertext, indeed other forms have emerged.[13] I have argued elsewhere[14] that the theory and practice of electronic data analysis has been modelled to fit within existing notions of reading, writing, and the attendant culture of qualitative research practice. I follow Ulmer[15] in arguing that hypertext is more than a mere example of 'mixed genres'. I use the layered account formula as it allows the writer to move between different genres within one piece of writing. It has the high flexibility that is necessary if hypertext is to be re-constructed as a printed textual piece. Furthermore, although this paper arises from the hypertext, it constantly acknowledges itself to be a *construction* rather than a *reflection* of the hypertext.

very feminist right on girlies

in their jackets
with their demo flags
and all the rest of it.
these were different women
that is what I had been
I had been stomping
and fighting
it was very different
and it was very angry

This account of rape crisis pedagogy is not, cannot be, a single unified narrative. The Rape Crisis Centre and the pedagogy generated by/for trainee counsellors consist of many cross-cutting interests and diversities. Likewise, this account needs to take a form that allows for its diversity to be taken into account. The stories that surround rape crisis counsellor training are not straightforward. Whilst I perform some of the common themes that are important in forging an understanding of women's experiences of rape crisis counsellor training, I wish to retain an awareness of the significant differences between these tales. Therefore, care has been taken to retain these and not to work toward some false consensus view. I agree with Jane Flax's[16] caution with regard to consensual discourse:

> Even consensus is not completely innocent, since traces of force may be found in the history of any set of rules that attain and maintain binding effects.[17]

For this reason the paper, this event of 'giving a paper', positively interrupts itself. Whilst recognising that these so-called interruptions are a necessary part of 'the story'. That is to say, the narratives of rape crisis training require all these strands in order to 'make sense'.

> Rape Crisis counsellor training has to be designed to develop competent counsellors
> ... However ...
> It is also concerned with the personal development of the individual women involved

'And you did feel, not on trial exactly, but that you were being judged on what you said, and that what you were saying was being watched. When you said things you felt that although there was no response the person was going "tsk, well fancy them thinking that. I'll have to change her view on that before the end of the course." ... I'm sure that wasn't true but it was what you felt.'

The hypertext from which this paper is derived was produced in collaboration with research participants. I found, as have other writers who produce evocative texts, that participants have a preference for a text that adheres to the verbatim accounts gathered during the interviewing process.

> Factual authenticity relies heavily on the Other's words and testimony. To authenticate a work, it becomes therefore most important to prove or make evident how this Other has participated in the making of his/her own image.[18]

This multiple and layered text uses experimental and evocative writing to weave together the many voices of the research process whilst recognising the multiplicity of each strand to be woven. It draws attention to the politics of knowing and being known. It is written to foreground that both content and form communicate meaning, and to prompt questions about the authorisation of knowledge. Through refusing to seduce the reader with the appeal of familiarity and self-consciously playing the author/reader/text symbiotic relationship I seek to 'both get out of the way and in the way',[19] and thereby escape scripting a seemingly unmediated account of research 'events' and 'data'. Textual effects cannot be stripped away to expose some core

or kernel, there is none to reveal. Meaning is dispersed throughout the text, through the inseparable interplay of content-meaning.

It was challenging lots and lots of things

I couldn't hack it.
I had to stop.
I just felt like–
I had nothing.
Nothing I could get hold of.
Nothing I could rely on
It was good.
I didn't think it was.
I didn't think it was good.
It wasn't how I wanted it to be.
I couldn't see where it was going
or what we were doing
or what we were achieving.
I couldn't get a grip on it.
Which was its virtue.

'And the other recurring theme was of all of us going to the pub afterwards. That used to be really good, and I wanted it to last longer. It felt naughty. It always felt like we shouldn't – we weren't allowed to do it. We were meant to go home and not speak. But that bit of camaraderie between us worked, in that we all would turn up because we were supported. We did end up talking about a lot of personal stuff. It was like a throwing up thing you know. Like an emotional cleansing thing really.'

> Can a theory express an emotion? It can if cognition itself is emotional.... And this emotional dimension of comprehension is precisely what is in need of exposure, such that to tell us about cognition without making us at the same time experience it emotionally would be to give a false account.[20]

'The sessions sometimes were quite structured. But [in the pub] afterwards we'd talk amongst ourselves about how we felt about things. I think the fact that we could sit and talk and discuss with each other our feelings was quite helpful. It reinforced how I felt about things. I remember especially talking about stuff if somebody was upset about something that we'd talked about that evening. I think in the pub, because we

were well bonded and got on really well, we felt safe in that whatever we said the others wouldn't judge you. And if you were a bit unsure about something you could throw it in and see what people's reaction was without feeling that someone would ridicule you. I think everybody got more out of it, from the fact that we were seeing each other not just in the confines of the training. So we developed a lot outside.'

You may have noticed that many of the text's layers take the form of poems. The poems all use the words as transcribed from interviews with rape crisis trainee counsellors, practising counsellors and trainers. The words are produced in the same order, with no additions, with no extra repetitions and with the emphasis as heard on the tape recordings. The exception to this is the long poem-like sequence, beginning *I PRAYED 'Please God ...'*, this was generated from my notes made when counselling a rape survivor, here the words used are solely those scribbled on scraps of paper during a counselling session.

Increasingly qualitative researchers[21] have used poetry to represent interview-generated texts because of poetry's qualities of not shying away from either ambiguity or indeterminancy, and because of poetry's cultural associations with communicating 'the emotional'. Furthermore with/in the postmodern the use of poetry to re-present interview material is important because it foregrounds the role of the prose trope in constituting knowledge:

> When we read or hear poetry, we are continually nudged into recognising that the text has been constructed. But all texts are constructed – prose ones, too; therefore, poetry helps problematize reliability, validity, and 'truth'.[22]

Poetry resists the desire for analytic certainty. It places in the foreground the negotiation of meaning between researcher and participants, and invites/entices the reader into the text in order to take part in the negotiation. Poetry acts to highlight issues around integrating the researcher into the text, whilst also unsettling any easy understanding of what it means to 'give voice' to research participants. In addition there are reasons why poetry is a particularly fitting tool to be used in research 'about' rape crisis pedagogy. There is a tradition of survivors of sexual violence producing emotionally evocative creative texts, including poetry.[23] Often self-help books for survivors include poems,[24] as do books for counsellors and other helpers.[25] Women who are, or who work with, survivors of sexual

violence are accustomed to seeing poetry as a re-presentation of lived experiences.

when you start calling yourself a survivor

I knew I'd been abused,
I knew it I knew it I knew it
I'd always been a survivor

then you start calling yourself a survivor
then you talk about it
then you become 'a survivor'

you don't feel like a bloody survivor
you feel like you're sinking
you don't feel like you're swimming away

that's the beginning of it
And then you have to survive
Before it's just been happening

when you call yourself a survivor
then you're dealing with the shit.
And you don't feel like a survivor
then you think
'fuckin' hell I wish I hadn't bothered'

that's when all the mad stuff goes on

when you start calling yourself a survivor
when you label it
Then you go through all that and go through all that

My previous exposure to poetry as a form of feminist political expression undoubtedly influenced my acceptance of it within the research process. My stance is akin to that adopted by Trinh Minh-ha[26] in relation to the politics of using poetry (in her case she is writing of poetry in anti-racist work rather than related to sexual violence). I agree that we need to carry this awareness of the poetic to our analytic work in order to acknowledge how theory can relate intimately to poetry:

> Theorists tend to react strongly against poetry today because for them, poetry is nothing but a place where subjectivity is consolidated and

where language is estheticised (such as building vocabulary and rhyming beautiful lines). Whereas poetry is also the place from which many people of color voice their struggle. Consider Cuban and African poetry, for example ... So poetical language does become stale and self-indulgent when it serves an art-for-art's-sake purpose, but it can also be the site where language is at its most radical in its refusal to take itself for granted.[27]

> For there are signs of newer and diverse stories in the making which shun unities and uniformities: reject naturalism and determinancies; seek out immanences and ironies; and ultimately find pastiche, complexities and shifting perspectives.[28]

I imagine what it will be like to stand up front, to be the somebody whom everybody is watching. It will be cool and bright and there will be women sitting on institutional plastic chairs. Some will look really keen and ready to listen, and some will look reluctant, as if they are there under duress or at least against their better judgement.

So, that's what it'll be like when I first walk on and I don't know anyone. That's what it'll be like before I get to know them, before I can be sure of whether they know how to behave, and I am still wary of their good will and they are still wary of mine. And then ten minutes later, I will know them all, and each woman will act the part I ask of her according to the terms of the agreement as a 'good audience'. And I will know who to look at, look to, for the meaning of what I am saying, because I do not know. The words leave my mouth and fly away into the audience seeking to hit upon their meanings.

You know, you forget that just being you is doing the job

perhaps if we can hang on to the end
perhaps it'll all be revealed at the end

Then suddenly we're there on the phones
doing it ... thinking
'I can't remember changing into a counsellor'

This paper is intimately related to an article published in the journal *Gender and Education*.[29] Both pieces take the form of a 'layered account', and both are a scripted performance of the research hypertext. However the electronic contour followed is not identical.

JEAN RATH *lectures in Professional Development at Christchurch College of Education. I moved to Aotearoa New Zealand from the United Kingdom in January 2001. I carried on my journey a variety of excitements and incitements regarding feminist research and writing. The substantive focus of this article arises from doctoral work carried out in the United Kingdom, however there are many resonances with living issues within Aotearoa New Zealand. I have a longstanding commitment to working with survivors of sexual violence and a shorter standing, but also heartfelt, commitment to exploring just how far the academic text can be stretched before it snaps. My current 'experiments' cluster around feminist/postmodernist understandings of biographies in relation to reflexive teaching, learning and research.*

Notes

1 Laurel Richardson, 'Writing: A Method of Inquiry', in Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Sage, Thousand Oaks, 1994) p. 516.

2 Laurel Richardson, 'Writing Strategies: Reaching Diverse Audiences'. *Qualitative Research Methods*, Volume 21 (Sage, Newbury Park, 1990); Patti Lather, 'Troubling Clarity: The Politics of Accessible Language', *Harvard Educational Review* 66 (1996) pp. 525–45; Norman K. Denzin, 'Sociology at the End of the Century', *The Sociological Quarterly* 37 (1996) pp. 743–52.

3 Patti Lather, *Getting Smart. Feminist Research and Pedagogy With/in the Postmodern* (Routledge, London, 1991).

4 See Carol Rambo Ronai, 'The Reflexive Self through Narrative: A Night in the Life of an Erotic Dancer/researcher', in Carolyn Ellis & Michael Flaherty (eds), *Investigating Subjectivity: Research on Lived Experience* (Sage, London, 1992) pp. 102–24; Carol Rambo Ronai, 'Multiple Reflections of Child Sex Abuse', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 23 (1995) pp. 395–426; Carol Rambo Ronai, 'My mother is Mentally Retarded', in Carolyn Ellis & Arthur P. Bochner (eds), *Composing Ethnography* (Altamira Press, London, 1996) pp. 109–31.

5 Joanne Moore & Gill Whitting, *Review of the Needs of Rape Crisis Centres (and Related Services)*, Interim Report ed. (Charities Evaluation Services, London, 1993) Appendix 1.

6 Laurel Richardson (1990) p. 27.

7 Minh-Ha Trinh T., *When The Moon Waxes Red: Representation, Gender and Cultural Politics* (Routledge, London, 1991); Minh-Ha Trinh T., *Framer Framed* (Routledge, London, 1992).

8 Patti Lather & Chris Smithies, *Troubling The Angels: Women living with HIV/AIDS* (Westview Press, Oxford, 1997) p. xiv.

[9] Michelle Fine, *Disruptive Voices: The Possibilities of Feminist Research* (The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1992).

[10] Michelle Fine, 'Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research', in Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Sage, Thousand Oaks, 1994) p.70, quoting from bell hooks.

[11] Minh-Ha Trinh T. (1992) p.121.

[12] Jean Rath, '(Hyper)text, Analysis and Method: Notes on the Construction of an Ethnographic Hypermedia Environment: Stories of Rape Crisis Counsellor Training', in G. Walford (ed.), *Debates and Developments in Ethnographic Methodology: Studies in Educational Ethnography*, vol. 6 (2002, forthcoming).

[13] e.g. Jean Rath, *Getting Smarter? Inventing Feminist Research/writing with/in the Postmodern,* unpublished PhD dissertation (Warwick University, Coventry, 1999a); Jean Rath, 'A CATTt and its Tale: Re-presenting Rape Crisis Counsellor Training', unpublished paper, *Little Stories/Small Tales/Educational Research*, BERA Educational and Social Justice Group Invited Seminar, (Stoke Rochford, 1999b); Jean Rath, '(Hyper)text and Method: Notes on the Construction of an Ethnographic Hypermedia Environment. The Case of Rape Crisis Initial Counsellor Training', unpublished paper, *Oxford Ethnography and Education Conference* (Oxford University, 2000); Jean Rath, 'Representing Feminist Educational Research with/in the Postmodern: Stories of Rape Crisis training', *Gender and Education* 13 (2001) pp. 117–135.

[14] Jean Rath (1999a).

[15] Gregory Ulmer, *Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys* (John Hopkins University Press, London, 1985); Gregory Ulmer, *Teletheory* (Routledge, London, 1989); Gregory Ulmer, *Heuretics: The Logic of Invention* (John Hopkins University Press, London, 1994).

[16] Jane Flax, 'The end of Innocence', in Judith Butler & Joan W. Scott (eds), *Feminists Theorize The Political* (Routledge, London, 1992) pp. 445–63.

[17] Jane Flax (1992) pp. 452–453.

[18] Minh-Ha Trinh T. (1991).

[19] Patti Lather, 'Troubling Clarity: The Politics of Accessible Language', *Harvard Educational Review* 66 (1996) pp. 25–45; Patti Lather & Chris Smithies (1997).

[20] Gregory Ulmer (1989) p.109.

[21] e.g. Laurel Richardson, 'Poetics, Dramatics and Transgressive Validity: The Case of the Skipped Line', *The Sociological Quarterly* 34, (1993) pp. 695–710; Laurel Richardson (1994) pp. 516–29; Laurel Richardson, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life* (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1997); Deborah A. Austin, 'Kaleidoscope: The Same and Different', in Carolyn Ellis & Arthur P. Bochner (eds) (1996) pp. 206–30.

[22] Laurel Richardson (1994) p. 522.

[23] e.g. Ellen Bass & Louise Thornton (eds), *I Never Told Anyone: Writings by Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse* (HarperPerennial, New York, 1991); Caroline Malone, Linda Farthing & Lorraine Marce, *The Memory Bird* (Vi-

rago, London, 1996).

[24] e.g. Deirdre Walsh & Rosemary Liddy, *Surviving Sexual Abuse* (Attic Press, Dublin, 1989); Bass and Davis, (1988).

[25] e.g. Jeannie McIntee, *Trauma: The Psychological Process* (Chester Therapy Centre, Chester, 1992).

[26] Minh-Ha Trinh T. (1992).

[27] *ibid.*, p. 154.

[28] Ken Plummer, *Telling Sexual Stories. Power Change and Social Worlds* (Routledge, London, 1995) p.133.

[29] Jean Rath (2001).

'Plains FM gave me dreams ... and dreams came true': Women and Community Access Radio

ROWAN JEFFREY

'Plains FM gave me dreams ... and dreams came true' are the words of Yuko, a Japanese student of English who became a volunteer at Plains FM 96.9, the Christchurch community access radio station. Soon she was producing her own programme about Japanese life and culture, which aimed to challenge stereotypes about Japanese people and to promote understanding between cultures. By the time she left New Zealand, Yuko had not only learnt some valuable radio skills, she had improved her conversational English, met a variety of 'kiwi' people and was aiming for a career in media in Japan. Yuko's experience is only one of the many stories told by women at Plains FM of lives enabled or enhanced in some way by their involvement with the station.

This paper is based on my PhD research – a study of the involvement of women at Plains FM. Through analysis of station literature and the narratives of fifty-one women involved with Plains as volunteers, programme-makers and paid staff members, my research explores how women at Plains make sense of the station, and their participation in its operations. However, this paper offers only a brief overview of that research and indicates some of the interesting questions and issues that arise from my analysis of interviewees' narratives.

The theoretical framework for my study is that of feminist post-structuralism, therefore I pay attention to the discursive constructions in operation at the station, that is, how language is used by women at Plains to explain how the station operates and what it aims to achieve, and how women use language to make sense of their own experiences of Plains. In particular, I am interested in the way participants position themselves as subjects, and the ways that tensions inherent within the subject positions they claim pose challenges for individual women and for the present and future operation of the station.

Because my study aims to pay attention to both women's individual reported experience at Plains FM, and the social, cultural and political power relations that drive broadcasting and media in

Aotearoa/New Zealand, two contextual factors are relevant. The first is the relationship between women and the media and the second is the positioning of Plains FM within the general mediascape of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

A survey of the feminist literature on women and the media reveals a history of exclusion and marginalisation. Since the 1970s, the central issues for feminists have been the representation of women and gender in media content, and the participation of women in media production, planning and decision-making. With regard to representation, Gaye Tuchman[1] argued that the stereotypical depiction, trivialisation and absence of women's lives, interests and issues in media content amounted to 'symbolic annihilation' of women. In her use of the same phrase 'symbolic annihilation' to describe the way the media portray women politicians in 1990s Aotearoa/New Zealand, media critic Judy MacGregor[2] suggests that, despite 'the changed nature of female participation in public life', the media still have a long way to go towards fair and diverse representation of women.

Feminists have also expressed ongoing concerns about women's participation in media production and management. In the early 1980s, Margaret Gallagher[3] talked about 'impoverished patterns of female participation' in the worldwide media, a situation that by the mid-1990s she claimed had not radically changed.[4] Although Gallagher[5] acknowledges increased numerical participation of women in media jobs, she points out that women are still under-represented in technical production work and in decision-making positions within the global media.

Since the 1970s, feminist critiques of media have developed from a simplistic assumption that more women working in the media would automatically improve the representation of women's lives and concerns, to a more complex analysis of the factors that contribute to media content production. These analyses[6] argue that employing more women in media production will not necessarily improve representations of women because factors like organisational culture, conventional practices, ideas about what constitutes quality and professionalism, and the political, economic and regulatory contexts within which organisations operate also influence content. Any strategies for changing media representations must therefore consider the complex interaction of contextual and cultural factors that contribute to the processes of creating media products.

