

BROADSHEET

NEW ZEALAND'S FEMINIST MAGAZINE

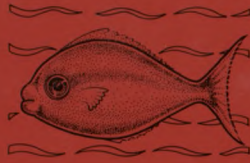
SEVENTEENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

NOVEMBER 1989

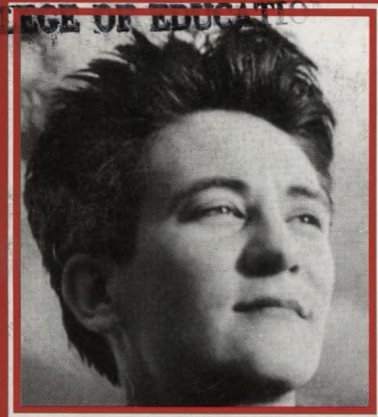
ISSUE 173

\$4

KERI HULME



West-Coasters, Recipes & Writing



KDL LANG

EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW

MORE THAN JUST TWANG A LANG A LANG!



HELLFIRE AND BRIMSTONE
global abortion attacks

MARGARET WILSON
labouring with Labour

FAY WELDON razors to lasers

SUPPORT & SISTERHOOD beating sexual abuse



Jumble sale!

Clear out your attics, basements and garages, *Friends of Broadsheet* in **Auckland** are organising a **monster** jumble sale. **Books**, records, furniture, plants, **tools**, clothes, the kitchen sink, we'll take (almost) anything.

Phone Cathy on **687-804** (any time) or Juliet **444-4529** (evenings) to arrange for collection.

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Alice Walker

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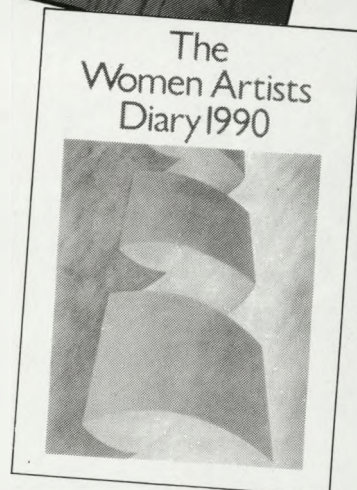
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RANDOM HOUSE NEW ZEALAND

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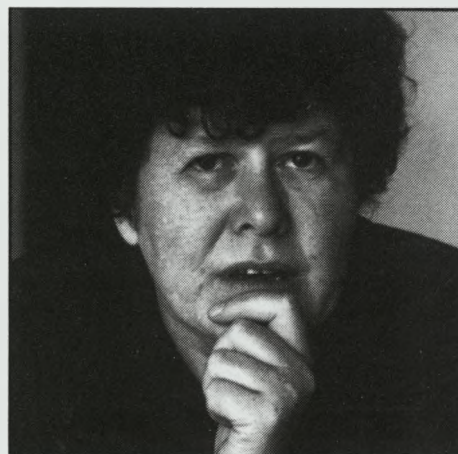
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BROADSHEET

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BROADSHEET COLLECTIVE

Martine Bouillir, Jan Cowan, Edith Gorringer, Claire-Louise McCurdy, Pat MacKay, Pat Rosier, Lisa Sabbage, Shirley Tamihana, Athina Tsoulis.

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These women helped around Broadsheet this month: Cathy Hall and Liz Caughey.

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HERSPECTIVE... this month's writer, Mary Irwin, is an experienced self-defence instructor and has just written a book called *Power in Our Hands* about physical and mental survival strategies for women.

LETTERS POLICY: The Broadsheet Collective may not agree with or endorse views expressed in letters. Nearly all the letters we are sent get published. Those that are not published in full are edited in consultation with the writer. We do not publish personal attacks. Letters from men are published only when they correct matters of fact or at the discretion of the Collective. We particularly welcome letters about the content of the magazine. Letters that are addressed to the collective or to the editor are assumed to be intended for publication. Please indicate clearly if they are not.

ADVERTISING POLICY: Advertisements are accepted at the discretion of the collective and all copy and artwork is subject to approval by the collective, which reserves the right to decline or cancel any advertisement. We do not advertise cigarette or alcohol products. We ask readers to support our advertisers as a way of sharing your enthusiasm for *Broadsheet*.

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HERSPECTIVE

In June 1988 Deborah Cox and I conducted a survey on violence against women in the form of a questionnaire, to get some up-to-date facts for a self defence book I was writing. This questionnaire was included as a flyer in Broadsheet. In my naivete, I thought it would involve maybe a couple of months' work, no problem.

It's now October 1989, and the Mental Health Foundation are to publish the report on this research. The longest "couple of months" ever.

Just to set the ball rolling we got a massive 741 responses, about four times as many as I expected. Of these we were able to use 705. I'd like to say thank you to the women who filled out questionnaires - many of you said how difficult and painful it was. Your efforts were important and appreciated.