Feminists have generally adopted two main strategies to improve the representation and participation of women in media: working to change the values and practices within mainstream media organisations and/or establishing or participating in non-mainstream media ventures where alternative values, structures and practices can be implemented. The question then arises: what constitutes 'mainstream' media? I am using the term mainstream to denote those media organisations whose philosophies and values derive from dominant and established media discourses. Broadcasting in this country has historically been dominated by two competing discourses: one of public service broadcasting loosely based on the BBC Reithian model that promotes use of the media for the 'public good', and the other a free market discourse which promotes commercial use of the airwaves and active competition between media outlets for audiences and advertising. Although the relationship between these two discourses is constantly shifting and contested, I would argue that both influence, or have influenced, policy and public understandings and debates about broadcasting to an extent that makes them mainstream.

Community access radio stations like Plains FM, on the other hand, operate within an alternative media sector. Their structures, policies and practices derive from a minority community access media discourse within Aotearoa/New Zealand. Proponents of community access media (the Aotearoa/New Zealand name for what are variously called 'community media', 'citizen's media', 'participatory media' or 'community communications' in the literature) argue that both public service and free market media models fail the ordinary citizen and minority groups within society in a variety of ways.[7] A central complaint is that in both dominant models the media are run by professionals who make decisions about who and what to represent on air. Those decisions may be influenced by profit and ratings concerns, or by government and professional perceptions of what audiences should want to hear or see. Community access discourses challenge these dominant models by asserting that ordinary, non-professional people can and should be able to create and broadcast their own media content.

The literatures on women and media and on community media both suggest that the questions of who gets to speak and what they get to say or hear on radio are important questions of power relations. Power is involved because the ability to participate in radio and other

broadcasting media, represents access to the public spheres of political, social, and cultural debate, where community and societal issues are defined and prioritised and public opinion is formed.[8] The point made by the aforementioned community access proponents is that under the dominance of either public service or competitive market discourses, access to media is unequal: some voices are privileged while others are marginalised or excluded. As a result, the ability of some groups and individuals to define and contribute to the formation of public opinion on cultural and political issues is restricted, and their voices and views are silenced.

By providing alternative programming, community access radio stations aim to serve communities and audiences that are excluded from, or marginalised by, mainstream, mainly commercial media. In this country, Section 36c of the 1989 Broadcasting Act identifies women, children, people with disabilities, and minorities, including ethnic minorities, as groups in our communities that require assistance to gain access to and representation within the media. People from these groups are far less likely to be media producers and creators,[9] they are far less likely to appear as everyday characters in entertainment programmes,[10] as authoritative sources in news items, or as newsmakers, unless, perhaps, they are portrayed in a limited range of stereotypical subject positions.[11] The government attempted to address this marginalisation through the 1989 legislation, by obliging New Zealand on Air (NZOA) to provide broadcasting access for Section 36c groups. Access radio stations like Plains FM benefit directly by receiving fifty to sixty per cent of their funding from NZOA for that purpose.

Plains FM has operated in Christchurch for thirteen years. It is one of eleven community access radio stations throughout the country. Community access stations in Aotearoa/New Zealand are local community-owned and -operated stations that exist to provide community groups and organisations with low-cost access to the facilities, training and technical support needed to broadcast their own programmes.[12] They provide groups with the opportunity to talk on air about issues that concern them, in their own language and in their own way. Over seventy-five groups regularly make and broadcast programmes in seventeen different languages at Plains. Those groups include Samoans, Catholics, environmentalists, school groups, gays and lesbians, Dutch people, Tongans, people with disabilities, Cook

Islanders, minority music enthusiasts, and health activists. The main criterion for access programming is that it is programming unavailable on other media in Christchurch.[13]

Many women at Plains FM also fit into the other special categories identified in Section 36c. They come from a variety of different ethnic, cultural, and religious groups, they span the age spectrum, and they may or may not be able-bodied. Women from the variety of minority groups participating at Plains FM are even less likely to see or hear themselves and their lives represented in mainstream broadcasting than Pakeha heterosexual middle-class women. For those groups, representation and participation in the media symbolise vital stepping stones to their visibility and audibility in the public sphere. What they are denied in the mainstream media they seek through participation as both programme-makers and audience members at Plains FM.

Women in my study draw strongly on community access discourses in their positioning of Plains FM in relation to mainstream media outlets. They emphasise its alternative nature, and the challenges it offers to mainstream media practices and priorities. Because it is community-owned and non profit-making, they position it as independent of the advertiser and ownership influences that commercial media experience. As a result, they suggest, its programming is more relevant, detailed, truthful, educative and innovative than mainstream offerings. In addition, they argue that its participatory nature is empowering and encourages inclusiveness and diversity.

Despite the diverse backgrounds, motivations and experiences of the interviewees in my study, common threads are apparent in their narratives. These threads constitute a discourse of enablement which features strongly in participants' explanations of what Plains FM is achieving or attempting to achieve. Every woman interviewed positions herself as 'enabled' by her experiences at Plains, and many also describe themselves as 'enablers' of others. Several talk about radio enabling or empowering themselves, their communities, and the wider communities within Canterbury, and even New Zealand. Because enablement features so strongly in women's descriptions of Plains, it became the central focus of my study. What follows is an overview of my exploration of a discourse of enablement at Plains FM, how it is constructed and enacted at the station, the subject positions it allows women station participants to claim, and some of

its inherent limitations and tensions.

My use of the term 'enablement' encompasses three elements of meaning: 'making able', 'empowering', and 'supplying the means or resources for action'.[14] All three of these elements are expressed in both the station objectives and the interviewees' narratives. The station aims to make people able to broadcast by training them in technical and practical radio skills, it aims to 'empower' them by ensuring they have editorial control over the content of their programmes, and it supplies resources in the form of studio facilities, recording equipment, funding workshops, and so on. Several programme-makers say that Plains also 'enables them to enable others' by allowing them to broadcast to their communities in their own language in their own culturally appropriate way.

Unsurprisingly, given the diversity of the women involved at Plains, interviewees use different metaphors or descriptors to explain the purposes of programmes broadcast at the station. They portray them variously as a 'lifeline' for the community, as 'identity-affirming', as 'mirroring' the wider community, as a 'forum or platform' for expressing opinions and debating issues, as a 'window' on a particular culture, or as a 'tool' or 'vehicle' for personal development. Women are eclectic in their use of these descriptors, using more than one simultaneously or using different descriptors to explain separate aspects of their participation. Whichever metaphors they use, Plains FM programme-makers' narratives indicate that they operate from an understanding of the enabling power of the media. By making programmes, they are asserting their right to utilise that power for themselves and their communities.

Interviewees identify the station environment and the skills and personal qualities of the station staff as key factors enabling their initial and continued participation at Plains. The most common words used to describe the station environment are 'welcoming', 'supportive' and 'friendly'. Many programme-makers, volunteers and staff position the station as a people-centred environment with a sense of 'community', 'home' and 'belonging'. Most interviewees attribute the welcoming nature of the environment to the 'people-skills' of the paid staff.

Staff members are also positioned in other ways both by themselves and other station users. Their roles as trainers of new broadcasters, programme-makers and volunteers position staff as 'supportive and empathetic teachers' who nurture and encourage developing skills and

confidence by making technology 'easy' and being constructively critical. They also position staff as 'creative professionals' who act as role models and set standards for new broadcasters to reach. One interviewee felt that staff could be 'self-congratulatory' at social events and 'biased' in their approach to different programme making groups. This position was contradicted by other accounts but nevertheless stands as one person's perception of station relationships.

Staff working at the station describe themselves as 'team members' with complementary skills and cooperative working relationships. They position themselves as 'managers' responsible for the smooth running of the station and the implementation of safe, effective and efficient systems and practices. Staff also strongly position themselves as 'community developers', a position that they see driving their approach to work at Plains. The discourse of community development, incorporating elements of community building, community outreach, empowerment, self-determination, participation, inclusiveness, resource sharing and the celebration of diversity, provides the philosophical basis for the station's operation. Staff refer to these community development objectives as the station 'mission' or 'kaupapa' and say that maintaining a people-friendly and enabling environment at the station is part of their commitment to putting that 'kaupapa' into action. They say that they 'make huge efforts' to be inclusive and to treat station participants equally.

Programme makers and volunteers position themselves as becoming personally enabled by their involvement at Plains. In other words, they believe that their experiences at the station have allowed them either to adopt new skills and subject positions, or to develop existing ones. For example, some women say that working at Plains has helped them to become more technically competent and confident and/or to enhance their communication skills. Others emphasise their ability to collect information, assess its relevance to their target community and disseminate it in an accessible form. Some talk of their expanded networks of information contacts and the professionalism they have developed in their approach to programming. Some talk of winning awards, of feeling personally enriched by mastering transferable skills, or by developing personal relationships as part of a Plains FM 'family' or 'community'.

The material I have presented so far focuses strongly on positive aspects of enablement at Plains, but of course the reality of operating

in an organisation made up of a diverse collection of individuals, communities and interest groups, is not so simple. As well as emphasising enablement, women identify obstacles to their full or continued participation at Plains. These obstacles arise from a variety of personal, cultural, social, and economic factors, and impact differently on each individual woman. The financial costs of programme making, the time commitment required to produce 'quality' programming (particularly for those with outside commitments like family and community obligations), and the lack of support from their own communities featured strongly in many women's narratives. Language barriers and self-confidence were emphasised as obstacles many interviewees had personally struggled with, and to a great extent overcome, but also as strong deterrents to other potential women broadcasters.

Although staff identified many of the same obstacles as programme-makers, they tended to put less emphasis on their effects. For example, financial cost and time obstacles featured much more strongly in programme-makers' narratives. They emphasised that ongoing financing of a programme can feel like a constant 'burden' requiring energy and time to overcome. It can also limit the creative and communicative potential of a programme by restricting the range of programme content and the amount of broadcasting time a group can afford to purchase. A key problem here is that many of the obstacles women face are 'hidden' because women continually overcome them and continue to broadcast. Therefore some staff may not be aware of the extent to which some women feel affected by these obstacles. It is axiomatic that the ability of a small community organisation to address obstacles that arise from external social, cultural and political conditions is bound to be severely constrained.

The potential for enablement through voluntary work at Plains FM is also complicated by the ambivalence some women feel about some of the subject positions they occupy at the station. For example, women who present programmes on air become 'public figures'. Although 'going public' is an essential part of the media communication process, the public nature of broadcasting is not always comfortable for women. For some women the public figure position evokes a strong sense of responsibility to produce 'quality' programming, both for their audiences and in order not to 'make a fool' of themselves. Programme-makers from minority groups (most of Plains FM's

Section 36c programmers), can also find that, whether or not they choose or desire such a role, they become positioned as public representatives of their communities. This representative aspect of the public figure position can be problematic because public representatives become exposed to both praise and criticism from within and outside their communities. Because of the scarcity of representations of minority group members and lifestyles in mainstream media, programming on Plains FM is, for many communities, the *only* opportunity to hear relevant information and cultural material in their own language and/or from their own cultural perspective. As a result, community expectations of such programming can be high, and some programmers, as representatives of their community, feel significant responsibility and/or pressure to meet those expectations, however diverse and irreconcilable they may be.

Many interviewees also express ambivalence about their position as unpaid workers at Plains. Programme-makers point out that their contributions to the work of the station are squeezed around other paid and unpaid work commitments, and provided at (financial, time, energy and emotional) cost to themselves and their families. Some women voice a degree of frustration with the huge time commitment required to make each programme, and the lack of appreciation outsiders have for this reality. They assert the significance of their contributions and insist upon the value of their programmes to their communities. Although they acknowledge the lowly status traditionally attached to 'amateur' and unpaid or 'voluntary' work, the majority of interviewees do not attach it to their work. Instead, they challenge dominant perceptions about unpaid work and media professionalism by positioning themselves as 'professional' broadcasters.

Despite its positive connotations for many of the programmers who claim it, the 'professional broadcaster' position also contains inherent tensions that pose some questions and ongoing challenges for the station. One problem centres around the contested nature of the term 'professional'. No formal consensus on the use of the term exists at Plains, partly because individual programming groups operate independently and set their own goals and programme standards, although staff members do talk about minimum technical and content standards that programme-makers need to reach before they broadcast on air. In addition, although many interviewees position their programmes as 'alternative' to mainstream media offerings, their

understandings of professionalism appear to both contest *and* valorise mainstream media definitions. Specifically, they tend to challenge mainstream media conventions about appropriate media content and modes of representation, while simultaneously aspiring to mainstream technical, production and ethical standards. They suggest, therefore, that a commitment to alternative content rather than alternative production techniques or standards is what differentiates Plains FM programming from mainstream broadcasters. This distinction becomes important in the light of interviewees' comments about professionalism at the station.

Several programmers suggest that they experience pressures from staff and audiences to meet 'professional' standards of broadcasting. One woman argues that 'even though we are amateur we have to get more professional in our delivery, because audience expectation (sic) do increase all the time.' The interesting thing is that 'professionalism' in these statements seems to refer to 'delivery' factors like technical production and sound quality, a conflation that marginalises the 'alternative' content elements of programme-making. Staff members also appear to elevate the importance of technical production when they talk about the need for overall consistency in the sound of the station to meet the expectations of audiences, sponsors and funders. Yet the participation of diverse programming groups with varying degrees of broadcasting skill and experience produces a patchwork programme schedule that will always make consistency of sound quality across programmes difficult to achieve. The desire for sound and technical production quality illuminates a central tension for the station between its objectives as an 'alternative' community access station providing a service to the 'voiceless' in society, and the rising expectations of its audiences, its funders and some of its more experienced programmers for a more 'professional' delivery of programmes. The challenge for the station is to maintain some kind of balance between encouraging a 'professionalism' that rewards programmers with a sense of achievement and helps them to fund their shows, and allowing new broadcasters the space to experiment and make mistakes while they learn the skills of radio.

Reference to the experiences of access broadcasters in other countries reveals how crucial a balance between enabling open community participation and expectations of professional programme delivery can be for the survival and integrity of the community media

sector. In both Australia and the United States for example, the pressure on community stations to 'professionalise' increased dramatically as government and institutional funding for the sector decreased, forcing them to rely more heavily on airtime charges, sponsorship and advertising revenue for survival.[15] Critics like Whitford,[16] Melzer,[17] and Thomson[18] argue that, within Australia, this change has increased pressure on stations to 'popularise' their programming to maximise audiences and to 'professionalise' or 'commercialise' programme delivery, at the expense of community development objectives. Melzer[19] claims that acceding to such pressures threatens the future survival of the community sector, because 'if the principles of independence, diversity and access are not pursued' then 'there are few arguments to justify the sector's existence.' In other words, if community access stations begin to sound and act too much like commercial stations, their distinctive qualities disappear and the funding and policy support available to them as alternative media ventures is likely to be withdrawn. Although there are significant differences between the community access movements in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand, I believe the Australian sector's experience offers a warning to the community access sector of Aotearoa/New Zealand about the dilemmas it may face in the future, should government funding through NZOA be reduced or removed (a possibility that is more of a threat since ring-fenced funding for public broadcasting disappeared with the abolition of the Public Broadcasting Fee in July 2000).

Other subject positions, like those of 'responsible manager' and 'Plains FM family' or 'community member', also contain tensions that offer challenges to the station. The fact that many interviewees position themselves as Plains FM family or community members raises different kinds of issues, because the terms 'family' and 'community' suggest some kind of 'insider' status for those who claim them. One staff member suggests that Plains is 'like a family' in that it is a 'warm, friendly, caring' place, a 'safe haven' where people are treated 'equally', and social barriers like gender and race are stripped away. Considering these comments in the light of interviewees' narratives, certain questions come to mind. Does a focus on the station as a family or community preclude challenge, conflict and differences? Are the station systems and practices flexible and self-questioning enough to respond to criticism or suggestions from station-users?

Are some people always going to feel more included and accepted as 'family' members? Does everyone have the same potential or capability to participate? Given the structural inequality within our wider society, can the attempt to treat everyone equally enhance some people's feelings of being 'outsiders'? Because the station exists primarily to provide access to the public sphere for groups already marginalised as 'Others' or 'outsiders' within society, these questions become significant, particularly as the station matures. Comments by a few interviewees suggest that they find it difficult to complain or challenge practices at the station. One woman who praised the 'good fellowship' at the station was critical of programmers who do complain, because complaint or criticism is demonstrating lack of appreciation for the 'good deal' offered at Plains. A few others described incidents when they had experienced prejudice or negative comments from other station participants. These examples, though small in number, indicate that the positioning of Plains as a united and accepting 'family' or 'community' is not entirely unproblematic.

The final subject position I wish to discuss is that of 'responsible manager'. Given the diversity and varied experience levels of station participants and their reliance upon staff to facilitate their participation in station operations, I would argue that the way staff interpret and inhabit the responsible manager position largely determines the enabling potential of the station. Access Radio reviewer, Brian Pauling,[20] suggests that successful management of community access stations requires an understanding and commitment to community development objectives. Staff at Plains demonstrate this quality when they talk about the need to integrate community development objectives into all aspects of their management practice. They say that they make 'what we're here for' the basis of every policy decision. One staff member argues that the 'parallel' or 'congruence' between ideals and practice at Plains is one reason why the station 'works'.

Responsible management of an alternative organisation is not easy or straightforward. The diversity of the participant groups at the station requires the balancing of a variety of different, sometimes conflicting, roles and expectations. For example, staff members are expected to be empathetic, flexible and supportive of volunteers and programmers while also ensuring that the station rules and policies, which were established in part to ensure safety, efficiency and equality of access, are followed. Part of their role involves the fair and effective

management of scarce and 'precious' resources like studio time, equipment for loan and available training hours. The element of scarcity demands a limit to the empathy and support that can be extended to station participants who do not respect the rights of other users. One challenge for staff is to maintain station efficiency and effectiveness without imposing rigid practices that cannot accommodate diverse participants' working and learning styles. Another is to negotiate and manage the tensions arising from the problematic positions of public figure, professional broadcaster and Plains FM family or community member in a way that contributes most usefully to the fulfilment of the station's key objectives. However, perhaps the most difficult challenge for station staff is to constantly evolve management strategies and practices to deal with new situations, experiences and challenges without losing sight of the station's original purpose.

As a small alternative station serving a limited geographic area, Plains FM may appear to have a negligible influence in the general mediascape of Aotearoa/New Zealand. Yet at the local level, the narratives of women at Plains emphasise the various ways in which their participation at the station enables both themselves and their communities. The tensions and contradictions within their discourses of enablement feature far less coherently and strongly in their explanations of Plains than the positive and empowering aspects. Nevertheless, I have attempted to draw out both the positive aspects and (very briefly) some of the complexities and disruptions within station discourses of enablement in order to highlight some of the challenges the latter pose to the station's current and future effectiveness.

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Notes

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[4] M. Gallagher, *An Unfinished Story: Gender Patterns in Media Employment* (UNESCO, Paris, 1995).