First, a tribute to the sheer survival instincts of many of you. Despite having lived a true life horror movie, you still function - as people, workers, mothers, lovers and so on. Violence that many of us would find hard to believe have not succeeded in crushing your spirit. Many told your story with a warmth, humour and wisdom that belied your experience.

The second thing that made an impression was the way we down play what happens to us. A quarter of the women who described their experience as "verbal abuse" ended up in hospital! One woman stated she hadn't resisted, yet jumped out a second story window to escape an attacker. She told the doctor she was practising in case of fire. Of course, he accepted the story! There were women who recounted lives, indeed generations, of endless violence. One who had lived for 52 years with continual violence said, "Not so many attacks these days, life is getting better."

Many of the results were predictable. Eighty-six percent of the attackers were known to the victim - partners, boyfriends, brothers and fathers figured highly. Domestic violence was the most common form. Incest had by far the biggest impact and repercussions. Most attacks happened in the home of the victim or attacker, more during the day than at night. Ninety-six percent of attackers were male. A much greater number of women experiencing domestic violence were injured than in any other type of

violence. The most common effects of violence were loss of self-respect and confidence, reduced trust in relationships and hostility towards men.

Still women blamed themselves, felt guilty and responsible for the violence of men. And of course it clouded their perception of their rights, limiting their defences and leaving them with heavy burdens of secrecy and shame.

The success stories were heartening. Attackers fled, begged for mercy, cried, ended up in hospital. We can do it - defend ourselves, keep ourselves safe, retain our dignity and self-respect - but not without freeing ourselves from the crippling effects of the conditioning society imposes on us.

In contrast to the common stereotype of rape as being committed at night, by a stranger, in the street, and probably by a black man, 80% of rapes were committed by someone the woman knew, the majority in the woman's or the attacker's home. Rape was, however, three times more likely to happen at night than during the day. European women were mostly raped by European men. Maori women were three times more likely to be attacked by a European man than were European women to be attacked by a Maori man.

The good news is women are talking more about their experiences, to friends, family and counsellors. From talking comes healing, education, awareness, power and change. More women are reporting violence to the police, dispelling some of the old myths and giving a more realistic picture. When we resist an attack we are more often successful than unsuccessful, it's definitely worth trying.

It's impossible to do justice to the testimonies of the women while respecting their anonymity. We can, however, continue to demand recognition of our rights and freedom, pointing out that the responsibility for violence belongs with the perpetrator, not the victim.

The full report is available from the **Mental Health Foundation, P O Box 37-438, Parnell, Auckland.**

There are no excuses for domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse and rape - none!

LETTERS

TECHNO ACTION

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Congratulations for printing the excellent article titled "Technological Frankensteins" and in particular the article referring to VDUs (visual display units) in June's edition.

I photocopied this article for several work places with which I am involved, where women use VDUs up to and beyond 20 hours per week.

The result of this action has been that these organisations have now agreed to purchase protective VDU screens for their workers.

Thanks to your article we have now taken positive steps to ensure many women across the Tasman are protected as much as is possible from the harmful Very High Frequency and Very Low Frequency radiation emissions and other side effects, caused by prolonged use in close proximity to VDUs.

The organisations here in Melbourne who have acted with regard to their workers include: Women's Refuge Referral Service; Casa House (Centre against Sexual Abuse); Moomba (Australia's largest outdoor festival); Australian Cancer Patients Foundation; (in process) The Social Work Department of the Royal Women's Hospital.

I have also given copies of the article to several personal friends who have now purchased the protective screens, an important preventative step in ensuring their own and their future children's well being.

Thank you sincerely on behalf of many of your sisters across the Tasman.

DENISE McENTEER

Melbourne

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Dear *Broadsheet*,
The September issue of *Broadsheet* carried an article about peace issues and the work of the NZ Foundation for Peace Studies.

Just to set the record straight, we do not claim any involvement with the establishment of the

very successful student mediation scheme at Hagley High School. The credit for this goes to a few dedicated staff members at the school. What we have done however, since learning about the scheme, is to provide other teachers with information about it, engendering the sort of enthusiasm that is likely to see similar schemes set up in a good number of schools.

We look forward to the day when every school in the country takes it for granted that students are trained to act as mediators resolving the conflicts that are endemic in schools.

MARION HANCOCK

Co-ordinator of NZ Foundation for Peace Studies
Auckland

POLITICS AND POLARITIES - A BISEXUAL VIEW

Dear *Broadsheet*,
In the July-August article "The Word is Out - Bisexuality", *Broadsheet* welcomes input from readers. I identify as bisexual and I take up the challenge. My reasons for accepting and declaring my sexuality are, like those of lesbians, political. They are also integral to my feminism.