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[6] For example L. Rakow & K. Kranich, 'Woman as a Sign in Television News', *Journal of Communication* 41, 1 (1991) pp. 8–23; and J. McGregor, 'Gender Politics and the News: The Search for a Beehive Bimbo-Boadicea', in McGregor (1996).

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[11] A. Webber, 'Women in the Media: Wrestling with Old Values', in M. Comrie & J. McGregor (ed.), *Whose News?* (Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1992) pp. 186–7; McGregor (1996) p. 183.

[12] Plains FM, *Information and Policies for Broadcasters* (2000).

[13] *ibid.*

[14] Cassell Concise Dictionary, 1998 Edition.

[15] I. Whitford, 'Public Radio: The Promise and the Performance', *Continuum: The Australian Journal of Media and Culture* 6, 1 (1992); D. Melzer, 'President's Report: Wild and Dirty', *CBX*, November 1 (2000); M. Thomson, '200 Stations in 2000 – But Where to From Here?', *CBX*, November 5 (2000); L. Montgomery & J. Becker, 'Political Ads Shock Public Radio Fans', *Washington Post Online*, October 25 B01 (2000) (Available http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articlaes/A7130-2000Oct24.html, October 26, 2000); P. Simon, 'A David and Goliath Triumph for Public Radio in Colorado' (2001) (Available http://forum.oneworld.net:8080/~mediachannel/read?2998,376, March 12, 2001).

[16] Whitford (1992).

[17] Melzer (2000).

[18] Thomson (2000).

[19] Melzer (2000) p. 1.

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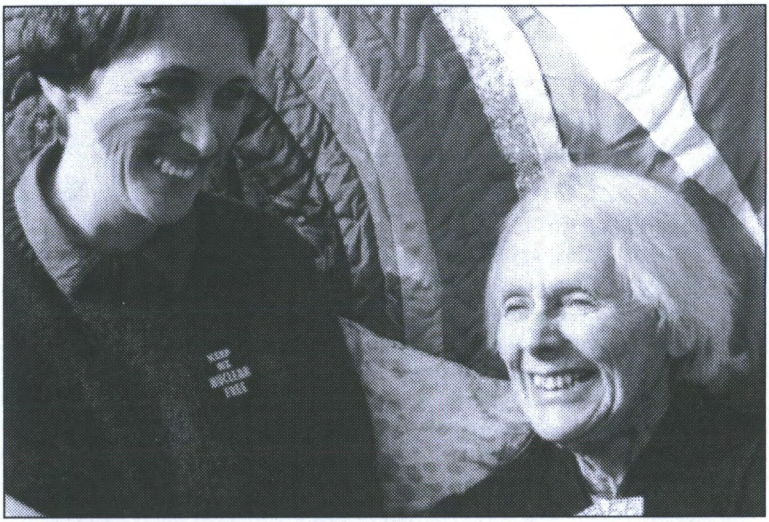
Elsie Locke: A Tribute



Elsie Locke and Kate Dewes celebrate the fifth anniversary of NZ's status as a nuclear-free country, Cathedral Square, Christchurch, June 1992. The banner behind them reads: 'Disarming the Pacific'.

Elsie Locke was a socialist and women's rights activist, a journalist, and Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament activist and peace campaigner. She was also a social historian, environmentalist, co-founder of the New Zealand Family Planning Association, children's novelist and persistent contributor to the letters to the editor column, as well as wife, mother, grandmother. She died in Christchurch in April 2001. Alison Kagen convened a panel of speakers for the 2001 Women's Studies Association Conference who spoke about their memories of Elsie. These tributes to Elsie are offered by three generations of women who loved her and were inspired by her.

Jackie Matthews

In August 1952 Elsie Locke saved my sanity. She was 40, I was 25 and just back from two years as a translator/journalist for a peace/politics international review in Paris. I had a child of 14 months and

was pregnant with the next. Elsie saved me by suggesting in an article in *Here and Now,* a left wing monthly, that mothers should not be terrified by John Bowlby. Maternal deprivation would not ruin my son if I went back to work teaching. So I did.

I went on to read other articles of hers on nuclear weapons, colonialism, discrimination against women and the Cold War. All expressed clearly and accessibly views we shared. It was strictly one-way traffic from her to me. Then came the big one, 'Looking for answers' in *Landfall*, 1958. It traced her journey from the 1932 march of the unemployed in Auckland, through the thirties, and the war, and the atom bomb, to the revelations of the 20th Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party and the tragedies of Hungary and Suez in 1956. Elsie subjected her convictions to a painfully scrupulous scrutiny. She retained her belief in internationalism uniting the human race, and her awareness of class. She had confidence in community, cooperation and collective action, as against individualism, competition and market forces. She envisaged possible alternative forms of socialism. She made explicit what many of us were groping for.

The immediate and healing project was the New Zealand Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. We had Aldermaston-style peace marches on Parliament (Elsie believed we first met there. But how could I forget the dynamo she must have been at 50?) I remember receiving in Wellington heaps of well-argued CND material from Elsie and Mary Woodward and used it when Pauline Stafford and I appeared before the House Petitions Committee to support a Nuclear-Free Southern Hemisphere petition.

Then in the sixties Elsie began writing a social history for the School Publications Branch of the Education Department. 'I had to tramp a path through thousands of words for every word I wrote', she said later. The six booklets were published in 1984 as 'The Kauri and the Willow'. The stories were vividly told through credible three-dimensional characters. Her novel, *The Runaway Settlers,* won an award for a much-loved book over 30 years later. There were regular articles in *Comment* and the *New Zealand Monthly Review* on a huge range of topics.

The next situation where in retrospect Elsie and I might have been close was in 1970s feminism. I was involved in a Women's Studies course founded with Phillida Bunkle at Victoria University

of Wellington in 1975. At the 1977 United Women's Convention in Christchurch, Elsie spoke in a plenary session to hundreds of women. But I wasn't there. I was in France on my first sabbatical leave. I came home and read her words but they were still disembodied.

So it wasn't really until I began researching Robin Hyde and exploring the thirties that I realised where Elsie had been for the twenty years before her work touched me in 1952. She'd had a whole socialist feminist life while I was still at school. Looking for Hyde in *Woman Today,* I found Elsie joining the Communist Party, editing *Working Woman* then *Woman Today*, co-founding The Family Planning Association (initially called 'The Sex Hygiene and Birth Regulation Society' but a mis-spelt advertisement for 'Girth' helped persuade members a name-change was needed), appearing before the McMillan Abortion Commission in 1937, working full-time as a solo mother in 1938 after her marriage to Fred Freeman ended.[3] She was never an unquestioning Communist Party member. Officials were heard to mutter that she suffered from feminist and pacifist illusions. Then she married Jack Locke and moved from Wellington to Christchurch, had three more children, wrote poetry and faced two years in hospital with tuberculosis. There she did a little light reading – one and a half volumes of *Das Kapital*, Olive Schreiner's *Woman and Labour*, Bebel's *Woman and Socialism*. It's odd to think of Elsie and Rona Bailey and Sonya Davies in the 40s and 50s all in hospital with tuberculosis and reading Marxist literature.

While in the 80s I was going back to explore her life of writing and militancy, Elsie was moving forward, writing *Stranger at the Gates*, *Peace People* and *Two Peoples, One Land*, all major books, involving tremendous research. Once I wrote to Elsie asking had she personal memories of Hyde in the thirties. 'Not anything significant' she wrote in mild reproof, 'but I'm glad you're writing about her and you're hardly short of material!'

So I didn't finally meet Elsie in the flesh till less than ten years ago, when we began working on *Stick out, Keep left*, the memoirs of Margaret Thorn. She had preserved and promoted the manuscript for 30 years and now it was finally to be published. We met for a brisk day's work in Wellington. Next I went to stay in her little house with the big vegetable garden and fruit trees in the Avon loop where she was caring for Jack. Later she came to me and looked incredulously at my rambling house and large unproductive garden with tree houses

and weedy lawns. We worked hard together editing and referencing Margaret Thorn, but Elsie's mind was already moving on. East Timor, the environment, globalisation. Had I read this? Protested about that?

It's strange. The friendship with Elsie of the last years seems now to go right back into the past so that when I read her again, I hear her distinctive voice in everything she wrote. I hear her as a young woman of 25 appearing before the McMillan Inquiry into Abortion and Contraception, rebuked for requesting public funding for contraception, which some sections of the community strongly opposed. She said firmly, 'In that case I think the Government has to look at it from the point of view of the majority of the community, not from that of the minority ... Taxes are made for quite a lot of things that many of us don't believe in.'

Rosemary Du Plessis

I first encountered the words of Elsie Locke when I read *The Runaway Settlers* to my daughter in the mid 1970s. It fired both our imaginations and, as recent immigrants to New Zealand, it transformed our engagement with Lyttelton and Banks Peninsula. But it was not until 1977 that I encountered Elsie in person on the stage at the Christchurch Town Hall during the United Women's Convention. I remember being struck by her vitality as she spoke from the podium at the controversial closing ceremony of this gathering from which male members of the media had been excluded. She spoke about her mother and aunt escaping through the window to exercise their vote in 1893 with the same vivid attention to detail that she brought to writing for children. Elsie also embraced the necessity for debate and division between women, arguing that: 'I don't think dissensions and divisions are anything to weep about. I think that they are an indication of vigour, passion and commitment. Stormy controversy is a sign of life, and peaceful agreement can sometimes mean nobody is really doing any thinking.'[1]

Elsie's political activism exemplified the multiplicity of women's struggles for civil rights, jobs, wages, contraception and maternity care, but also for peace, justice, health and equality. She wrote about the value of women's domestic labour and the importance of their access to education, jobs and earnings in the 1930s. She recognised the necessity of women's opportunities to control whether or not they conceived children and worked in very practical ways to facilitate

women's access to contraception. She marched against the use of nuclear weapons in the 1950s and wrote about the Treaty of Waitangi in the 1980s. And she made a significant contribution to the early years of the Feminist Studies programme at University of Canterbury in the late 1980s, cycling out from her home in the Avon loop to talk to students. I remember her arguing at a university International Women's Day seminar that her experience as a working class teenager at a country school provided her with the independence and resourcefulness she needed at university – an independence that young women were less likely to acquire at elite girls' schools. She was also generous with her time, especially when students contacting her could demonstrate that they had 'done their homework'. Every now and then I would get the odd photocopied article that she thought would be of interest to me or to students. The last was an article relating to women's rights activism in Canada with a little note: 'How clearly parallel it is to our women's history!'

Woman Today, edited by Elsie in the late 1930s, was, like the *Women's Studies Journal,* a collectively produced publication with a few people who took responsibility for putting the final issue together. There was an Advisory Board of women from all over the country who were called on now and then to contribute and provide advice. There was also a Sponsors' League who took on the job of publicising and selling the magazine and encouraging women to contribute articles. Those involved in running the magazine were involved in discussion groups, musical evenings and conferences where they addressed their goals of 'peace, freedom and progress; advancement of women's rights; and friendship with women of all nations'. Like many women activists today, they also disagreed among themselves. Elsie's Communist Party connections were targeted by conservative politicians during a national promotional tour she embarked on for *Woman Today* and some members of the editorial committee wanted Elsie to leave. Finally, at the end of 1939, the committee made the decision to close the magazine. The ostensible reason was finances, but political differences and the beginning of the war were the key factors. Elsie would take her journalistic skills into other forms of writing over the next fifty years.[2]

New Zealanders were once, unfairly perhaps, described as 'passionless people'. Elsie Locke was one of the most passionate people I have known. She radiated an interest in what was going on

around her and in the work of others. She worked with words and she believed in them as tools for change. Her presence in Christchurch made me feel proud to live in this city and I am going to expect to see her face on all sorts of occasions in the future and feel her absence. But I will not forget the luminous energy, the sharp wit, the swift turn of her head or her wonderful laugh.

Alison Locke

I am the youngest child of Elsie Locke. Others will write about her influences on them in regard to her more well-known and public achievements. I want to write about all the personal gifts she gave to me.

The first is a deep love of the New Zealand landscape and in particular the mountains. My mother was a country girl at heart and our adventurous summer holidays saw us travelling the length of New Zealand, always to a different place each year. With no car, public transport and hitchhiking led us to strange places and interesting people. My mother introduced me to tramping and we had the best of times away from city life in the hills and mountains. She went tramping to more wild places than I have been yet, including distant parts of Fiordland and the Copeland Pass. I learnt a lot about people from all walks of life on our trips as well as learning to love our landscapes.

The second gift is that of music. Mum encouraged me to learn music from an early age, which must have stretched a tight family budget paying for lessons and instruments. She also took me to see all sorts of live music from the Vienna Boys' Choir to *Showboat*, to Peter, Paul and Mary. I was always aware too that my grandmother, who I never met, was responsible in the same way for encouraging and enabling Mum to learn and appreciate music. This chain has continued because in later years we both enjoyed supporting my daughter Jessie on her musical path. Mum came to see me perform with my choir recently, which carried on a well-kept family tradition of supporting family members in any of their endeavours. Our last outing together was to watch the Christchurch City Choir sing Belshazzar's Feast in the Town Hall. Watching Mum listening it was easy to see how good music enriched her spirit, as it does mine.

A third gift was that of setting me on the path of deciding to have all my children born at home. The beginning of this journey was the familiar story of my birth in the house at Oxford Terrace.

Our children were welcomed into the world in the heart of the family, a joy shared by all of us.

Another gift is the ability to support friends and colleagues. Mum was generous with her time and energy and there was always a letter, a phone call or a visit when there was something to celebrate, for an achievement or in sad and difficult times. It will be hard to keep up to Mum's standard in this respect, but worth trying.

Although I am in no way a public person, the inheritance from Mum and my father is a deep sense of social justice, integrity and service to others, all of which influences the work that I do as a school counsellor and in my approach to family life. I have found that since Mum's death I have attended several peace events, somewhat more than usual for me, which may say something about Mum being a hard act to follow in life, and it having been easier for me to stay out of her shadow. All of her gifts to me are even more precious to me now, as I attempt to follow in own way, my inheritance.

Libby Plumridge

Many people know now of Elsie Locke. Indeed during her lifetime, Elsie used to joke she was a 'living archive'; 'living treasure' I used to answer, but with her peremptory good sense and lack of egotism in a bad sense, she sniffed this away. Elsie will be justly celebrated as a heroic figure for her zeal for the rights of women to health and happiness, a zeal that lead to work in politics, in feminist journalism, and in women's health organisations that flourish today in the Family Planning Association. But for me, Elsie's importance as a feminist came while I knew nothing of such achievement. Indeed in the days when I first became aware of Family Planning for instance, other women were at the helm, women like Phyllis Zeff, and committed workers like my own mother. I did not associate Elsie with this.

For me Elsie's impact as a feminist came through the way she lived as a woman. She not only believed in women's rights to equality, she expected it for them and of them. This, despite being a woman of her generation and shouldering the usual task of housework without question – at least without causing me to question. The division of labour in the Locke home was in most ways like the division of labour in my own home. The separation of spheres between her and Jack had been so complete, she once told me, that when Jack retired and came into the domain of the kitchen he did not know what uncooked

rice looked like. But her attitude to housework was that it should never contain women. When I got married she gave me a set of bright orange pots 'because being in the kitchen is so boring'. While she was a really inventive cook, serving vegetables grown by Jack in dishes I encountered nowhere else, cuisine was not a pastime, and her pleasures lay elsewhere.

In her pleasures she opened the door to intellect and culture otherwise impossible for a working class girl like me. Elsie validated for me the world of literature and the arts. Jack, like my parents, worked hard in manual labour all his working life. I felt Elsie and her kids were of my world. But they relished things that were unknown or incomprehensible in my family. Like most working class families, we just did not go to the opera, live theatre, or art exhibitions. We did not discuss literature and books. Life was hard, and while there was great respect for education in my family, education had been completely denied to my parents and they hardly knew the pleasures it could deliver.

Elsie did, and she encouraged its enthusiasms and pleasures in me and other young women. I well remember tramping up Mount Herbert, eating her Chinese chew and talking ideas. I remember tramping in Stewart Island, expounding and wrestling with the doom and gloom of Dostoyevsky. She must have been amused at me, and other young women like me, gulping down ideas and gobbling up books. Because of her, I went to operas, concerts, plays, invited as Ali's friend. She took me to opening nights of the Group in Christchurch, confident in the expectation that one day I'd be a significant painter. Indeed she introduced me as such. Her confidence in me couldn't effect that result, but in other ways her confidence was hugely important. I always felt she expected intellectual engagement by women as normal. She expected young women of the working class to relish the pleasures of high culture that many regarded as the domain of the middle class. There was no pleasure of intellect, culture and the arts which she saw as not for working class girls. In her own commitment to writing, she exemplified how to be serious about creative process. These things were within the capacity of woman. And if she did struggle with the burdens of the 'double shift' before there was any analysis even, of such a thing, she deeply loved her family life.

As I was able to engage more with her, so she revealed more of

her thought and analysis. She was a complex woman and had a fine mind of the first intellect. She was the most thoroughgoing nationalist I ever met, and yet a deeply committed internationalist. She read more widely about the international scene than anyone I met; yet New Zealand was where she saw her political commitments. She dismissed as contemptible the heritage of the 'colonial cringe' that led so many to esteem everything foreign as more important, significant and somehow worthy than that to be found in New Zealand. She would have none of this; New Zealand was where she would fight her political and intellectual battles; New Zealand cultural forms were as exciting and stimulating as any. I doubt her contributions to the New Zealand scene of politics and culture are as yet fully appreciated. By the end of her life she was an almost irresistibly charming figure, tiny yet indomitable. While it is true that she thus became part of the character of Christchurch life, she was never just a 'character'. Hers was a solid intellectual contribution to art and letters, culture and politics in New Zealand. At the same time, she embodied what she thought. To have had Elsie in my life has been an almost daily reassurance and comfort in the possibilities of being a woman. And the best thing was that she did it through pleasure as well as struggle. I hope other young women of working class families have such feminists in their lives.

Gina Moss

Elsie Locke was my Grandmother and she had a strong influence on my life. As a kid I was always aware that Elsie knew a lot of people and that most of those people thought very highly of her. I knew that she supported the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament because she had a sticker on her door that said 'Nuclear Free New Zealand'. But, I always assumed that most Nanas had those stickers on their doors. The part of her career that I was most aware of was her writing. I was very proud to be a granddaughter of the author of *The Runaway Settlers*. I didn't know anything about her involvement with feminism, I didn't realise that she had brought my mother up to be a feminist, and that in turn I would be one too.

She wasn't a conventional Nana. She didn't spoil us, or do the usual cooking and craft that most grandmothers are supposed to do. She left that up to Grandad. She used to give him pocket money each week because otherwise he would have spent all their money on us.

She was definitely an equal partner in the Locke household, and I never thought that it was anything unusual because Alison, my mother and Elsie's youngest daughter, is also an equal partner with my Dad in our family. It was the way she lived her life day to day which has had the most effect on me.