I use the polarisation between lesbian and heterosexual feminists as part of the great fallacy which brings us good and evil, black and white, male and female (gender, not sex), us and them, and right and wrong. This laziness and immaturity of the brain makes us force the subtle gradations of reality into mutually exclusive and conceptually opposite boxes in order to comprehend them.

It is not an exclusively male fallacy but these are obvious advantages to oppressors in seeing the world this way. You can attach a pejorative label to one pole and force the oppressed into that category. You can narrow everyone's choices to two, (marry or be single, pass or fail, sleep with men or sleep with women), and control people by approving of one and not the other. You can enhance that control by brainwashing them into

approving or disapproving their own choices in the same way.

Lesbians, by openly choosing the "evil" box, and proudly affirming their right to do so, are issuing a powerful challenge to the patriarchy and its institution of heterosexuality (a particularly pernicious "good" box).

However I believe you can issue a yet more profound challenge to these dangerous polarities, which bring us racism and classism as well as sexism. You can say, "I won't go into any of your square, hard-edged boxes. Reality is not black and white, with sharp edges. Reality is a rainbow, with bands of glorious colour merging into each other".

When you do this, the reaction shows it is a profoundly disturbing thing to do, and it may disturb even your allies. Some of my fellow feminists, who join me in rejecting both male and female gender roles because they are so oppressive and confining, will not join me in rejecting both heterosexual and lesbian roles which I do for the same reason.

Certainly lesbians have re-defined their role to make it less confining, and they are using it politically to challenge and expose what is wrong with the opposite role. I sympathise and agree with their doing this. But so far as any lesbian punishes me for rejecting the bipolar view and finding a third way, they are taking up the thinking and meth-

ods of an oppressor.

Yes, I have been cut dead by some lesbians, and yes, it does hurt. It hurts because I know we are both struggling against the same twin oppressions of sexism and heterosexism. I am not drawn to be close to people who accept these oppressions, and they can't hurt me by cutting me. But my allies can, and do.

My "third way" is not just another, compromise box, somewhere in the middle. In my mind it encompasses all varieties of sexual/sensual/loving bonding with another person and does not prohibit any of them. I was brought up Presbyterian, and had a gutsful of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not". They stunt human life.

However, when choosing who to open myself to making a love bond with, I reject outright both men and women who assent to the patriarchy. A man cannot reject his male privilege, because it is conferred on him by others, through institutions which he cannot change by himself. But he can refuse to seek or embrace his privilege or to exercise any of it in the domestic sphere, and he can raise the consciousness of other males. He can opt to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem as far as it lies in his power.

I am at present living in a committed relationship with a man who meets this description.



FRONTING UP

DEADLINES

For the Dec/Jan issue, 1 November, for February 1990, 29 November.

FAREWELLS AND WELCOMES

We say a sad goodbye to Sharon Alston who has been the art director of *Broadsheet* for the past four years. Sharon re-designed the magazine in 1987, guiding it into its new-look, glossy format. Her work has had a huge impact on the way the magazine is perceived and read out there in the world. Thanks, Sharon for all your dedication, especially during the late nights and early mornings during deadlines. Wishing you well in your new career, and may it be stress-free.

Welcome to Helen Courtney – whose cartoons will already be familiar to many of our readers. Helen will be *Broadsheet's* new art director. We also welcome aboard Lewis Williams, recently returned from her overseas experience.

APPEALING

If you have been thinking about making a donation to *Broadsheet* – large or small – please do it as soon as you can. Your support really means a lot to our future.

WANTED ASAP ☆

Capable woman to handle *Broadsheet's* finances. 3 days per week. Phone Athina (09) 608 535 (wk) or (09) 766 293 (hm).

We have struck a bargain which does not diminish either of us, and in the nature of relationships we keep renegotiating so that each keeps our space and dignity.

This relationship is intended to be for life, but I will not call my self heterosexual because I have deeply loved a woman. At the time when I met my mate I was equally open to bonding with a woman. If anything happened to him I would be again (after a while). He knows this and is not threatened by it. I do not believe I am cohabiting with "the enemy" because it is the institution of the patriarchy which is the enemy and not individual men.

I share some of the benefits of his easier path through society. I am not constantly being sexually harassed as I was when a solo parent. These are accidental bonuses of the relationship and if we were able to reject them it would not ease women's oppression one whit. Instead I put as much energy as I can into women's political struggle and I do not for one moment forget the greater oppression I suffered as a solo parent.

I'm sure my views will be roundly criticised. I also hope none of my sisters will vent her anger on me as a person. I would also love to hear from other women who, like me, see women's strength as their ability to experience life as a whole, vibrating rainbow spectrum, rejecting the compulsory choice of options placed in little black and white boxes.

KAREN PETERSON
BUTTERWORTH
Otaki

NAVIGATING

Dear *Broadsheet*,
I refer to Athina Tsoulis' review of "The Navigator", which I've just seen, and to an unease with characteristics of her *Broadsheet* writing, characteristics which, to date, had not been quite so easy to pinpoint.

The review stated: "The film is flawed. Visually it is not particularly stunning, the storyline is not gripping or plausible".

In fact, visually, that film was a stunner. There's no getting away from that, Athina... "led by an adolescent boy"... "to erect their spike"... "the biggest church"... where is the honesty of representation?

The sourness that permeated this review, and which permeates *Broadsheet* articles by the writer, is no substitute for the stunning, plausible, gripping, feminist analysis that *Broadsheet* readers so much appreciate when we get it. Ritual side-references to beer-drinking Kiwi jokers, to the homophobic preferences of international critics, were no substitute, I think, for that. To recommend "a script more rooted in the film-maker's own experience" was a) denial of a talent – to hell, I say, with tall poppy slashing, whatever the gender; b) denial of a genre of film and; c) along with the rest of the review, abuse of the critic's power.

Loyal we *Broadsheet* readers may be, captive we are not.
NICKY NEGRESCU
Nelson

[Athina replies: Nicky's letter is a good illustration of the fact that each person reads a film differently. By their very nature film reviews are impressionistic and not in-depth critiques. When I write reviews I try to present my views at the point in time honestly and from a feminist perspective. As I'm aware that people's impression of *The Navigator* ranged from "infantile" to "magnificent", I urged readers to see the film and judge for themselves. I do not regard Vincent Ward as a Sacred Cow. I welcome different opinions. However I do object to the implication that I have a personality disorder or that my feminist analysis is of a lowly kind. Can't we just accept that there are a variety of viewpoints. And I'm afraid that gender is important when we are discussing "tall poppies". The reason I reviewed *The Navigator* and Melanie Read's film *Send a Gorilla* at the same time was to illustrate this point. Both films have their merits, both have their flaws. However, Ward's film was given superstar treatment, while Read's film was either criticised or ignored. It would be an "abuse of the critic's power" to go along with the crowd and laud a film, which I believe, is mediocre – and that's putting it kindly.]

SPELING MISTACHES

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Thank you for the review of *A Woman's Life* in the September issue, and congratulations on the whole Book Festival spread.

However, you allowed our book's review to go to print with the title mis-spelt throughout, including the heading, as *A Women's Life*, which makes no sense.

Getting titles correct does matter, for the record; getting women's names correct is even more important, especially when they may not yet be well known. The outstanding Maori woman writer is Roma Potiki, not Rona; our sister anthologist is Trudie, not Trudi or Trudy, McNaughton. As for the *Wilderness Women*, they are Maud Morland, not Mord-land; Louie Roberts, not Lonie; Lucy Moore, not Shore; Margaret Bradshaw, not Brackshaw; Margaret Clark, not Clarke; and Alison Mary, not Marcy.

ANNE ELSE AND HEATHER
ROBERTS
Wellington

[Our apologies to all those concerned for any embarrassment our lapse in proofreading caused.]

WOMEN'S WIRELESS

Dear *Broadsheet*,
I have begun a women's radio show on Christchurch's community access radio station; Plains FM. The show is called *Women's Wireless* and is a mixed bag of women's news, views, music, interview and comment, it runs on Saturday mornings; 10.30-12.00.

The show began as a women's music show but I saw a need for a women's radio show to encompass more of the issues that are relevant to women and to use the powerful voice of radio to broadcast an information package that appealed to all.

We were lucky to track down WINGS (Women's International News Gathering Service), which is a news package of events from around the world and we play bulletins on the show.

Gradually more women are becoming involved and there is a lot of support from women's community groups, which for me was a priority as I feel the show is a great medium for letting women know of the services available to them.

The show has just recently received \$1000 from the Ministry of Women's Affairs to help pay for airtime and equipment. Getting sponsorship is an ongoing headache, as you can imagine.

The show can also be used to

teach women basic radio skills, as I am trained in radio broadcasting and radio journalism... the show can be used by women in many ways.

I thought you may be interested to know what is going on down here in little, yet busy, Christchurch. You might find a gap in the magazine to mention the show... it's going to be exciting to watch it grow.

SARAH KINNIBURGH

Producer
Christchurch

GOOD GRIEF

Dear *Broadsheet*,

Your article ["Good Grief", October *Broadsheet*] has made me extremely angry, emotionally devastated, and I feel ripped off. And, it has left me wondering whether *Broadsheet* writers have any ethics.

When I agreed, in good faith, to my experiences being used as part of an article on ways of caring for a terminally ill woman, I also requested to see the article before it was published, and this was not done. I feel I have been dealt to by the male media and subjected to men's rules.