I have always believed that women can, and deserve to be able to, do anything they want to. It is not something I have ever really thought about consciously because in our family it is the way things are. Not many women can say that they are a third generation female attending university in New Zealand, but I can.

Elsie was a woman with a 'no fuss' attitude. She was never sentimental, but always emotional about things she believed in. I only saw her cry once. That is a character trait that I have inherited and am very proud of. I don't think that it is useful to get passionate about small, trivial, unimportant things because we should save our energy for the things that truly matter. I am sure that Elsie would agree with me on that. I try to keep this in mind when I am in meetings with the Aoraki Young Greens.

The Aoraki Young Greens is a young persons' group within the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand and I am a member. Meetings can easily become bogged down with trivial issues, and it would be easy to burn out from the stress of it all. One thing I would ask Elsie if she was still around, is how she managed to stay motivated and escape burnout during her long life as an activist.

Some of the most valuable things Elsie has taught me are: to enjoy education, that one person's contribution can make a difference in the world, women deserve to do anything they wish to, to keep a sense of humour about life and that to be respected a person needs integrity. Although, having said that, the most important thing Elsie Locke ever did for me was to be my Nana.

Notes

[1] Elsie Locke, 'Towards the Future' in Joan Browne et al. (eds), *Changes, Chances, Choices: A Report on the United Women's Convention 1977* (United Women's Convention, Christchurch, 1978) pp. 60–1.

[2] Elsie Locke, 'About *Woman Today*', *Turnbull Library Record*, 29 (1996) pp. 47–58.

[3] McMillan Report AJHR, 8 31A (Government Printer, Wellington, 1937).

Commentary: Indigeneity, Sexuality and Disabilities Ko Wai Ahau? Who Am I? Indigenous disabled identities

HUHANA HICKEY

At the 2001 Women's Studies Association Conference, Huhana Hickey highlighted a range of issues associated with the intersecting experiences of gender, colonisation, disabilities and sexualities, both in her presentation in the Mana Wahine section of the conference and on other occasions during the conference. These issues have often been neglected at women's studies conferences and at meetings at which the politics of disability are discussed. Huhana had earlier presented a paper at the Disability with Attitude Conference in Sydney Australia in February 2001 at which she was the only indigenous disabled woman presenter. What follows is a written version of some of the issues raised in these presentations. It is the basis for planned postgraduate research into the complex identities of Maori Takataapui (lesbians) with disabilities and the historical, cultural, legal and social policy frameworks that shape their day-to-day experiences. This commentary on ethnicities, sexualities and disabilities is directed at stimulating other work on the connections between multiple and overlapping political identities.

Ko Wai Ahau
(Who Am I?)
Identity … what is this?
When we are born, we are who someone tells us we are …
do we know who we are?
As we grow, we learn, copy, duplicate, experiment …
is this who we are?
Our language, our skin colour, our gender, our abilities or dis-abilities –
do we define these?
Our memories, our teachings guide us,
are they always positive?
When I was born, someone gave me to someone else,
My mother gave me to a stranger,

My mother named me … she called me Tina …
The stranger called herself mother, she called me … Susan …
When I grew up, I grew up in a language not of my Ancestors …
A culture not of my own.
My skin colour not their skin colour. My beliefs, not their beliefs …
My memories not always positive.
Yet – I am affected by all of this and so alone by that which I should know.
Identity – what is this?
Identity – what is mine? Who am I?
Ko Wai Ahau?
I am as I am able to piece myself together from the pieces of the puzzle I have found and the ones still missing in my life.

My analysis of the identities of indigenous women with disabilities has been prompted by my own location as a Maori woman with multiple disabilities living in a colonised society. I am a graduate from Waikato University where I completed an LLB/BSocSci, majoring in Law, Psychology and Women's Studies. This year I completed my Masters in Law with first class Honours where I researched disabled identities in health, mediation, employment and human rights legislation in New Zealand/Aotearoa. My interest is in struggles for self-knowledge and self-definition and the historical and political contexts that shape these struggles. My work is located within wider analyses of disability, colonisation, gender, sexuality and citizenship.[1]

While the experience of disability is often individualised, it is important to recognise the impact of collective social experiences on those with disabilities. Colonisation as a collective experience of indigenous people has had an impact on indigenous disabled and most first nations groups worldwide. In his book *Spirit Dive* Michael Cottman[2] writes about his journey in search of his African roots. Cottman speaks about the need to understand the slave journey of his ancestors and how they survived, so that he can better understand himself. He claims it permanently changed his outlook and allowed him to heal his own angers and hurts as a descendant of a slave.

The colonisation process has tended to stifle the history and the voices of the past. In doing this it effectively took away our identity. Tariana Turia, New Zealand/Aotearoa Member of Parliament, was recently criticised for stating that colonisation was to blame for the

loss of identity for many Maori. This is a contentious issue for all indigenous people who have been colonised as many individuals and states are afraid of what would result if we were to address the past. In a speech in August 2000 at the New Zealand Psychological Association Conference 2000 Turia stated that:

> Maori know the social structures of whanau, hapu and iwi[3] are responsible for both cultural reproduction and identity ... These same social structures have demonstrated amazing resilience as sites of resistance to colonisation, but which as you also know, have been seriously weakened ... With personal identity inextricably tied to whanau, hapu and iwi identity, indigenous people still have to counter the problems of the conspiracy of alienation, assimilation and deculturation launched against them well over a century ago.[4]

Native American psychologist Eduardo Duran in his discussion of the experiences of native Americans suggests that the colonial oppression suffered by indigenous people inevitably wounds the soul.[5] Duran also believes effective therapy for indigenous peoples involves attention to the historical context of generations of oppression, since colonial contact needs to be articulated, acknowledged and understood.

How relevant is this analysis of the effects of colonisation for the identities of indigenous persons with disabilities? Colonisation concentrated on individualising the indigenous person, just as approaches to disability have often individualised those with disabilities. Assimilationist policies and laws alienated indigenous people from the traditional social structures that had been the basis for social cohesion and collective support for hundreds of years. An example of this process in New Zealand/Aotearoa is legislation such as the Native Health Act 1904 that prohibited Maori women from breast-feeding in public. The right to vote accorded women in New Zealand/Aotearoa in 1893 was not extended to Maori men or Maori women, their right to vote came several years later. The Tohunga Suppression Act 1907 prevented Maori from healing in the traditional manner, traditional healing was prohibited by law. The Native Lands Act 1907 gave the government the right to remove children from their parents, and the Adoption Act 1955 specifically denied legal status to whangai[6] adoptions. Other acts alienated Maori from their tribal land and contributed to urbanisation and the break-down of

traditional networks. The undermining of the whanau structures also had long-term impacts for Maori.

While many Maori with disabilities were traditionally cared for by their whanau, the urbanisation of many Maori in the 1960s disrupted communities and undermined the possibilities of whanau support for those with disabilities. More people with disabilities entered institutions that did not provide culturally sensitive care nor attend to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The cultural needs of people with disabilities generally and the needs of Maori with disabilities in particular were largely ignored. Neglect of the specific needs of Maori was part of a process of service delivery that was often problematic for people with disabilities.[7]

Institutions for disabled in New Zealand/Aotearoa were historically modelled on the implementation of the medical model of disability – a Western construct that involves seeing any impairment as 'abnormality'.[8] This implies that there is such a thing as 'normality'. According to the medical model of disability, an impairment needs to be 'fixed', cured, corrected or overcome. If the impairment is unable to be fixed, the disabled person is considered abnormal, inadequate and potentially 'a failure'.

This understanding of disability is inconsistent with the traditional Maori concept of well-being. According to this understanding of health, Te Taha Wairua (spirituality), Te Taha Whanau (the family), Te Taha Hinengaro (the mind), Te Taha Tinana (the body) should all be in balance to maintain well-being.[9] If one of these is out of balance, then one is unwell. When Maori with disabilities were institutionalised, the Treaty of Waitangi and Maori conceptions of well-being were ignored and basic human rights were often neglected.

Self-determination is the desire of any indigenous person to regain what has been lost through the process of colonisation. For indigenous disabled persons, self-determination has a more personal meaning, for we face not only the battle for self-determination as indigenous people, but we also face the battle of self-determination of our own lives as those with disabilities. For me, there is also the identity of being Takataapui (lesbian) which means living in a society that is not accepting of that sexuality and discourages lesbians from being open about their sexuality. This leads to isolation as lesbian and as Maori.

Victoria Brownworth and Susan Raffo address the issue of the isolation of lesbian women with disabilities in their anthology

Restricted Access: Lesbians With Disabilities.[10] The silence of indigenous disabled does not mean we do not exist. Living with a disability, compounded by living in a society that does not often recognise our indigenous identity (often further compounded by poverty as both groups are over-represented at the lowest income levels), and living with the identity as Takataapui, only further leads to the multiple oppressions experienced.

Despite these pressures, it is possible to embrace one's indigenous, spiritual and sexual identities while simultaneously identifying as a disabled person. Williams suggests that Native American women who are intimate with other women did not identify as members of a minority community as white lesbian women do:

> ... women involved in a relationship with another female did not see themselves as a separate minority or a special category of person, or indeed as different in any important way from other women. Yet, they were involved in loving, sexual relationships with their female mates.[11]

Within Maori communities there are not the clearly defined barriers that exist in non-Maori lesbian society. Sexuality within the Maori community may not be spoken about, but it is also not an issue to bring a lover to a home Marae or to bring them into the family structure. In this context, I am free to celebrate my sexuality and embrace my sexual identity openly and honestly.

As one who has grown up assimilated, I was raised as a Catholic with guilt and repression of my sexual identity. I also tried fundamentalist Christianity and still felt the void associated with the repression of my lesbian identity. By removing the religious barriers and challenging the assimilated identity I had acquired as a child, I found a freedom and replaced that void. I am fortunate in that my home Marae is fully accessible and I can therefore integrate completely as a Maori and as a disabled woman. Inclusion is the main issue and I am often carried onto the Marae and given the status of Kaumatua (elder) and therefore not expected to participate in Marae activities. This is something the Disabled Persons Assembly Maori Caucus are seeking to change throughout Aotearoa/New Zealand through education of disability and active partnership participation with Maori organisations and Iwi (tribal) groups.

For an individual with a disability to be balanced and healthy in their mind, in their spirit, in their relationships with significant others

and in their physical selves, requires knowledge about their identities. It entails accessing complex understandings of who we are. Issues of colonisation and self-determination are often not understood by staff in care environments, nor is it seen as a prerequisite for staff working with disabled persons. I know in my own case that while cultural identity has been listed in forms, it has not been seen as relevant in the choice of carers and the issue of meeting my individual needs. An example of this is when I applied for a specially adapted bed, I had to fight for nine months for a queen-size bed as I am single and my identity as a sexual being who has had women lovers was not recognised. I won my argument, although it took nine months to achieve that outcome.

We have a long way to go before disabled are seen in society as whole, vital, sexual and integral members of society.[12] As an indigenous person, I am aware that indigenous identities are not likely to be given a high profile within disability politics. As a lesbian woman, I know that acceptance of heterosexual identities will precede consideration of the needs and rights of queers or disabled transsexual or transgendered people with disabilities. While there has been some recognition of the sexuality of women with disabilities, they are still often seen as asexual and young disabled men are often seen as oversexed.

I would like to conclude by explaining why it is important to explore the multiple and interconnected identities of indigenous persons with disabilities. I have found that, while I was adopted at birth, I have had a spiritual link to my cultural identity throughout my life that made no sense to me until I began to slowly piece my life together.[13] Indigenous or earth-based spiritualities of people such as Celts and Maori involve a close link to the land and to their Wairua (soul/spirit), to disrupt those links is to remove a part of that individual. These issues are often ignored for those living in care situations, and therefore their 'whole' identity is denied.

Many of the disabilities I identify with were largely hidden and misunderstood (asthma, depression, ADHD, FMS, CFS)[14] and the validation of my identity as a disabled person has only just been accepted, despite being in a wheelchair for over five years now. There is little recognition in this society of the links between disabled, sexual and spiritual identities, and that is why I work with and encourage disabled persons to self-identify in ways that make others aware of

their complex and overlapping selves. In doing this, they begin to take charge of themselves and their lives.

For many who struggle with religious or spiritual concepts, gaining an understanding of their collective historical background which, for many adults, has been obscured, enables people to embrace their spiritual self. Whether this understanding of spirituality be Humanistic, Christian, Pagan or any other belief system is not important. The important thing is to give ourselves permission to embrace these beliefs and not to rely on others and their definitions of our identities.

It has taken thirty-eight years for me to begin to construct my identity as Maori, as disabled and as Takataapui (lesbian). If I had been allowed to understand myself from the beginning as an indigenous person by linking my spiritual, emotional, physical and family needs, I believe I would not have faced the many struggles I encountered to get to this point. For many indigenous that is still not an option, and until those with disabilities are given the ability and guidance to exercise self-determination, they are unlikely to gain the self-knowledge needed to be whole in a contemporary society.

In the new millennium it is exciting to see changes happening, and as disabled persons begin to gain confidence in the western world, it stands to reason that indigenous disabled will eventually benefit. The United Nations is asking for full inclusion of those with disabilities by the year 2010, and work is proceeding on a Declaration of Disability Rights for disabled persons.[15] This declaration should include attention to the rights of indigenous disabled and how they wish to be seen and heard in the years ahead. One way to achieve this is to recognise the ethnic, gender, sexual and spiritual identity of persons with disabilities. Recognition of diversity is important (including diversity among those with disabilities) if we are going to have true inclusion for ALL persons with disabilities. The next twenty years offers an opportunity to do that.

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and have been published in American anthologies with an emphasis on disabled lesbian women. I am mom to a teenage son, identify as Ngati Tahinga of Tainui waka and live with several physical impairments that mean that I need to use a wheelchair for mobility and other technologies to complete my goals.

Notes

1 See for example, J. Barbalet, *Citizenship: Rights and Class Inequality* (Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1988); A. Comfort et al (eds), *Disabled People, Second Class Citizens* (Springer Publishing Company, New York, 1982); L. Davis (ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (Routledge, New York, 1997); J. Morris, *Pride Against Prejudice: Transforming Attitudes to Disability* (Women's Press, London, 1991); I. Parsons, *Oliver Twist Has Asked for More: The Politics and Practice of Getting Justice for People with Disabilities* (Villamanta Publishing Service, Australia, 1994).

2 Michael Cottman, *Spirit Dive* (Three Rivers Publishers, USA, Feb 2000).

3 Maori terms for Iwi = tribe, whanau = family, hapu = smaller sub tribe.

4 Tariana Turia's Speech Notes, Address to the NZ Psychological Association Conference 2000, p. 2

5 Eduardo Duran, *Native American Post Colonial Psychology* (Suny Series in Transpersonal and Humanistic Psychology, State University of NY, New York, April 1995).

6 Inter family adoptions and informal adoptions within the family.

7 See M. Ratima et al., *He Anga Whakamana: A Framework for the Delivery of Disability Support Services for Maori* (Department of Maori Studies, Massey University, Palmerston North, 1995) for discussion of disability support for Maori; Margaret Tennant, 'Disability in New Zealand: An Historical Survey', *New Zealand Journal of Disability Studies* 2, 3 for an analysis of the history of responses to disability in New Zealand; and Martin Sullivan, 'Regulating the Anomalous Body in Aotearoa/New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of Disability Studies* 1, 9 for a critique of human service practices relating to disability.

8 See P. Coleridge, *Disability, Liberation and Development* (Oxfam Publishers, United Kingdom and Ireland, 1993), p. 72.

9 Mason Durie, *Whaiora: Maori Development in Health* (Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1995).

10 See Victoria Brownworth & Susan Raffi (eds), *Restricted Access: Lesbians With Disabilities* (Seal Press, USA, 1999) for a discussion of the issue of isolation for lesbian women with disabilities.

11 W.L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Identity in an American Indian Culture* (Beacon Press, USA, 1992) p. 247.

12 For discussion of issues of gender, disability, sexuality and intimacy see for example, A. Asch & M. Fine, 'Nurturance, Sexuality and Women with Disabilities', in L. Davis (ed.), *The Disability Studies Reader* (Routledge, New

York, 1997); and M. Morton & R. Munford, 'Re-presenting Difference: Women and Intellectual Disability', in R. Du Plessis & L. Alice (eds), *Feminist Thought in Aotearoa: Connections and Differences* (Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1999).

[13] Aroha Yates-Smith, *Hine e Hine: Rediscovering the Feminine in Maori Spirituality*, PhD thesis (University of Waikato, 1998).

[14] ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder, FMS stands for Fibromyalgia Syndrome and CFS stands for chronic fatique syndrome.

[15] I attended along with 120 disabled lawyers, advocates and experts a symposium held in Washington DC by the US State Justice Department and the Disability Research and Defence Fund civil rights organisation in Oct 2000. The website http://www.dredf.com has details of this symposium where we negotiated the guidelines for the proposed United Nations Convention on Disabled Persons. A result of this symposium is that a network of world experts with disabilities, including myself, are negotiating the terms for such a convention. To date, although there are numerous NGO (non government organisations) reports on disabled persons status internationally and several declarations, there is little done by the Member Nations for the Convention. My networks and connections regarding this work spans the globe, yet we have to date been unsuccessful in gaining much support in New Zealand for this convention other than to advise the Minister for Disabilities Issues that there needs to be greater support from the government for this convention.

Book reviews

A BODY OF WRITING, 1990–1999

Bronwyn Davies

AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, CA, 2000, $140.00

If there were not such an irony in the idea I would love to use this collection, *A Body Of Writing, 1990–1999*, as a textbook for my postgraduate class Feminist Issues in Education! I suspect that Bronwyn Davies would appreciate the paradox between my desire to use her text as *the* text, and what I also understand the intention of her 'body of writing' to be. She sets herself two agendas for the book – to make the language of poststructuralism accessible and usable in action, and to experiment with using it as a discourse of one's own, with which to see the world against the grain – and in doing so she shows herself as both a courageous and caring scholar. She states the educative purpose very clearly, and throughout the chapters demonstrates how we can learn to use poststructural ways of working and thinking to make tangible differences in schools and classrooms. However, it also becomes clear that it is not how she and her co-researchers have done things that she wants us to learn from her, or the book; rather she wants us to find our own ways of re-thinking, creatively and perhaps uncertainly, our educational practices.

When I said that I thought Bronwyn Davies was courageous in her work, I think I meant that she is not intimidated by the forces of discourse, nor by those who participate in making them. In this collection of key articles from previous publications, she demonstrates how she works with language and ideas as repertoires, not in the sense that out of them will emerge her 'real role', but in the sense that once they are made visible she will understand how systemic sets of patterns work to maintain a particular kind of order. It is with this visibility that she can then interact, trying to rethink how things could be, while remaining suspicious of her own decisions and actions.

For those feminists and other social activists who have been suspicious of the postmodern (to use the more overarching term) turn because of what they see as its tendency to relativise issues, and to paralyse grassroots social action, this collection is really important.

Bronwyn Davies is a feminist and an educator. She is fully aware of how women have been demeaned by patriarchal discourses, and that, for example in education, girls and women have been defrauded of opportunities because of hegemonic views held about their gender. Many of the chapters demonstrate feminist, poststructural theory at work in practice in schools. But she is also aware of ways in which essentialist feminist theory has iterated universalist notions of women's (and men's) subjectivities that actually continue to debilitate rather than liberate their lives. For her, poststructural ways of thinking about sex and gender reveal that gender has been so successfully and secretly constructed that we believe it to be real and become desirous of its effects. What is particularly helpful in these discussions is her way of writing which, rather than pronouncing on key ideas, draws the reader in to experience the ways in which Davies herself has come to think about them. There are two particularly powerful chapters on this theme, 'The Process of Subjectification' and 'Women's Subjectivities and Feminist Stories' in which she also draws on her autobiographical experiences in particularly poignant ways.

Another chapter which interested me was Davies' reply to Alison Jones' critique of her work.[1] Alison Jones has argued that both Davies and Jones' own students are unable to engage properly in poststructural theorising because they constantly 'corrupt' it with 'confused humanism'. Her point is that they are using poststructuralism incorrectly, and maybe shouldn't have been taught it in the first place. Perhaps it is too difficult for them, she suggests. Davies' response to this criticism is an example of her scholarly and pedagogical caring that I mentioned earlier. She hints at the pedagogical responsibility of teachers to encourage students into new practices by acknowledging the complexity of dealing with new theoretical possibilities. She reminds us that teachers do well to ease students gently into new territories leading to different theoretical and applied pathways, that they may never have traversed before. She also argues that poststructuralist ways of working are ways that will never be complete or correct. Their role is to help us take up possibilities and find out where they might lead, rather than to come to conclusions.

I was disappointed with the chapter in which she collaborated with Rom Harré. Although they have brought together a very interesting discussion around the concept of positioning, using narratives of different kinds, they have failed at integrating their styles

and reference materials. Stylistically it is an oddly discordant section of an otherwise elegant and flowing set of chapters.

The epilogue to the collection is subtitled 'On mor(t)ality' and addresses a theme often raised in previous chapters: namely, how do we question and make change without iterating the mistakes of the 'dominant (and dominating) discourses and practices' (p. 169). Bronwyn Davies' reflections on these issues are personally and humbly expressed. She explains that because she has ceased to be able to rely on certainty then two major developments have occurred in her work. One is that because poststructural theory removes authority from dominant discourses then she has a wonderful and creative opportunity to tease out their constructions, and to reveal their secrets. The other is that she now enjoys a new freedom in the act of writing, which constitutes a licence to explore moments of 'human experience with all its grinning knots, and gaps and passions' (p. 173).

I really wanted to end the review with that last paragraph because it is almost the point at which Davies ends her collection, and perhaps that is what I should have done. But I can't help pointing out that with her ending Bronwyn Davies is suggesting that the representation of her journey of writing over a decade is not a conclusion, but a constantly new beginning. (How did I ever think conclusions added anything to a text?)

ELODY RATHGEN, *Department of Education, University of Canterbury.*

Notes

[1] Alison Jones, 'Teaching Post-Structuralist Feminist Theory in Education: Student Resistances', *Gender and Education*, 9, 3 (1997) pp. 261–267.

FACING THE MUSIC

Directors/Screenplay: Bob Connolly & Robin Anderson
Photography: Bob Connolly Editor: Ray Thomas
Sound: Robin Anderson 85 minutes

25th International Film Festival July 26–August 12, 2001, Christchurch

Facing the Music is a slice of life documentary. The directors compiled a year's worth of film footage focusing on Anne Boyd, Head of the Music Department (HOD) of the University of Sydney. The end result is a compelling and at times emotionally charged film. We watched Anne Boyd struggle on many levels – professionally, politically, emotionally and physically. As a viewer, I had the chance to laugh at the ironies she faced. In particular, I noted shifts in her vocabulary when confronted with the necessity to promote an aesthetic subject within the framework of economic rationalism that was rapidly becoming embedded within the university structure. I celebrated her developing revolutionary spirit as she fought to maintain her calling and right to teach. I admired her ability to continue working and maintain her passion for music and teaching when the magic that held her to her vocational calling was dramatically eroded under the rigours of the new management regime.

I was struck by three factors when viewing *Facing the Music*. First, academic work was strongly portrayed as a vocational calling, entailing wholehearted belief in providing high quality education to students. Second, under the current economic and political regime this tradition was being undermined and this prompted in some academics, like Anne Boyd, a political awakening. Third, there was evidence that the academy was becoming feminised. Work standards were being compromised by the demands of economic rationalism and constant budget cutbacks and/or shortfalls put pressure on departmental staff. Each year the department had to make savings by employing less staff whilst the core staff worked longer hours. Overall the status of teaching in the academy was becoming decidedly unattractive and the position of HOD, a once highly sought-after position had lost its kudos. The HOD position had become more suited to someone who could absorb and adopt the management model discourse.

Anne Boyd had been HOD of the School for Music for some

years and in the past ten years the Department had experienced continuous budget cutbacks. Dangerously, this was becoming institutionalised and, as HOD, Anne Boyd's job was to accommodate the budget cutbacks and maintain the calibre of the Department. For example, tutor hours were cut back to save money. Consequently, Anne Boyd taught 20 hours per week. This was well over the prescribed HOD teaching load of six hours per week. At the same time, unwilling to compromise their professional standards and without HOD permission, the tutors worked extra hours without pay. They too had their own beliefs in a commitment to excellence and the necessity of students having access to a certain level of individual tuition.

The film festival catalogue noted that Anne Boyd's training, knowledge and expertise in musical history and composition were ideally suited to nurturing and advocating her discipline to her students, but in a new economic climate it was evident that Anne Boyd was not sufficiently skilled to market, defend or find funding for her discipline. We follow her attempts to obtain sponsorship for the department through private sector funded scholarships. In the lecture theatre Anne Boyd storms the platform with a deep passion for music and scholarship. In her office she ruthlessly pushes a postgraduate student to produce a composition both innovative and to the best of her ability. Boyd also issues a challenge to the tearful student to think about the viability of her intentions as a composer. We witness a graduation ceremony of the previous year's students. The ceremony appears futile, surreal even, when juxtaposed to the speed at which department cost cutting exercises are taking place. While keeping her emotions in check Boyd within less than two minutes strikes the experimental, contemporary, high technology music programmes from the department's curriculum. The programmes were proving too expensive and the department could not afford to upgrade or maintain the equipment. Boyd was aware of the contradiction evident in this decision, as she believed that experimentation was part of academic excellence.

The film documents a dramatic shift in Anne Boyd's political position on strikes by academic staff. At the start of the academic year she did not want to taint her vocational calling with union concerns about pay and work conditions. She is also concerned about the impact on students of the planned strike. At the next union meeting, we witness a stroppy Anne Boyd, annoyed at the unrelenting demands

placed on her department by management. This time she supports another protest and becomes an active participant on the picket line, handing out pamphlets and turning away traffic wanting to enter the campus; an elegant revolutionary with a handbag draped over her shoulder and sensible shoes to match. A pivotal moment for Anne Boyd was when the Vice Chancellor refused to meet the protesting staff. Turned away from the VC's door she viewed this as a rupture to collegiality between the VC and academic staff. The camera accompanies her as she stomps away, in tears and visibly frustrated. Bravely, she turns to the camera and states that she was too upset to talk. It appeared that her initial hopes that the union and protest march would sway the VC were dashed by the realisation that the beast of economic rationalism was going to be harder to shift. At the same time her language begins to absorb the new management speak in her own daily discourse within the academy. Teaching as a vocational calling was being eroded in Anne Boyd's world. Her only leverage it seemed would be to risk her position as HOD. However, in the current climate of what appeared to be a slow and brutal death of the music department this proved to be difficult to avoid.

I saw the film as an illustration of occupational feminisation. On the one hand, I was amazed at Anne Boyd's ability to teach till she dropped and act as HOD when the department was under extraordinary pressure. Admittedly she had wonderful administrative support. I applauded her decision to take study leave during this crisis period and focus on her primary purpose as a composer. We had the chance to hear some of her music composed during this period of turmoil and its beauty was a sharp contrast to the growing ugliness of the practice of everyday departmental life. This was illustrated poignantly during an end-of-year meeting when the following year's curriculum and workload levels were discussed. The group comprised two women and two men. The women were adamant that they could operate and sustain ever-increasing workloads. In contrast, the men were unwavering in their view, based on union guidelines, that they would not undertake workloads that would not only compromise their capacity to operate at a satisfactory level, but their health and well-being as well. It seemed to me the department and perhaps the university overall, due to economic pressures, was exploiting academics with a strong vocational commitment to teaching. This was evident in the actions of the women, who appeared to succumb

to increased workloads in order to uphold their professional ethics and their department at the expense of their health. The movie closes with a gut-wrenching epilogue. Anne Boyd had to take extended leave due to stress while her woman colleague who embraced increased teaching hours had a heart attack.

My movie companions thought that the movie soundtrack would make a good CD and provide the music department with access to a much needed income source! After watching *Facing the Music* they were not inspired to work in the academy; as for myself, I felt that I had been run over by a truck. Yet being the eternal Pollyanna, I secretly believe that there is still a glimmer of hope for the arts and humanities in the academy although the movie directors gave no impression that this may be so.

I would have liked this documentary to provide us with much more information. In its focus on an individual's response to a particular set of crises, it often neglected contextual details that were critical to understanding the situations presented. I wanted to know about student enrolments and how students had been affected by the arbitrary cutting of courses from their curriculum. I wanted to know if all the arts faculties had faced a continuous budget cut-back for the past ten years and wondered if there had previously been a tradition of 'frivolous expenditure' that needed to be addressed by the new regime. I wanted to know if all the departments in the university faced the same 50 per cent budget cut as the music department did. I wanted to know if Anne Boyd was reprimanded for undertaking the film project and hanging her dirty laundry in a public space. For someone who at first appeared politically a fence-sitter, she was extraordinarily brave to expose her experiences for public viewing. As a postgraduate student investigating the impact of economic restructuring on the museum profession in New Zealand, I was struck by another example of the erosion of a 'genteel' profession. *Facing the Music* highlighted the effects of the demands for marketing, revenue generation and economic rationalism that now shape universities and their primary functions of research and teaching. It provided a useful parallel with the changes taking place in New Zealand universities and would be of interest to past, current and future students and staff of tertiary education institutions in New Zealand.

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TOUCHY SUBJECT: TEACHERS TOUCHING CHILDREN

Editor: Alison Jones

University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 2001, 128 pp., $39.95

Earlier this year I participated in the NZ Women's Studies Association Conference in Christchurch. At the AGM – as has happened from time to time over the past 25 years – the 'man question' was raised. Should men be permitted to attend, and present papers at, WSA Conferences? And should contributions by men be acceptable for publication in this, the NZWSA's Journal? Debate was intense, the motions to include men were narrowly lost, and the issue will resurface at future conferences. In November 1999 – just over a year before that women-only NZWSA Conference – I had attended the symposium, 'Hands off! Teachers touching children' that was held at the University of Auckland. Participants included men and women of all ages, academics from a range of disciplines, teachers and others working in professional settings. Most of the ten papers in this book, *Touchy subject: Teachers touching children*, originated as contributions to this symposium, which was sponsored by Auckland University's Institute for Research on Gender. The book, like the symposium that gave rise to it, is an exemplar of what women's studies becomes when both women and men are admitted as 'subjects' – as subjects of our own behaviour (s/he who thinks, speaks and writes) and as the subjects or topics that are being researched or discussed.

In the book's introduction, the editor, Alison Jones, defines its project as: 'to contribute to the understanding of intimate government, and the governance of intimacy in education' (p. 13). 'Intimate government' refers to the overt and covert surveillance, monitoring and regulation of the 'bodily self.' The 'policing' of bodies occurs through surveillance and regulation by others (parents, teachers, employers, etc.) and through the processes of 'self-discipline' or self-regulation we learn and engage in – as children, as parents, as teachers or workers, etc. – in families, schools, work-places, etc. The younger the 'body', the more intimate such regulatory processes become. In the case of babies and infants in childcare settings, 'intimate government' includes toileting, nappy changing, comforting, cuddling, and feeding. How are the bodies of children and those who care for

them monitored and regulated in such settings? How is physical contact between children and their teachers/carers regulated and monitored? How and why have conceptualisations of appropriate and inappropriate touching changed over time? Have, and if so how have, conventions of touch in indigenous cultures been altered as part of the process of colonisation?

Since Foucault's work became available in English from the late 1970s, it has inspired an exciting array of theoretical and empirical writing by Educationists about contemporary and historical rationales for – and techniques of – surveillance, regulation and disciplining of (children's and carers' or teachers') bodies in early childhood centres and schools. This legacy is evident in the conceptualisation of the book as a whole, and in the theorists cited in the references to most of the ten contributions. The authors explore such questions in five different countries. One chapter addresses British contexts (co-authored by Sue Scott, Stevi Jackson & Kathryn Backlett-Milburn); and two discuss American settings (Richard Johnson and Gordon Tait). Erica McWilliam writes from Australia and Peggy Fairburn-Dunlop's chapter is concerned with Samoa. New Zealand writers are Maggie Hohepa and Arapera Royal Tangaere (on traditional and contemporary Maori settings); the other local writers are Alison Jones, Sarah Farquhar and Lynley Hood. Despite these different national and cultural concerns, taken as a collection, these papers form a much more cohesive text than do most books of readings.

Colonisation is described as radically mis-representing 'traditional Maori knowledge and practices around touching children' (Hohepa & Royal Tangaere, p. 51). Drawing on 'Maori descriptions, Maori oral texts and non-Maori ethnographies of "traditional" Maori life' (p. 51), these authors portray a people described by one nineteenth century observer as 'excessively fond of children' and by an education official of the time as 'never inflicting chastisement on a child'. Contemporary assertions that harsh corporal punishment is 'the Maori way' is undermined by such evidence. In her chapter, Fairburn-Dunlop raises similar questions about the 'hitting' of children in Samoa.

Chapter Two (by Scott et al) and Chapter Three (McWilliam) explore changes in dominant discourses of classroom practice with respect to 'the body' since Victorian times. In the mid twentieth century, the pre-eminence of developmental psychology saw the sometimes eccentric (and cane- or strap-happy) autocratic Victorian pedagogue

displaced by the facilitator of 'normal' and 'healthy' development. This discursive shift saw authoritative conceptualisations of the objects of teachers' attention – the children – transformed from the essentially evil little creatures of Victorian times to the essentially good and innocent beings in need of protection of the post World War Two era. Throughout the twentieth century, this therapeutic model of teachers extended their reach into the most private worlds of the children in their care – an expansion of their pedagogical zones of surveillance.

Since the 1980s, most of the authors argue, children have been seen – to a degree never seen before – as in need of protection from dangerous (male) adults. Authors speak of an age of 'moral panic' (Farquhar) or 'risk anxiety' (Scott et al). At the level of the state, and within institutions, policies have been put in place for the 'government of risk' (Tait). Since the 1980s, policies and regulations governing – limiting and sometimes even prohibiting – bodily contact between teachers/ carers and children have been put in place in western nation-states, including the USA (Chapters 4 and 9), Australia (Chapter 3), Samoa (Chapter 6), Britain (Chapter 2), and New Zealand (Chapters 5, 8 and 10). In these and other countries, policies have been put in place – by government ministries, by institutions themselves, and by teachers' unions – to limit bodily contact between teachers and children or to prohibit it altogether. As several contributors comment, these 'no touch' policies have sometimes been put in place to protect the institutions, or the teachers, rather than out of concern for the well-being of the children (Farquhar, Johnson). Forbidden to touch or be alone with a child, teachers are subjected to increasing surveillance – by colleagues, employers, parents, monitoring authorities such as ERO, and even by the children themselves. Given the developmental/ therapeutic model that has long dominated programmes of teacher education (McWilliam), this is both ironic and tragic. As Farquhar notes (p. 96), this teaches children 'that teachers aren't to be trusted and are cool uncaring people concerned more about the teaching of knowledge than nurturing the child'. To those who have engaged in critiques of the managerialist, 'information-driven' emphasis of recent educational reforms, the irony of this cannot pass unnoticed.

So what lies behind the panic about touch? Jones summarises the themes in many of the chapters as 'the effects of the anxieties about child sexual abuse ... and the conditions in which these have

arisen' (p. 9). Teacher behaviour is, argue many of the authors, increasingly constrained by such anxieties. Parental fears that their child might become the victim of abuse lie behind the increased surveillance of intimate contacts between adults and children in centres and schools. Recent high-profile sexual abuse cases are seen as fuelling such fears – for example, the McMartin case in California (Johnson) and the Peter Ellis case in New Zealand (Johnson, Hood, Farquhar, Jones). The authors do not dispute the fact that sexual abuse occurs, or the damage it does to its survivors. What they wish to engage with are the 'truth effects' of the discourse of the 'child at risk' and the 'dangerous (male) adult'. As male early childhood-worker Richard Johnson points out in his chapter, in the United States, as few as one per cent of all reported child abuse cases occur in school. Yet Johnson – a father, a teacher and a children's soccer coach – reports that: 'My once competent body is failing me as it becomes more and more unsafe. What makes my body especially unsafe to others is its maleness' (p. 99).

At the time I accepted the invitation to review this book, I had already read it and decided to adopt it as a set text for one of the modules in the on-line version of my undergraduate course 'Education and Sexuality.' Recently – in addition to women teachers, female student teachers and the occasional women's studies student – the on-campus version of this course has attracted young male trainee physical education teachers. Often these young men find themselves also expected to teach the health curriculum and/or sexuality education. The fears and anxieties about being men in teaching, identified by the authors in this text, echo those expressed to me by my male students. Like the men interviewed for Farquhar's and Jones's chapters, my male students have talked of the suspicion their choice of vocation arouses: 'male teacher = likes little boys = child molester'. The women in the course have concurred with these young men's perceptions of how they are regarded. They are terrified of being alone with a child, being accused of abuse, or even of hugging a crying child. The course provides a forum for discussion of these anxieties and this book will no doubt stimulate discussion of them.