In your introductory paragraphs, you outline how you are wanting to provide different models for coping with death, and then proceed to write an article which does not show this. You make me the only woman involved, by omitting to talk with the whole care group. You negate the other womyn in the care group by failing to recount their experiences, and you fundamentally destroy a wonderful, sad, funny, serious, marvellous and joyous way of living!! This is what men do to womyn's experiences all the time.

You have fundamentally misquoted me to cater for your own agenda. Column one, p 14, paragraph six. This paragraph can be read to imply that the medic did not contact Ruth. This is not so... Ruth found it very difficult to initiate any modification of her own medication if it was not stable. All the personnel at the Hospice were wonderful. I was always included in any discussions regarding Ruth's treatment, and in this, we were always spoken with together. I was recognised as Ruth's partner in all ways. I will not be party to slighting any Hospice personnel, or oncology nurses. There womyn showed wonderful

sensitivity, which is more than I can say for Lisa Sabbage.

Similarly you do the same denial of hospice nurses' sensitivity in recounting how "this nurse came in and insisted I keep talking to her", page 15, column three, paragraph three. This implies that I was cursorily ordered to keep talking to Ruth, which is not so. The nurse spoke in a calm, reassuring way and I valued what she said, and found it useful.

I had hoped this article would provide other womyn with some sort of model of possible ways of living with a terminally ill woman. However, all I feel has happened is I have been the unwitting party to telling one sixth of a story; annihilating the wonderful contributions of so many caring womyn, and opening up myself and Ruth to being done over.

I want this letter to be published un-edited.

JUDE RANKIN

Poneke

Dear *Broadsheet*,

My name is Lauren Lethal and I was a member of the care group involved with Ruth Charters.

Your article re: Good Grief - has made me feel negated. It does not recognise the one year or more that the group met, nor does it recognise the very real issues discussed with the group and between Ruth and individual womyn of the group.

The article buys right back into the patriarchal, heterosexual mode of dying. All of us in the care group were trying to make Ruth's death a celebration of Lesbianism and all things Lesbian, and to develop Lesbian ways of living with a woman who has terminal cancer. If Lisa Sabbage had talked with all womyn in the care group she would have been able to produce a far more accurate reflection of the wonderful Lesbian ways of celebrating Lesbian lives.

Ruth was always present at care group meetings because we were all involved in her living and her dying.

Very real issues were discussed in these meetings. Ruth wanted to know "Who is going to lay me out?", "What are the particular clothes I want to be buried in?", "Is there a woman embalmer available to embalm me?" These are very real issues,

and not to be dismissed by a cute sentence like "The group met every week to discuss time and how everyone was feeling".

How was I to know what it would feel like laying out a friend - when I was doing it I expected Ruth to sit up and say "What the hell are you doing?" The Hospice staff were incredibly supportive and guided us through this process. At all times the Hospice staff were sensitive, discrete and caring. I have always been "anti-medical" - however the nursing staff at the Hospice are to be admired for the way they treated us.

Each woman in the care group was chosen by Ruth for her particular abilities - Ruth chose me because I'm a great Gossip - both in the living process and in the dying process - for my skills to enable Ruth to develop her own artistic skills, and because Ruth said "You always tell the truth". Our art sessions together were a time I shall always remember. Initially Ruth's art was "constipated" and small - towards the end - her pictures were big, expansive, and colourful. I have kept all this art, feeling that one day it will find a home.

For me I felt Ruth accepted her own death when she asked to see her coffin. The coffin had been made for some months and I remember telling her it was finished. Ruth avoided the subject at this stage. Then, some months later she rang me and said "I'd like to see my coffin". This made me feel really nervous as in the past Ruth had always talked about "IF I die". I had challenged her using "IF" and said "don't you mean WHEN". This stopped the colluding bullshit and made things more honest between us.

When Ruth actually saw her coffin, she said "Yes, that looks like a really good home for me to be in". The coffin had a purple braided Labrys on the top and the inside was lined with purple tie dyed silk - the mattress was made with fragrant dried herbs and flowers from "Earthspirit". I wanted Ruth's coffin to be as Lesbian as possible. It did cause quite a "stir" at the funeral home and I often chuckle about that, knowing Ruth would have enjoyed the sensation it caused. The funeral home tried to block the coffin because it didn't meet with legal requirements. This

was, in fact, not true, because I had anticipated hassles and had deliberately consulted with a woman undertaker and worked on the technicalities to the letter, eg "must have a plastic lining if body is to be embalmed and be in 'state'". I put three plastic linings.

My last task for Ruth was to design her headstone, and see that it went into place. Ruth's headstone is marble in a sea of black granite. (Once again, the "hassles" emerged - apparently, at present, City Councils are trying to bring into being a by-law that says ALL headstones in lawn cemeteries shall be the same!!!) To my joy on the day of the unveiling Powhiri Rika-Heke said "Ah, great to see a headstone that is not black granite - most of the black granite is from South Africa!"