Many of today's students see feminism as one of the lenses through which their parents' generation (mine) views the world, and which is used as a basis for discipline and regulation by authorities. In the educational institutions in which today's student teachers study and

teach, policies on matters such as EEO, gender inclusiveness, sexual harassment, and non-sexist language have encapsulated feminist concepts. As 'second-wave' feminist activists, professionals, and academics moved into and 'up' the educational hierarchies, we brought 'what we use to think with' into our work and feminist analyses moved into the various apparatuses of ruling. But for some, 'our' feminism/s are just part of the power structure, a tool for discipline and repression. Since the mid-1980s, the 'truth effects' of feminist discourses – feminism/s as tools of surveillance – have become subjected to feminist (and non-feminist) analysis.

Positioning herself as an 'evolutionary' rather than a 'radical' feminist, Lynley Hood writes a polemical chapter about the Peter Ellis case. She argues that – like the witch hunts of old – Ellis was a scapegoat for the hysteria about child abuse whipped up during the 1970s and 1980s by a 'coalition' of radical feminists, the child protection movement and the fundamentalist Christian 'social purity' groups. The historical evidence for a 'coalition' (rather than a mood 'in the air') is sketchy; her depiction of feminism is something of a caricature shaped to fit the frame of her argument. The tone is provocative, but the argument compelling to those of us who have worries about the Peter Ellis case. In research for her forthcoming book, Hood found 'no evidence of illegality by anyone accused in the case. Instead, I found convincing evidence that more than one hundred Christchurch children had been subject to unpleasant and psychologically hazardous procedures for no good reason' (p. 75). For Hood and other contributors (Johnson, Farquhar, Jones), Ellis – like Peter Edgar – is seen as a scapegoat for projected anxieties.

The Ellis case is mentioned by several authors – Johnson, Farquhar and Jones as well as Hood. However only one of these authors (Jones) explores how public suspicion of male teachers – especially men who work with little children – is fuelled by a deep-seated homophobia in addition to public fears of paedophilia more broadly. While male teachers per se are increasingly seen as potentially dangerous, the *gay* male teacher is particularly so. In her discussion of how student teachers and shopping mall Santa Clauses learn 'proper masculine pleasure', Jones argues that: 'men's pleasure in small children is suspect not merely as an illicit sexual pleasure, but as a *homosexual* pleasure. The demonisation of homosexual-as-paedophile haunts the straightforward pleasures that male teachers

might take in small boys' (p. 109). I would have liked to see more exploration of questions of touch and the gay male teacher. And what of the lesbian teacher touching children?

Throughout the 1970s, women's studies – and feminist research – defined itself as 'about women, by women and for women'. But by the late 1990s most, if not all, university women's studies programmes and departments had added the phrase 'and gender' to their titles. The turn to 'women's and gender studies' can be seen as a strategic response to low student enrolments caused by a combination of backlash politics and the demand for vocational courses in a managerialist, competitive environment. However, it is also a response to shifts in the (inter)disciplinary foundations on which women's studies rests. Throughout the 1980s theoretical shifts in humanities and social sciences chipped away at the two-sex binary upon which 1970s women's studies was grounded (queer theory being one example). At the same time, natural scientists in fields such as genetics and physiology were viewing the two-sex categorisation as increasingly fuzzy.[1] Personal accounts, and artistic impressions of gender reassignation, intersexuality and other forms of gender-bending also threw binaries into question. Women's Studies desperately needs to present itself as 'young and sexy'. Young students demand the admission of ambiguous or amorphous bodies, multiple identities, fluid orientations, transgressive theories, images and tales of gender-bending. This book is a contribution to such a blending. I await with interest my students' responses to it when 'Education and Sexuality' goes on-line in 2002.

Sue Middleton, *School of Education, University of Waikato.*

Notes

[1] Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse:feminism and technoscience* (Routledge, New York, 1997).

LIVING IN THE 20TH CENTURY. NEW ZEALAND HISTORY IN PHOTOGRAPHS, 1900–1980

Bronwyn Dalley

Bridget Williams Books/Craig Potton Publishing, in association with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Wellington, 2000, $49.95

Dalley argues that hair that was visible, other than on a woman's head, was considered unacceptable for most of the century. She illustrates this point with a 1952 photo of women canteen staff with unshaven legs (p. 205). Such hairy legs we are told were to vanish as the mini-skirt and stockingless fashions of the 1960s exposed new sites for shaving. So, are the women's legs on page 205 unshaven or not? I looked for a while but I couldn't decide. Nonetheless, the point is a good one. The next photo shows a bikini-clad model in 1969 obviously with hairless legs, underarms, and 'bikini-line'. Dalley notes that there was a radical feminist grow-back in the 1980s and 1990s.

Few sources, other than photos, would lend themselves to a consideration of trends in feminine shaving in twentieth century New Zealand women. Moreover, Dalley's book is the first broad attempt to write about such topics in 'everyday New Zealand life', and the author is to be congratulated for her innovation. We are introduced, for the first time in most instances, to over 350 black and white photos in this beautiful and wide-ranging book. Women's hairless appearance is part of one chapter out of seven, all of which speak to everyday life: paid and unpaid work, recreation and leisure, communications, accommodation and shelter, hair and clothing, food and drink, and a public view.

The history draws exclusively on the photographic collection at Archives New Zealand in Wellington. The collection contains nearly one million images. I for one both envy Dalley her research and sympathise with her agony of choice. The collection was the result of government-employed photographers, first in the government photographic branch and various agencies from 1901, and then in the National Publicity Studio for 40 years from 1945. The official photographers set out to record New Zealand life and scenery for publicity purposes. Their official work was supplemented by 'unofficial donations' of snaps by employees and photos in other private papers at Archives New Zealand. A unique collection has been

gathered from these various sources covering 'a surprising breadth of twentieth-century New Zealand life under the guise of 'government activity' (p. 18). The collection is not tidily indexed and Dalley is one of the first historians to systematically use it. So the book, and a related exhibition at Archives New Zealand's Head Office, were launched simultaneously to publicise a much under-used resource.

Dalley describes the collection, its origins, its gaps, its weaknesses and its strengths in an excellent introduction to the book. What is in the collection itself is important; even more so is the tiny proportion (less than one per cent) that Dalley selected to publish. The selection focuses on the mid-twentieth century. Rightly so, as we discover, for 'these middle decades ... were also formative years in our history. Economic depression, war, the flowering of the welfare state, rapid population growth and the expansion of cities, Maori urbanisation, postwar security and protest, as well as considerable social change mark' them (p. 15). The collection is not good on 'family and private life', but this is perhaps because 'weddings, christenings, birthdays or funerals' are not everyday actions. Perhaps they are not repeated sufficiently to become mundane and ordinary. There appear to be no photos about sex, and that should not be surprising, though conceivably not because sex is as unusual as weddings and christenings. The collection is almost as free of the sacred as it is of the carnal: while there is a photo of Ratana churchmen (p. 257), it is largely a book of everyday life – presumably reflecting the photographic collection – without religion. Certainly the fact that there are no photos of the feminist movement in the 1970s or the various Maori protest movements is no great loss given the book's largely non-political framework.

So the definition of everyday life might provoke some controversy. Even so, in spite of its government origins, its gaps, its weaknesses and her own definition, Dalley shows that the Archives New Zealand collection is a rich source for a history of everyday life in New Zealand. Above all it reveals the uneven developments between Pakeha and Maori, the differences between men's and women's and urban and rural dwellers experiences (p. 11). She may have picked out every photo there is of women but then this is a history of everyday life, not a mirror of the collection. Each chapter is framed by Dalley's introduction, an introduction giving an overview of the changes the images illustrate. Then, about half-way through, the captions to the photos become the only text.

Few New Zealand histories have concentrated on everyday life: 'ordinary activities – things done on a daily basis such as eating, drinking, dressing or working, activities of the home, the workplace, the street, or the sports field' rather than 'political events or national structures' (p. 12). From the outset, Dalley laudably adopts the approach of cultural history to turn our 'gaze from labour relations to the grimy table in the smoko room or the clothing worn by working men' and women to gain insight into the everyday life of New Zealanders. Photos would indeed allow us to concentrate on the grimy table and the workers' clothes. It is a shame that there were not many photos of grimy tables in the collection. Most readers of a women's studies journal will be aware of a bigger problem: that of trying to understand a part in abstraction from the whole. 'Separate spheres' history is limited, whether the sphere in focus is private rather than the public worlds, male rather than female orbs or everyday rather than political life. One of the major problems in the history of everyday life is the relationship between everyday and public life. It is not an issue with which Dalley engages, perhaps because photographs are not an apt tool with which to probe it.

One might recommend that historians gaze on both the grimy table and the labour relations and work politics of the workers sitting around it. But in the circumstances perhaps this is a counsel of perfection. For Dalley is trying to write an overview on thin foundations: there is little New Zealand work on the particular components out of which a synthesis can be built. Her footnotes can be read as an excellent review of recent New Zealand work on her various topics. Dalley has clearly done much work simply to contexualise the images. She has had to write captions on such 'diverse subjects: men's razors, the construction of hay stacks, the "rules" of 4 Square, or the art of catching eels' (p. 7). Overseas social and popular historians have written histories of dirt, clothes, how we learnt to eat off plates with knives and forks 'from below'.[1] For over 20 years historians associated with micro-history (microstoria) mentalities and the German school of everyday life (Alltagsgeschichte) have been considering what this history of everyday life 'means'.[2] (The first volume of Michel de Certeau *The Practice of Everyday Life* was published in 1979, although the second volume on living and cooking was not translated into English until 1998).[3] So there is an international historiography, though until recently not one strong in gender analysis.

Given the state of the historiography, this history of New Zealand everyday life in the twentieth century is an ambitious overview.

This paucity of the New Zealand historiography on everyday life has to be borne in mind when appraising what I think are the two weaknesses of this book. It explains less than it reveals and, oddly given the sophisticated introduction, it deals uncritically with the photos in the text.

What Dalley has gained on inclusiveness, she loses on incisiveness. Take for instance, her consideration of turning points. Demographic and public health historians would probably argue that health changes have been fundamental to everyday life. Their turning points would be people getting off dirt floors, basic sewerage measures which ended epidemics, hospital reform and immunisation. Women's historians might suggest mortality and fertility have wrought the greatest change in women's everyday life and their turning points would be older couples' abstinence from sexual intercourse, vulcanised rubber, the containment of sepsis and the pill. The problem is saying something about these and all the various aspects of everyday life. *Living in the Twentieth Century* does not so much toss the standard turning points to one side as offer new reasons for old turning points which are stretched and drawn out to cover almost half a century. Once there are too many turning points, the very idea of a 'turning point' loses its force. 'Massive change' in many ways becomes almost 'perpetual change', given that the two turning points, or 'markers of change', in New Zealand's everyday life are said to be 'the First World War and the 1920s, and the Second World War and postwar years of the 1950s and 1960s' (p. 13). It is very difficult to argue with such large general turning points.

With width has come shallowness because we are given no clear motor of change, nor direction of change, for understanding everyday life. *Living in the Twentieth Century* becomes a catalogue of rich and varied experiences, but not an explanation of those experiences. We are told on the last page that 'Amongst the many threads of twentieth-century life shown in these pages, no one strand is dominant. Protest is strong in recent memory of the later twentieth century, poverty affected the lives of many in the first and last decades (as well as several decades in between); far-off wars brought death to families and communities; stability is off-set by sudden or long-term change' (p. 271). And consistent with this, Dalley suggests that *Living in the*

Twentieth Century offers quite literally 'snapshots, rather than a comprehensive account' (p. 20).

Second, and most curiously, the photos are dealt with uncritically. In her introduction Dalley points out that history writing is not a mirror to history and that photos do not speak for themselves. Photos, like any historical source, have to be read and interpreted. At the same time not all historical sources are equal; as historical sources photos have particular strengths and weaknesses. Dalley cites Raphael Samuel's warning that 'The realistic detail that is part of their attraction can be deceptive, for the frame of a photograph acts as boundary, obscuring more than it reveals'.[4] And yet Dalley describes but does not question her photos. The photos are only occasionally played against one another; extremes of housing are shown (p. 156) and rich and poor (p. 255). But there might have been much more of this. Take for instance, the chapter on work. Work is said to be critical to everyday life, 'Paid or unpaid, work lies at the heart of much of New Zealand life' (p. 23). Consequently it is the first chapter. The text discusses changes in occupations and photos indicate change over time. However, there is a huge difference in relations in the workplace and conditions if the workplace is the mechanised Chief Accountants Office (p. 53) or the small pay office in Taihape (p. 52). Is one more typical than another? Is one kind of photo more typical in the collection than another? Despite the sophisticated discussion of 'reading' photos in the introduction, the photos of work are displayed rather than read.

These minor criticisms should not detract from the great strength of this book. It is the first broad attempt to write about everyday New Zealand life, the first to do so using photographs and to seriously consider gendered experience. It is both innovative and inaugural. And the photos really are wonderful.

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Notes

[1] For example, see James B. Gardner & George Rollie Adams (eds), *Ordinary People and Everyday Life: Perspectives on New Social History* (Nashville, 1983).

[2] See Gregory S. Brad, 'Is small beautiful? Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life', *History and Theory* 38, 1 (1999) pp. 100–110, which reviews

Alf Lüdtke (ed.), *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, trans. William Templer (Princeton, 1995); and Jacques Revel (ed.), *Jeux d'Echelles: La Micro-Analyse a l'Expérience* (Paris, 1996).

[3] Michel de Certeau, Luce Giard & Pierre Mayol, *The Practice of Everyday Life, Volume 2: Living & Cooking,* trans. Timothy J. Tomasik (Minneapolis, 1998). See also Agnes Heller, *Everyday Life,* trans. G.L. Campbell (London, 1984) (f.p. 1978); and Fernand Braudel, *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible, vol. 1 of Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century*, trans. Sian Reynolds, (New York, 1985), (f.p. 1979).

[4] Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory. Vol 1. Past and Present in Contemporary Culture,* (London, 1994) p. 328.

AT HOME IN NEW ZEALAND: HOUSES HISTORY PEOPLE

Editor: Barbara Brookes

Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 2000, $49.95

'The Idea of Home in New Zealand' was the theme of a symposium held at Otago University in November 1998. The articles in this beautifully produced and illustrated volume are based on papers offered at this symposium. Brookes' strong introduction lays bare the complex evolution of her personal idea of home. The dedication is to her mother 'who made my childhood home happy and does the same for her grandchildren'. An immigrant from Dublin, her mother rejoiced in the space in her house, garden and hot water cupboard, loved her seaside suburb, and in the holidays welcomed children from a 'Home'. Brookes evokes the Sumner esplanade at night where 'the golden glow from the windows suggested warmth and intimacy.' Later she recognises that a home must have a material structure and location, mentioning her father's incredulity that her squalidly located student flat should now be her preferred home. Then came the reluctant realisation that violence and oppression could lie behind lighted windows. She says that *At Home in New Zealand* does not claim to treat this underside of the 'home' fantasy, but concentrates rather on the ideological construct of the home and its material form, inside and out.

The change of title between symposium and book appears significant, making it easier to accommodate papers which do not really address the 'idea of home' or consider whether a woman's presence in it as unpaid worker and family caregiver has been central to the concept of 'home'. A certain uneasy slippage between 'house' and 'home' allows more emphasis on the 'New Zealandness' of the material structure. This review focuses on the contributions that address the ideology of home most directly.

The symposium theme is tackled very directly in Margaret Tennant's 'The Decay of Home Life?'. She argues that 'the home is more than a physical structure – it houses human interactions of a peculiarly intense kind'. Tennant uses turn of the (last) century welfare case records to show how the 'bad' or 'problem' home helped formulate the positive ideal. There was increased policing of family life by child welfare and school medical officers. Present calls for CYPS and neighbours to uncover or forestall child abuse by better policing were heard 100 years ago. The Women's Christian Temperance Union ('For God, Home and Humanity') and the Society for the Protection of Women and Children asserted their right to investigate home living conditions. Action by the Society for the Protection of Women and Children was prompted more often by outside complaints than by the abused parties.

In 'Strangers at the Hearth – The Eclipse of Domestic Service in New Zealand Homes 1830s–1940s' Charlotte Macdonald offers a condensed history and statistics of domestic service, including the reluctance of Maori women to engage in it. Through this brief history she explores 'the reconfiguration of the middle-class household' and the emergence of the New Zealand villa or bungalow as an ideal nuclear-family home. Macdonald also observes that the virtual absence of Maori from domestic service meant that 'the home was not generally a place in which colonial or ethnic relations were created and played out'. However, as the responsibility for the servantless house fell incontestably to the women in it an 'intensely domestic and highly utilitarian' form of femininity was developed.

Helen M. Leach in 'The European House and Garden in New Zealand. A Case for Parallel Development' begins with the voice of Katherine Mansfield's character Stanley Burnell. He is impatient to be out of his workplace in town into the garden and paddocks of his recently acquired home in the country. But Leach points out that,

while for Stanley the home/garden is an undifferentiated domestic retreat, the women of the family explore and enumerate the different components and spaces in the house and garden. Their diversity and size suggest a satisfying social ranking and grandeur. Leach analyses in detail what Macdonald has indicated in general, that the allocation of public and private zones inside and outside the house is further complicated by family and servant zones. The two essays are mutually illuminating, both reminding us that the home was/is a workplace for women.

Anna Petersen's essay on 'The European use of Maori Art in New Zealand Homes 1890–1914' is a fascinating illustrated commentary on the appropriation of Maori Art to decorate the houses of prominent citizens like Sir Robert and Lady Stout, Thomas and Bessie Hocken and Alexander Bathgate. Elaborate carved designs were incorporated into fire surrounds, doorframes, newel posts and furniture. Sometimes Maori carvers were employed but Pakeha women made their own versions. Was this an attempt to make themselves and their houses 'at home in New Zealand'? Despite instances of violation of tapu and aesthetic incongruity, Petersen sees this movement, though limited, as 'part of a two-way productive process of appropriation between the cultures'.

Lawrence Jones sees the shadow of the parlour in 'A Home in This World? Provincial Writers and the Puritan Family'. He presents the childhood and adolescent family home as revealed in the writing of Hyde, Sargeson, Woollaston, Frame and others as a veritable torture chamber. The twin puritan code of hard work and sexual inhibition instilled shame and guilt into the young growing up there. Jones claims that the 'relative unanimity' of the writers showed itself across a great range of geographical location, social class and religious persuasion. Oppression was felt in rural and urban, working class and bourgeois homes alike. These writers were definitely not 'at home' in their homes of origin, constantly seeking and sometimes finding an alternative home, even a material dwelling like Sargeson's Takapuna bach in Esmonde Road. It is significant that two of the writers he mentions, Robin Hyde and Janet Frame, were welcomed and felt 'at home' there. Jones notes that these writers and artists of the thirties and forties specifically dissociated themselves from the icons of their contemporaries (p. 92).