Anyway, in the cemetery, is Ruth's headstone, on it a Labrys and Lesbian symbols - and to my knowledge it is the ONLY up front, openly Lesbian headstone I have ever seen.

This was indeed a Lesbian death.

LAUREN LETHAL

Wellington

[First to Jude, I offer my sincere apologies with regard to the publication of the article without her reading it. I misunderstood the fact that she had checked the written questions and answers from which I worked, as meaning she was happy to see the content published. I regret not checking this with her and feel that all other criticisms stem from this error on my part. Secondly, I ask all the women involved with Ruth to also accept my apologies. My intention was not to exclude or negate anyone, and certainly not to make Ruth's lesbianism invisible. I am upset that this is how the article could be read. I'd like to stress that I believe the article does raise issues around living with death and illness which are important to pursue and discuss, and thanks to both Jude and Lauren for their letters. I hope my mistake doesn't detract from the need to develop these ideas - Lisa Sabbage]

HOME SWEET HOME

Dear *Broadsheet*,

We really enjoyed the article on housing [*Broadsheet*, October 1989] - thanks Susan Grimsdell

continued on page 16



Women on the ice

Arani Cuthbert of the Antarctic Campaign talked with some women who have been in the Antarctic.

Antarctica – a vast and mysterious continent of exquisite beauty and teeming wildlife. Seventy percent of the world's fresh water is held in reserve while in the surrounding oceans the last of the blue whales roam. And now the heads of the Antarctic Treaty nations eye the untapped wealth of its ice-locked minerals with greed. The planet's last remaining wilderness could be opened up for mining if the Minerals Convention is ratified, as the New Zealand government intends it to be.

At a time when the future of Antarctica is at a crossroads, Greenpeace has intensified its watchdog role south of the Antarctic Convergence.

Dr Maj de Porter, expedition co-ordinator, and Vicki Getz, who has just completed a nationwide grassroots campaign tour of New Zealand, recently left for Antarctica on board the "Gondwana", which will spend three months inspecting scientific bases on the Antarctic peninsular to monitor their environmental impact. It will also visit the site of the Bahia Paraiso, a resupply and tourist ship which ran aground earlier this year, spilling oil. The remaining 270,000 litres of fuel on board is a timebomb. Another focus of the trip is the issue of over fishing – some finfish species have been

depleted to two to five percent of their original numbers and now krill (a small shrimp), the critical food source for the entire Antarctic ecosystem, is threatened by increasing harvests.

Maj, Belgian-born but now living in New Zealand, has been involved in previous Greenpeace expeditions both as a scientist and as a campaigner, while Vicki spent three seasons working for the "other side" as co-ordinator of summer supplies at the US McMurdo base, until she was fired last year for fraternising with Greenpeace. She was told only that her contract had suddenly terminated, but on obtaining her personal file found it was clear why the National Science Foundation had given the order. She has since brought a lawsuit against the National Science Foundation on the grounds that it broke her constitutional right to "freedom of association and assembly". Vicki is a "stirrer from way back... and now I have the opportunity to stir professionally!"

Vicki knows the disregard that McMurdo personnel have for the environment. She witnessed the superficial attempts to clean up the area and the effort senior staff made to prevent people from co-operating with and giving information to Greenpeace.

"Only in this last year have retrograde metals and toxic wastes been sent back to the US – before that no-one knew what to do with hazardous waste. It was all dumped together in drums. For any port to accept hazardous waste it must be identified – so these toxic barrels still lie down there

somewhere."

Thirty years of scientific activity generates a lot of waste – and evidence of its careless disposal can be found in the sediments of McMurdo sound. A waste quality study in the 1970s found the concentrations of PCBs and heavy metals to be as high as those found in the most polluted waterways of North America. The US stations are not the only culprits. Last year Greenpeace inspected 20 bases of 11 different nations and found gross breaches of the Treaty's Code of Conduct on waste disposal: open air dumps the size of football fields proliferate, piles of discarded machinery, tyres, batteries, even mattresses litter the foreshore, raw sewage and chemicals are flushed directly into the sea, and the regular incineration of garbage, including plastics, has shifted the impact to the atmosphere.

Maj: "We have been told that several bases have cleaned up existing dump sites and improved their attitude since our last visit but we cannot take anyone's word for this".

A glance at the past record is appalling. In 1977 a convention was signed to regulate fishing. It's supposed to ensure the "stable recruitment of all harvested species and calls for "an approach to management which understands the entire ecosystem". The nations responsible for overfishing – the USSR, Poland and East Germany – have blocked efforts to carry out a comprehensive monitoring programme which is crucial to understanding the Southern Ocean ecosys-

tem. In 1986, when a decision was made to limit the catch of a finfish species threatened with near extinction, the USSR "honoured" this by upping its catch six times.