I don't believe Robin Hyde ever renounced the positive image of

a home and a fire with its 'heaped golden embers', but to enjoy it there had to be 'patches of gold, the reflection of similar fires' all down the street. It was the exclusion of outsiders that distressed her. She wanted 'not a cell into which one can retreat, but a place from which one can advance'.[1]

The erection of a New Zealand State House in 1950 at the Olympia Ideal Home Show in London is the subject of Robin Skinner's article 'Home Away. A State House in London'. It attracted visits from six royals and many potential migrants to New Zealand. There were some misrepresentations in displaying it as a typical New Zealand state house. Original artworks, a refrigerator, satin bedcovers and wall-to-wall carpets could be seen through the double-size window area without even entering the house. No one mentioned that the newly elected National government, wishing to build a nation of home-owners, would turn its back on Labour's rental housing programme. Gender expectations were clearly demarcated, however. Men designed, planned and built the 'house' but women working in the kitchen and laundry and supervising children at play created the 'home'. Visitors were intrigued by the rotary clothesline and the impermanent (timber) building materials.

Louise Shaw, in 'A Woman's Place?' suggests that the ideology of the home, with its notions of security, comfort and happy family relationships, prescribed and depended on the existence of a woman in the home providing care and nurture, a housewife, indeed a woman married to a house rather than to a man. Shaw notes that the twin drives towards home ownership and cost reduction under the National Government in the fifties left many women with workplaces that were smaller, shoddier and less convenient than the state rental houses they were intended to supplant. In reaction, the National Council of Women, the Home Science School and its alumnae in Auckland and some women's branches of the Labour Party criticised the low-cost housing trends. The Auckland alumnae called for increased women's representation in matters of housing. Already in 1947 an address by Professor Ann Strong to a Home Science refresher course at Otago had stressed that mothers and housewives should have the freedom and responsibility to be part of a world larger than the family. She raised the possibility of cooperative child-care and house-cleaning and even cooperative kitchens. Emily Carpenter in a 1953 radio broadcast asserted that a housewife should be equipped to think and

act intelligently on the social and political questions of the day. Of course women like Jean Devanny, Elsie Locke and Robin Hyde had written even more radical things twenty years earlier and this was only a modest move by mainstream organisations encouraging women to assert their own housing needs and question the National government's housing policies. Despite increased input from women in monitoring house design, and despite their remaining longer in and returning earlier to the paid workforce, often to buy more space and household appliances, Shaw claims that by the sixties women were no longer finding their dream of home satisfied by the standardised suburban bungalow and the notions of domesticity it embodied.

The article on 'Sarah Campion and the Modern Colonial House' by Xanthe Howes and Paul Walker sent me to the book *'I Live Here Now'– Sarah Campion in 1950s New Zealand*, edited by Rachel Scott, which is a collection of all the *Home and Building* articles discussed.[2] I recall many articles by Sarah Campion in more radical papers like *Here and Now* and *New Zealand Monthly Review*. Howes and Walker recognise that Campion's voice is cosmopolitan, idiosyncratic and imaginative but they find her submissive to the prescribed domestic norms, a typical or model 1950s housewife! I wager that women like Sarah Campion and Margot Roth used 'housewife' laughingly about themselves knowing that 'housewife' and 'hussy' were the same word differently pronounced. I don't agree that Sarah Campion will become 'meek Mrs. Alpers' and tailor her reading to fit the bookshelves in her modern colonial house. In her insouciant style Sarah Campion makes clear that home is a place for reading books, talking, welcoming a horde of one's son's muddy friends and looking out onto the wider world. 'A place from which one can advance' in Hyde's words. Articles and letters to the press on apartheid, colonialism, nuclear weapons and capitalism were sent from that small open-plan timber home.

In 'Book, House, Home' Justine Clark and Paul Walker prefigure or condense their material for *Looking for the Local: Architecture and the New Zealand Modern*.[3] Its publication coincided with an exhibition of the same name at the Adam Art Gallery. Both were based on writings and photographs assembled in the 1950s by the Wellington Architectural Centre and the Auckland Group Architects with the intention of publishing a book. The project foundered amid controversy. Was the small detached timber house the best or only

valid expression of New Zealand architecture or did public buildings, apartments and inner-city redevelopment have their place? Did only nuclear families have homes? Clark and Walker touch on the slippage between 'house' and 'home' and mention 'too easy gender assumptions'.

Clark and Walker return in the last section to a more direct evaluation of what the simple, straightforward, reduced timber house built by Group Architects offered as a family home. They quote A.R.D. Fairburn's admiration but also his reservations: 'I doubt if these young men have envisaged clearly enough the family situation at its stickiest, with the twins howling in the bedroom, the three elder children doing their homework or playing trains, and Mum and Dad listening to the radio'.[4]

Barbara Brookes article, 'Nostalgia for "Innocent Homely Pleasures", analysing the 1964 controversy over *Washday at the Pa*, fittingly concludes the collection. This School Publications Branch booklet was withdrawn and copies destroyed on the request of the Maori Women's Welfare League who claimed that their right to define and represent the meaning of home and housing for Maori had been usurped. By what was seen as a paradoxical reversal of values the Maori Women's Welfare League aspired to modern city and suburban accommodation for Maori families either through state rental housing or home ownership by capitalisation of the family benefit. Pakeha admirers and defenders of *Washday at the Pa* saw Ans Westra's photographs as robust images of a lost rural world of warm family happiness and cooperation, not dependent on stainless steel and electric appliances. 'Few European New Zealand children have faces as beatific as Mrs. Wereta's, when she turns her bread out of the coal range' (p. 224).

Brookes observes that the League's rejection of *Washday* was 'consistent with its project of conserving difference ... without conceding Maori rights to equivalence in material living standards' (pp. 224–5). Pakeha regrets at the destruction of *Washday*, expressing a romantic nostalgia for a domestic mother present at the heart of the home, had to give way to the League's claim to control the representation of a Maori family at home. Brookes suggests that 'to be "at home" in New Zealand, Maori and Pakeha had to seek an accommodation' (Introduction p. 3).

As a 75-year-old feminist and social historian I regretted the

absence of a chapter exploring the effects on the ideology of 'home' of social and economic changes over the last 30 years. The DPB, television, gay couples, femocrats, eating out and fast food, the widening gap between affluence and poverty, must all have left their mark.

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Notes

1 Robin Hyde, *A Home in This World,* p. 10, with an introduction by Derek Challis (Longman Paul, 1984).

2 Rachel Scott (ed.), *'I Live Here Now' – Sarah Campion in 1950s New Zealand* (Shoal Bay Press, Christchurch, 2000).

3 Justine Clark & Paul Walker, *Looking for the Local: Architecture and the New Zealand Modern* (Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2000).

4 A.R.D. Fairburn, 'Another Student House', *New Zealand Listener*, 12 May 1950, p. 7.

PALMERSTON NORTH WOMEN'S REFUGE – HERSTORY 1979–2001

Sheryl Hann

Palmerston North Women's Refuge Inc., Palmerston North, 2001, $15 plus $3.50 postage & packaging, PO Box 573, Palmerston North

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In this book, Sheryl Hann has made a brave attempt to pull together a brief overview of 22 years herstory and work carried out by the Palmerston North Women's Refuge (PNWR). PNWR works to provide safety and support for women and children experiencing domestic violence, and endeavours to empower women to live free from violence and abuse. Concurrently, refuge workers strive for social change and are committed to eliminating domestic violence.

The book highlights the plight of the many women trapped in violent and abusive relationships in our society, and provides insights into how the refuge was established, the philosophy and guiding principles of the work. While the book is a celebration of the refuge's

successes – 'when children smile and feel free to make a bit of noise when they play: and when they see women happy and excited about a new found independence'(p. 94) – it does not prevaricate about some of the tensions and politics that at times stifle the joy.

Herstory 1979–2001 is divided into two main sections. In the first part, Kelly shares her own story, a graphic narrative about her journey into a relationship that plummeted into a cavern of despair. It was a dangerous relationship where her partner, Cole, repeatedly abused, assaulted and raped her. Kelly's account describes a process of degradation, or as well-known scholar Erving Goffman outlined, a means 'by which a person's self is mortified'.[1] Thus through a series of abasements: emotional, physical and sexual assaults combined with other power and control tactics employed by Cole, Kelly and her children became entrapped within the confines of her relationship. Her story illustrates a contradictory world in which a positive sense of self, love and hope gives way to fear, alienation and a sense of powerlessness. As the reader proceeds through the narrative, however, we see that Kelly began to make sense of her victimisation and the power and control exerted over her by Cole. Subsequently, Kelly, with the support of her family, found her way to PNWR where the workers and advocates listened. She gained understanding, support and information that enabled her to make informed and positive choices about her life. With support Kelly not only ended her relationship with Cole, she also started to look positively towards the future. Humbly, she declared, 'I'm going to make the most of my life now, for me and my children' (p. 44).

The second part of the book draws attention to the development and workings of PNWR and some of the tensions, controversies and debates that have occurred. Working from a socio-cultural feminist/ pro-feminist analysis, PMWR workers locate male violence towards women and children within social structures, traditions, and the ideology enmeshed in patriarchy, traditional gender assumptions and power relations. Hann provides a summary of the power and control tactics men use, with or without intent, against women in a systematic way to ensure control. Although these theoretical underpinnings are briefly covered, the discussion provides access to the overarching philosophy of refuge work. From this framework PNWR, alongside all refuges affiliated to the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (NCIWR), works to challenge sexism, racism,

homophobia and socio-economic inequalities that impact heavily on women in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Herstory 1979–2001 allows readers to appreciate the complexities of working in the local community, with the personal and practical implications of providing safety and support for women and children, and on the individual, local and national political levels, educating and promoting change in the wider social context. When PNWR first began in 1979, the objectives were, 'to make available support and accommodation for women and children who were facing physical or mental abuse ... [and to] initiate research and publicise the issue of violent relationships' (p. 58). The course of events that led to the opening of the Women's Refuge Safehouse on 8 September 1979 is described, and those courageous individuals and organisations that actively began to deal with the challenges involved in running a refuge are recognised. Snippets from PNWR reports, minutes or case notes and workers memories are reported in the book and illustrate workers' struggles and the tensions this work involves. Likewise, similar stories and memos from women who have used the refuge services depict fond memories and the rewards of refuge work.

Some of the tensions discussed include struggles over funding and the practicalities of finding a suitable house and furniture so that the service for women could be established. Then there is the reality of educating the community at large when unsympathetic community members blamed the women for the violence and abuse they were forced to endure or police, church or welfare workers were unhelpful. At times workers had to deal with individuals and groups that saw refuge as a threat. They promulgated myths and negative stereotypical labels in an attempt to hinder the refuge's work. For example, Hann reports that refuge workers were and are 'seen as "men-haters" who broke up families ... [as] butch dykes who convert women to lesbianism; pagan witches; and fat ugly women who have a problem because they cannot get a man' (p. 71). Then there were the debates about whether refuge should shelter men fleeing from violent women or if men should have an active role in the running of a women-centred safe house. Clearly, the idea of women coming together to care for other women drew a mixed reaction from the local community. Although some tensions and myths have dissipated over time, Hann's discussion indicates that others have not. Furthermore, within the PNWR and the NCIWR debate and controversy have arisen 'between

those who wanted to take a "low key" approach and those who wanted to be more political, pro-active and "out-there" (p. 75).

While the internal politics of refuge cannot be fully documented, Hann reflects on some of the discussion, negotiations and learnings in several key areas. As PNWR developed so too did the NCIWR, which brought independent refuges together under a national body. Hann outlines the 'constant tension' (p. 78) that occurred when the Code of Ethics and Code of Practice were drawn up and adopted in 1985. Recurrent negotiations about the role of feminism, the role of Te Tiriti O Waitangi and the women-centredness of the service took place. Debates brought different and sometimes contradictory perspectives to the floor. In particular regard was the liberal versus radical feminist viewpoints and the conservative or Christian versus feminist stands on domestic violence and how a refuge should operate. The tension involved in these debates was compounded with additional negotiations in the development and implementation of parallel development, which initiated two service streams, one Maori and one Tauiwi (non-Maori), and the NCIWR's commitment to lesbian visibility in service and work practice.

Although Hann draws attention to the above and a number of other debates that have worked to shape PNWR's herstory, her work is largely descriptive and there is no in-depth analysis of the collective processes that have occurred. This becomes a little frustrating for people who are interested in how these tensions are resolved or at least managed. While a theoretical analysis is not the purpose of *Herstory 1979–2001*, these debates would provide a good platform for sociological exploration and discussion. Furthermore, such an analysis could explore collective decision-making and group dynamics; power relations among women bringing in sexuality, class and ethnicity as influential factors; and how the proponents of various strands of feminism accommodate and acquiesce as the boundaries between strands are contested, redefined and renegotiated to enable the collective to function as a whole.

Moving on to the more celebratory aspects of *Herstory 1979–2001,* and in spite of the debates and controversy above, Hann details the successes that have been made through collective decision-making processes. Refuge as a whole provides a model of management varying in degrees from management and governance that utilises consensus decision-making as opposed to the hierarchical structures

that are perpetuated by patriarchal ideology throughout society. The courageous stand for collective decision-making has been maintained even when pressure from funders endorsing local and national New Right policies that have eventuated through government during the 1980s and 90s have pushed for greater efficiency and accountability.

Hann reflects on many other joyous moments in refuge work, some of which warrant brief reflection here. She reports on the good feelings that emerge when workers see women become empowered to take hold of their lives and move forward with hope without fear of violence or abuse. Snippets from the women's thank-you notes convey a sense of pride and satisfaction and endorse the fact that the effort and time the refuge and workers have contributed has been worthwhile. A child's drawing presented in the book with the words 'Happy House' and 'Happy Now' (p. 137) illustrate these feelings graphically. On the more humorous side, Hann shares a number of snippets that encapsulate some of the lighter moments in refuge work. For example, she reports on times when refuge workers are called on to hold ghosts accountable for their behaviour and when a full-scale manoeuvre with military police, soldiers, and civilian police with dogs was arranged. All had consulted and were ready to make 'a 'left flank' attack' (p. 122) only to have the woman they believed needed assistance tell them she did not want refuge help. By spreading these and other delightful inserts throughout the book, Hann has managed to present a balance that illustrates the positive and quirky aspects of refuge work without negating the complexities involved.

Overall, the book is easy and interesting reading and would be particularly useful as a training resource for trainees or novice refuge workers in that it provides a useful overview of PNWR as a whole. For scholars and researchers delving into the domestic violence area the book would be useful, alongside other publications from NCIWR or individual refuges in providing background information and a solid grounding in refuge work and philosophy in Aotearoa/New Zealand.[2] *Herstory 1979–2001* not only extends the information contained in other refuge works it also delves into the more controversial and complex operational side of refuge work. In terms of PNWR, it provides a historical overview that will be a valued resource for years to come as it encapsulates and preserves understanding of the general themes, trends and shifts that have occurred and shaped the journey that PNWR and the workers have followed.

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Notes

[1] See Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, 1961). Note: Goffman's work focuses on degradation ceremonies employed systematically in total institutions to 'untrain' – referred to by Goffman as 'disculturation' (p. 13) – the new patient, recruit, or inmate. However, these processes can easily be recognised in the institutions of the family and marriage where some women, as wives or partners, become prisoners to the dictates of their men.

[2] See B. Banks, J. Florence & J. Ruth, *He Said He Loved Me Really: Experiences at a Women's Refuge* (Halfway House Book Collective, Ponsonby, 1979); National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, *Fresh Start: A Self-help Book for New Zealand Women in Abusive Relationships* (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges, Wellington, 1982).

BAUDRILLARD'S CHALLENGE: A FEMINIST READING

Victoria Grace

Routledge: London and New York, 2000, 212 pp. $71.95

Like Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard is not a favourite of feminist theorists, and most have ignored his work. Victoria Grace's book, *Baudrillard's Challenge: a Feminist Reading*, is the first extended critical appreciation of Baudrillard's contribution to feminist thought. It is not, she argues, 'a book about Baudrillard, it is an engagement with his work' (p. 3). The book's release was timely, coinciding with the first visit of Jean Baudrillard to New Zealand. *Baudrillard's Challenge* is, in every way, an extremely scholarly and rigorous contribution. It is not an easy book. While being an exceptionally clear exposition, it requires hard work, particularly for people like myself who are not Baudrillard scholars. But it is also a highly rewarding read.

In *Baudrillard's Challenge* Grace uses some of Baudrillard's best-known essays to both methodologically and epistemologically critique some of the most pressing concerns of feminist theory in the last two

decades, in particular the questions of identity and difference.

To set up the book, Grace begins by questioning the assumptions that underpin the feminist post-structuralist approach to language, whereby subjects are created through discourse. Baudrillard's critique of the political economy of the sign interrogates the nature of meaning, and thus can be useful, Grace argues, to an understanding of the object status of women. Baudrillard's is a question of value. There is a value system (a code) that precedes the constitution of objects as objects and which gives objects a particular status. And this code also structures the relationships between objects and subjects. Subjects are posited as autonomous and the relationship between objects (women) and subjects (men) are dichotomous. The relationship is also hierarchical; the subject is valued over the object. This binary relation man/woman is built on an economic exchange model in which identity is set as oppositional. Identity as a woman is based on its opposite, man. Baudrillard's challenge to feminist theory is not just that binary codes situate women in the lowest place in the hierarchy man/woman, but to the codification itself that precedes such a hierarchical structure.

Grace argues that Baudrillard proffers symbolic exchange as a form antithetical to this hierarchical economic code and model, where the binary opposition between subject/object, man/woman does not hold, a place where in Grace's words 'there is no identity' (p.19). This call to no identity means that to take up Baudrillard's challenge is to question some of the most basic tenets of feminism.

In late modernity, there has been a shift in economic value from exchange value to sign value. The sign does not avoid the logic of political economy. Rather the concurrent constitution of value and signification means that signs function as exchange value and commodities function as signs. This weaving of the two into one another has meant that reality has become a function of the sign, a hyperreal.

In this movement toward the political economy of the sign (described in detail in the book) identity is not constituted as oppositional; it is now pure positivity. While allegedly encouraging difference and diversity, this positivity relies on the exclusion of difference and otherness: 'The abstract code that regulates sign value in the contemporary political economy of the west, a code that creates the systematic programme for infinite consumption and proliferation of identities, is a form of social control that Baudrillard writes about as absolute' (p. 23).

What Grace does so elegantly in *Baudrillard's Challenge* is to take these principles to deconstruct (if we are to plagiarise this term from another school of thought) feminist post-structuralist assumptions about sexual difference (in the case of Luce Irigaray) and the proliferation of identity (in the case of Judith Butler). Grace argues that both Butler and Irigaray fail to confront the actual logic of value. It is at this point that the book becomes, for me, *Baudrillard's Challenge*.