The agreed measures for the protection of Antarctica's fauna and flora prohibit the killing, wounding, or capturing of any native bird or mammal (excluding whales) and harmful interference with their normal living conditions. However, the French construction of an airstrip at Dumont d'Urville killed hundreds of penguins and devastated breeding sites of many seabird species. The French initially went there to study the penguins they are now destroying. Although this project violates treaty agreements, the other treaty nations have turned their collective heads the other way.

Maj: "The treaty states flagrantly abrogate their responsibility to the vulnerable Antarctic environment. Their track record so far has been appalling, whether one looks at waste disposal, fisheries management or the protection of fauna and flora. Yet these nations now expect us to believe they could extract minerals without harming the environment - this is clearly ridiculous."

There has been a moratorium on mining in Antarctica while nations negotiated closing a "gap" in the treaty which does not address minerals activity. Six years of negotiations ended in Wellington last year when delegates from 33 of the 38 nations approved the Minerals Convention (CRAMRA). Once ratified, this agreement will allow prospecting for minerals to begin immediately.

It is argued that without CRAMRA the present moratorium on mining could not be enforced, that an unregulated scramble would occur unless rules, stipulating controls and environmental protection, were imposed on mining companies. But a minerals free-for-all is unlikely to happen in the absence of a legal and institutional framework for issuing mineral permits. No company will spend billions of dollars over many years searching for oil unless they have secure and preclusive property rights to what they find. The Minerals Convention provides for this and so facilitates the very thing it purports to control - minerals exploration - and the inevitable degradation of the Antarctic environment.

No convention can safeguard against human fallibility. The Exxon Valdez oil spill stands as a warning to this. If an accident of this scale happened in Antarctica, which is inevitable if mining goes ahead, the damage to the environment would be even more catastrophic given the fragility of the ecosystem and the climatic/physical constraints which would make cleaning up impossible.

It is a sad irony that the global results of humanity's impact on the environment are evident above Antarctica - the ozone hole is enlarging at an alarming rate - and yet at the same time preparations are being made to launch yet another mega-scale assault on the environment. One of Antarctica's special

features is that it serves as our planetary laboratory. Its pristine nature enables scientists to study such phenomena as the Greenhouse effect. Unlocking Antarctica's fossil fuel reserves will certainly make the greenhouse hotter and we will no longer be able to monitor our threatened existence.

Towards the goal of declaring Antarctica a World Park, Greenpeace established a year-round World Park base at Cape Evans in 1987. It is the only non-governmental presence in the ice and is maintained by a team of four people who are replaced every 12 months. Liz Carr, base scientist, and Lilian Hansen, medic, are due to return in January. They were both involved in a violent confrontation with the French construction crew at Dumont d'Urville while forming a human chain in front of the bulldozer.

"People down here either feel threatened and provoked by Greenpeace's presence or else they enthusiastically support what we do," says Liz. She has been continuously monitoring human impacts from the surrounding bases.

Meanwhile the New Zealand government continues to defend the Minerals Convention. Even though it claims to have Antarctica's best interests at heart, it seems to have become a matter of personal honour, since New Zealand played a key role in its negotiations.

Public opinion supports a World Park. The government must listen. There may never again be such an opportunity to fight for the last unspoiled wilderness on earth. Your help is needed.

Technology at a Cost

Renate Klein believes New Reproductive Technologies are women-hating. She was in New Zealand recently and spoke to Kay Morris Matthews.

Here primarily to launch her new book *Infertility: Women Speak Out About Their Experiences of Reproductive Medicine*, Renate received a variety of media attention. All focused on her critical analysis of the in vitro fertilisation programmes (IVF) which she believes are dangerous for women's health and should be stopped.

Apart from Belinda Trainor's 1988 paper and Pat Rosier's *Broadsheet* articles on IVF in recent issues, there has been little publicity within the public arena on the health hazards for women arising from this treatment. Indeed, the media have tended to glamorise this "miracle cure" for infertile parents whilst the scientists involved have been hailed as the wondrous inventors of a new technology.

Renate's initial research into IVF resulted in the publication in 1984 of *Test Tube Women: What Future For Motherhood*, co-edited with Rita Arditti and Shelley Minden. The following year, she co-authored with Gena Corea and others *Man-Made Women: How New Reproductive Technologies Affect Women* which has remained an authoritative

source of information.

It was in 1985 that Renate Klein became a founding member of the Feminist International Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering (FINRRAGE) and acted as its International Co-ordinator until 1987. She became the pivotal person for the dissemination of knowledge on IVF. Trained as a biologist in her home-city of Zurich, Renate went on to gain degrees in Women's Studies from the University of California at Berkeley and London University. Her reputation as an international feminist scholar was further recognised in 1986 when she was given a fellowship which enabled her to research the experiences of women who dropped out of test tube baby programmes in Australia.