First, Irigaray. Grace argues, via Baudrillard, that the question of sexual difference is based on the valuation of the one, from which the other is added or differentiated. For Irigaray the way out of the binary opposition is the valuation of women as subjects, a feminine specificity. In contrast, Grace argues that this demand for women's subjectivity and autonomy is an insistence on the very logic that gave rise to women's oppression in the first place and from which it seeks to escape.

Judith Butler, Grace contends, grapples with the problematic of women's interpellation into gender. For Butler, there is no true or original femininity; femininity is an imitation, a parody. Grace is critical of Butler on a number of points. First, Butler's universalist tendencies disavow their cultural and historical location. Second, she assumes the productivity of the subject and identity, but this call for the proliferation and multiplicity of identities may be much less radical than it appears. This point is reiterated later on in the book when Grace discusses transsexuality. Butler's emphasis on gender as discursively and performatively constituted in difference also warrants Grace's attention, and she contends that Butler's stress on the linguistic character of difference is symptomatic of the era of the sign and formulated on the exclusion of the symbolic. Lastly, Grace argues that the logic of Butler's argument for the transferability of the phallus has exactly the same logic as Irigaray's. Why would you argue for the very thing that has provided your subordination?

The emphasis on gender proliferation, ambiguity or difference (e.g. transsexuality) is part of the globalisation of difference such that it becomes hegemonic and same. Grace shows that when Baudrillard speaks of transsexuality he is 'pointing to the confusion and contagion of categories which has more to do with indifference (in all senses of the word)…' (p. 131). Rather than a belief in women's singularity, as per Irigaray, or an emphasis on multiplicity, as per Butler, Grace proposes an engagement with Baudrillard's notions of simulation, in whose nexus identity and difference are implicated. In simulation,

identity and sexuality becomes a form of sport or a pornography.

The last part of the book is an examination of Baudrillard's notion of seduction. The binary opposition man/woman, Grace argues, is for Baudrillard a masculinist opposition. Phallogocentrism is an instance of the hegemony of production; the feminine, on the other hand, is seduction. Femininity here is not essentially associated with women, nor is seduction with the female. And furthermore seduction has nothing to do with the subject. To become a female subject is to lose the power of seduction, to become ensnared within the power of the sign. Rather than the hyperreal dispersal of identity into indifference, for Grace seduction, which is of the order of the symbolic, impels the binary opposition of man and woman together.

I would heartily recommend *Baudrillard's Challenge*. While in no way agreeing with all its tenets (I am after all a confirmed Derridean), it is an extremely well argued and compelling book, entirely original in both vision and content.

HEATHER WORTH, *Institute for Research on Gender, University of Auckland.*

GIRLS AND WOMEN, MEN AND BOYS: GENDER IN TARADALE, 1886–1930

Caroline Daley

Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1999. $39.95

With monographs on any area of New Zealand's gender history unfortunately still few and far between, Caroline Daley's study of the performance of gender in the Hawke's Bay town of Taradale makes a brave and important contribution to the re-casting of traditional history. Moving beyond a women's history that recovers and celebrates women's experiences, Daley attempts to re-cast 'the whole' by interpreting the history of a local community through a gendered lens. Influenced by local area studies, rather than letting aspects of women's culture and life courses guide the parameters of her work, Daley opts for 1886 as the beginning of her book because that is

when Taradale officially became a town district. For its significance as a marker of memory, the 1930 Hawke's Bay earthquake provides the closing curtain.

Defining gender as a relational concept, and hence dealing with 'gender relations', rather than 'gender roles', Daley grapples with historical meanings of gender, and of how gender was constructed, played out, and contested in a local context. This involves interconnections and interactions between women's and men's lives, an endeavour that is reflected in the structure of the book. After introducing Taradale, and placing it in context, there is a chapter on family and community. Here Daley builds upon the work of women's history, extending her gaze to include men in her examination of building community. Chapter three foregrounds connections between household and the local economy. At this point in the book, women and men's work emerges as an indicator for exploring gender. The book then follows a see-saw-like structure, bobbing from women to men, and back to balance in the middle by considering both together, then from feminine, to masculine. Chapter four involves a detailed discussion of women's work, while chapter five is dedicated to men's work. Chapter six considers communal leisure, while chapter seven is feminine leisure, and chapter eight is masculine leisure.

There is much innovative material and analysis in the leisure section of the book. The communal leisure chapter includes such diverse pursuits as picnics, church, shows, and the races. Daley argues that, while it made a difference for women, age and marital status rarely divided men, with 'a shared set of values' often prevailing in an inclusive masculine leisure. At times, the category of leisure becomes too all-encompassing, involving too much generalisation, and even reinforcing the gender norms of the time. For example, the Women's Institute (WI) is interpreted as a leisure activity that women joined to enjoy a social life (p. 128). Maybe so, but the WI's political potential goes unnoticed under such a framework.

Daley is able to cover a large terrain in such sweeping and synthesising fashion through her adherence to a number of themes. Building upon the work of women's historians, her themes are kin groups and interactions, the household economy and, least conventionally, leisure. Since Daley completed her research, over ten years ago, a crisis of representation has seen the fragmenting of the woman subject herself. In a reflection of the rapidly evolving field

that is women's/gender/feminist history, were the study carried out today there would be more reference to sexuality, ethnicity and violence. In her introduction, Daley clearly situates her study within gender history, justifying her themes by the extent to which available sources limited her inquiry: a constant concern for historians. Yet fast changes in the field, combined with a tough and oft-times sluggish publishing climate (neither at all Daley's fault), are more likely to explain why this work was not published at the time when it was theoretically on the cutting-edge.

Daley's themes may not all be of the latest trend, but they are vital and important. Her exploration of continuity rather than change leads her to reject a watershed in Taradale's gender relations. Rather, she suggests small but important 'repositionings' and the importance of inter-generationality, especially in men's work and their understandings of masculinity (p. 72). Throughout the book there is a concern with inter-generational change. Daley grapples with the big issue of how women's lives changed during her timeframe, both in work and in leisure, drawing upon examples such as young women's earning power, women's increasing role in Taradale's public life, and their presence in previously male domains.

Of particular appeal is the book's commitment to 'history from below', the 'everyday', and its skilful mapping of the often 'taken for granted'. Daley writes of birth, illegitimacy and weddings with care and interest, while reading about the making of butter is not a chore. The use of oral histories adds an important layer to this book. Methodologically, Daley found that oral history was one place where women gained voice in speaking and remembering for themselves as well as *for* men. The diversity of sources leads to the sheer depth and detail of this book that makes it so immediate and enjoyable. By the end of the study Daley's database included information on over 9000 people. This is a solid book in which numbers with life breathed into them 'do matter' (p. 29).

As well as making a useful contribution to gender history, this book provides an excellent local/ regional history, and will be of use to anybody who is interested in conducting a local area study that successfully shows the importance of gender. As local history, the book engages with current debates in New Zealand historiography; namely the mostly androcentric atomisation thesis of whether in colonial Pakeha New Zealand society people were alienated atoms

(Fairburn) or co-operative crews (Belich). Daley wades into this debate and demonstrates how insights from women's history first are useful, and second, can destabilise gender-blind theories. From her feminist perspective, Daley argues for the importance of kin and family life and ties in New Zealand's past. Such arguments favour a revised notion of crews. Yet, although her conclusions in this area have much in common with Jim Gardner's work, there is no mention of his work on the South Island.

This is a careful, useful, and important book, for gender history, local history and New Zealand history in general. Non-historians will find Daley's detailed pin-pointing of gender performance an application readily applicable to the present, part of the on-going quest to deepen our understanding of masculinity and femininity. This is also a highly readable book, possessing a strong human-interest-nosy-element, and an undercurrent of quips. It is reasoned and scholarly, and rather than going for a grand thesis and a basic thrust with a watershed, it seeks and achieves balance and complexity. For, as Daley argues, there are rarely watersheds in gender relations, but rather 'ebbs and flows'.

KATIE PICKLES, *History, University of Canterbury.*

THE BETTER PART

Meg Campbell

Hazard Press, Christchurch, 2000. $21.95

The Better Part is a selection by Meg Campbell of her poems from 1969 to 2000. As all three of her collections – *The Way Back* 1981, *A Durable Fire* 1982, *Orpheus and Other Poems* 1990 – are out of print this is a welcome collection by a poet, who, though often anthologised, deserves to be better known as a significant New Zealand writer. Its appearance, together with the republication of Mary Stanley's single volume of poetry, *Starveling Yea*r in 1994, begins to give the sense of a persistent female tradition that has often not been acknowledged. Both Meg Campbell and Mary Stanley's husbands – Alistair Campbell

and Kendrick Smithyman – are far better known and in both cases the wives, bringing up the children, have a comparatively slight body of published poetry. Meg Cambell's are short, clear, personal poems which tell with a startling and poignant simplicity the dilemma of being a woman trying to write, trying to love her husband – 'There are fewer poets alive/ of your standing' – trying to overcome her sense of tentative uncertainty, and struggling with mental illness. Campbell's first poem, 'Solitary Confinement', one of her best, was written in 1969 when she was in the Female Refractory Ward, Villa 9, Porirua Hospital, on her fifth admission for 'manic depression'. Her first admission had been seven months after her son's birth when she was twenty. 'Solitary Confinement' is about finding poetry – 'words'– as the way back to sanity. In a letter to Joy McKenzie, whose 1995 University of Auckland MA thesis 'Facing Our Terrible Gods: the Personal Poetry of Meg Campbell' is necessary reading for anyone interested in Campbell's poetry, she wrote:

> In psychiatric care again and feeling that I had lost Alistair, and possibly, my children, I knew very surely that I had to achieve for myself – to represent myself as I knew I really was. I was not the pathetic mad woman that I felt was my image amongst Alistair's friends and acquaintances. The hospital was the perfect environment for me to concentrate and take my time to sort my thoughts into sense (p. 90).

Campbell is yet another powerful voice in the series of New Zealand women writers institutionalised because of the terrible conflict between their gender and their creativity – Robin Hyde, Eve Langley, Janet Frame. The following poem, not published in the earlier collections, but characteristic of these earlier ones, shows a resemblance to the confessional poetry of the American poet Anne Sexton, written around the same time:

> A Time For Leaving
>
> How could I face you
> and your friends?
> It was hard being a failure
> and such a public one
>
> I had aspired to much.
> We were Mother and Child
> the child and I.

Then I found myself

alone in a nightmare
frightened by your anger
perplexed by your indifference.
I couldn't know the cause.

I left you more than once
not to hurt you,
but to leave life altogether.
I failed in this.

Had an affair with an electric
machine. Shook me

into brain-baking flight.
As often as I left you,

I returned, 'Turn…
turn… turn…'
as the song says.
The illness had gone.

Bright faces drew me in, you
placed a guitar in my hands,
sang with me:
our children sang.

You took me to bed,
drew me in and under:
no better place to hide
for a time.

Not to leave… not to leave…
eyes and ears dissolved

in a hand basin:
the songs of children dissolved.

You are life,
and the way between,
nightgowns and corridors,
locks and potions.

I am here, wanting
to get home, because

of you and love on hold,
and the voices of the children.

I find these poems the most effective in the collection, seemingly simple, yet so absolutely right in their choice of words to evoke the emotion. And there's a marvellous hate poem, 'Bee of Anger':

The bee sings of betrayal
and I wish it would sing in the open,
not in my heart and lungs. Why am I stung?

The later poems are tender and celebratory poems to father, mother, son and grandchildren, poems that fit well with those of Lauris Edmond and Jacquie Baxter – poems by grandmothers about the significance of family and heredity (one of Mary Stanley's most beautiful poems is to her young son, Steven). Although this is a shapely and coherent selection of forty-two poems I could have wished for more, if only because poems not in here are unavailable to most readers. 'School for Little Children', about her sister's breakdown before her:

At my birth, red-haired sister
I became your plaything
but you forgot me frequently
as you flew nineteen times as high as the moon …

is a poem that it's a pity to lose, as are so many from *The Way Back*. Campbell has omitted all her satirical religious poems, but they have not dated, and it would have been good to have examples of this voice. Her poems about God, such as 'The Great Freezing Works in the Sky' in *The Way Back* or 'God and the Singles Club' in *Orpheus and Other Poems* are witty and amusing. But the voice she will be remembered for is that of the opening poem of this selection, from *The Way Back*, 'Heredity':

Inescapably, this is me – the diagnosis
is cause for anger at those
who brightly say we choose our destinies.
There is no store of courage,
wit or will can save me from myself,
and I must face my children,
feeling like that wicked fairy

coming uninvited to the christening
to bestow on my own
amidst murmurs of apprehension,
a most unwanted gift –
that of a blighted mind …

These are courageous poems that show warmth and insight, poems of a survivor. And they are important poems in both content and style, in terms of our understanding of the distinctive qualities of the now emerging corpus of New Zealand women poets.

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BREADWINNING: NEW ZEALAND WOMEN AND THE STATE

Melanie Nolan

Canterbury University Press, Christchurch, 2000. 386 pp. $39.95

This book makes an important contribution to New Zealand historiography. Its organising theme is the state's role in shaping the changing status of women in a society that, according to UN measures, ranks highly in terms of gender equality. Nolan argues that we need to look beyond domesticity – emphasised in earlier literature – for explanations, and that women's move into paid work represents the most significant economic change in the twentieth century, despite the centrality of child rearing to women's lives. *Breadwinning* examines, first, how domesticity and paid work interacted through time, and second, the state's ambiguous role in these changes.

Its thesis is that, contrary to earlier studies of domesticity, the state did not respond coherently to interest group demands. Nor did it consistently promote domesticity. The state's role was contradictory, and sometimes undermining. Nolan advances a 'strategic-relational model' of state power and finds that the state was not a monolith, but an 'ensemble' of institutions. State power was contingent and relational and its actions were strategic. In this sense the book adds to the findings of feminist sociologists such as Nicola Armstrong, Anna

Yeatman and others on contradictory aspects of state policy, which disrupt views of the state as an arm of patriarchy or capital. Rather, as Nolan demonstrates, different parts of the state acted differently, while the 'state' in general had its own imperatives.

The approach adopted to the field is best described as labour history and a mix of women's/feminist/gender history, with an emphasis more on the 'reality' of trends in domesticity and paid work as opposed to prescription, on which much of the previous historiography is based. Begun in the Historical Branch, the book is necessarily state-centred (Nolan's postgraduate research on women's paid work in Australia is also evident). Rather than a maternalist explanation for the undermining of the family wage across the twentieth century, Nolan approaches her topic from the other end of the viewfinder, from the viewpoint of the woman as a worker and breadwinner. While not maternalist, hers is a feminist explanation, which interprets women as agents with their own contingent and disputed positions. Nolan offers a new, more complicated, contradictory interpretation of women's expanding citizenship in which she documents the complexity of New Zealand experience, and makes a powerful case for her thesis of the 'ambiguous state'.

Critical of the New Zealand historiography about domesticity for being too narrow and specialised, Nolan aims successfully for the big picture, to present an overview of domesticity in its various meanings and its complement, of wage-earning. She refutes the assumption that there was little change in women's domesticity from the 1890s to the 1970s, either as a corollary to the labour movement's push for a family wage, or in gender relations terms, as a flip side of 'a man's country'. She argues for shifting definitions from as early as the 1920s. She also distinguishes between trends in single and married women's experience: while single women moved steadily into paid work across the twentieth century, married women – hitherto the focus of the historiography – comprised a second phase of the movement into paid work, after the Second World War. Instead of periods of 'first' and 'second' wave feminism, with a 'cult of domesticity' in between, Nolan identifies three phases: a liberalising of domesticity to the 1920s, where women used domesticity to lever themselves into the public world; a reform of male breadwinning from the 1920s to the 1960s; and a radicalising of domesticity from the 1960s.

Breadwinning is accordingly organised around eight major

debates: protective labour legislation, widows and 'grass widows', domestic education, the family allowance, unemployment and single women, married women in paid work, equal pay, and the DPB, all points of intersection between public and private spheres of women's work and men's breadwinning. In her review of the debate over domestic education, for example, Nolan challenges the earlier social control interpretation advanced by Ruth Fry and Erik Olssen and emphasises accommodation and resistance by women, as does recent Australian literature. Margaret Tennant and Sandra Coney, too, are challenged for not taking sufficient account of resistance by girls and parents and of cost issues. Instead Nolan argues that the 1917 regulations emphasised by historians were drafted as a response to girls' lack of interest in domestic education, and students' lack of interest in history and civics. Here, as elsewhere, the state had a range of agendas of which domesticity was one among many. Indeed, the state underwrote the new work pattern in which young girls moved from school into clerical work, supporting not just scientific mothering but the 'business girl' through job qualifications such as School Certificate in the 1930s.

In a detailed discussion of the family allowance, Nolan argues that this initiative of the 1920s unwittingly helped redefine domesticity, and challenged the ideology of the family wage even though it was an add-on. The allowance (later family benefit) is represented as a compromise between child endowment (a payment for child expenses), motherhood endowment (what the international literature describes as payment for mother-work) and the family wage, and hence contradictory. So complex is the argument here that Nolan risks contradicting herself at times, in not always distinguishing between the symbol of the family wage and its (inadequate) reality. She makes a stronger case that women were not pushed back into the home after the Second World War; the wage-earning mother emerged in the 'golden age of the housewife'. Again she shows how the state played an ambiguous role, providing only part-time child care as it nudged women into paid work and actively recruited married women teachers and nurses to care for baby-boomers. In a novel argument, Nolan sees the universal family benefit in 1946 as the 'major turning point for equal pay' (236). Her book demonstrates how the state continued to support domesticity for some women and mothers in paid work for other groups of women. It shows how and why it is

unsurprising that mothers' rights to state assistance remain a contested issue. The 1970s backlash against the DPB was one case in a series of disputes which resulted as more married women moved into part-time paid work and yet the state did not pay them to stay home when it paid single mothers. Equality versus difference debates feature throughout the book, over the concepts of women as citizen workers and citizen carers.

Breadwinning makes a notable contribution to the field in its emphasis on women's paid work as much as domesticity in shaping the discourse and reality of women's citizenship and in its revelations about a state which itself exercised multiple identities and conflicting objectives. If I am left with a question, it is just how far we need to look beyond domesticity to explain New Zealand's relatively high gender equality and the stereotypes of the Great New Zealand Mum, or aunt. Working-class women involved in Labour politics are better served by this book than middle-class women. But this book deserves high praise. Strong in archival research and in reasoning and argument, it is a major piece of scholarship. It is also superbly illustrated. Likely audiences include general readers and school pupils (who would be entertained by the cartoons) as well as students of women's studies and feminist and social history. Melanie Nolan has written a book that is central to historiography and that should be widely circulated, read and debated.

PHILIPPA MEIN SMITH, *History, University of Canterbury.*

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