In her work on IVF to date, Renate Klein posits that the new reproductive technologies and genetic engineering "are women-hating, and constitute an insidious new form of violence against women".

"They exploit women who are in a vulnerable position because they (or their partner) desperately want a biological child of their own and feel they have little 'choice' to disagree with what the 'experts' tell them to do. By advocating the use of the new reproductive technologies, the promoter of these technologies offer hope that will not be fulfilled in the majority of cases. IVF, an example of this technology, is by and large a failed technology, giving the woman a healthy live child in only five to ten percent. The promises of reproductive technology are therefore not only false: they are also cruel".



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She is critical of the fact that women selected for IVF programmes often have the pain and stigma of infertility ignored by the scientists. Instead, they undergo great physical and psychological trauma of the drug and hormone treatment used to stimulate the ovaries into producing more than one ripe egg.

The health hazards and side effects of the drug clomiphene citrate, which is used to "superovulate" the ovaries include dizziness, weight gain, burst ovaries, cysts and adhesions. Indeed, of the women interviewed for the book *Infertility*, all described the lack of information they were given about the risks before they underwent treatment.

If women respond to the fertility drugs by producing more than one egg, surgical removal or "egg collection" is the next stage. The eggs are then fertilised in the laboratory, either with her partner's or donated sperm. The embryo is then re-implanted back into the women's body.

"Up to 50 percent of these pregnancies end in spontaneous abortions, miscarriages or are ectopic. In addition, most babies are born prematurely and by caesarians. Up to 25 percent of all women who do get pregnant end up having multiple births due to both the effect of the fertility hormones and the insertion of multiple embryos in their wombs".

Yet despite the low success rates, the women who have contributed their stories to Renate's research projects over recent years and hundreds of others who have undergone IVF treatment, have done so compelled by a strong urge to give birth. Even if these women are among the five to ten percent who successfully attain this goal, a further danger "lies in the effect the superovulation drugs may have on the developing fetus and the future child as well as long term effects on the woman who took them", explained Renate.

"Birth statistics show a slight increase of spina bifida and transposition of the great vessels in children born from IVF. Great cause for concern is the fact that clomiphene citrate has a very similar chemical structure to DES: a drug which was given to pregnant women some 20 to 40 years ago and which resulted in a high proportion of children with fertility problems, increase rates of cancer of the cervix and the vagina and, in the mothers, of breast cancer".

As if this was not bad enough, Renate Klein is incensed at the lack of counselling and psychological support for the woman undergoing treatment. "Month after month 'hope' is artificially 'induced' by IVF doctors and hospital staff. Meanwhile the woman's life is in limbo: should she think of another job, a change in career or perhaps adoption? Often after years on IVF, on the 'roller-coaster of emotions', as one woman described it to me, she has become economically dependent on her husband".

A woman tends to worry about the expense of the treatment, her own physical and mental health. Ultimately, if she fails to

become pregnant she is labelled a "non-responder", "fertilisation failure", has "bad eggs", "diseased tubes" or a "hostile womb", all of which are doctors' terms commonly used in medical literature.

Instead of being made to feel "incomplete women", Renate Klein believes that alternatives for parenting should be encouraged. This could mean consideration of other means of mothering, such as adoption, fostering or having close involvement with another person's child. Renate also says we need "to talk about why women feel that without a child they are not full people and why, if they can't have a child naturally, they are prepared to go to great lengths to do things that make them very sick or even kill them".

Another major concern that Renate Klein has is the amount of embryo experimentation currently being conducted by reproductive biologists. She notes, with alarm, the significant change in emphasis, "from the promise of 'curing the infertile' to 'preventing' or 'therapeutically remedying defects' in embryos". She worries about the eugenic implications of women's bodies being exploited as "living laboratories" for both egg extraction and embryo carriers and of embryo screening for sex determination.

Such criticisms of the medical and scientific fraternity involved with IVF programmes are met with great disdain. Both Renate Klein and her colleague Robyn Rowland have borne the brunt of their feminist critiques of reproductive technologies. The debate in Australia where they are based has been very public as both women have challenged new developments. But some of the critical information that has been presented has had an impact. Some IVF doctors in Australia now acknowledge that fertility drugs are harmful and undesirable; that some of their interactions with the women on the programmes could be more humane.

Renate Klein says that she would never tell another woman not to try infertility treatment, but is concerned that she should be aware of all the risks and options involved. "It's a no-win situation, but I can't justify something that brings so much misery to so many women, even if it does bring joy to a few".

In the final analysis, Renate claims that reproductive technologies are not about choice. "Instead they bring with them not only a loss of control for women but a gain of control for international technopatriarchy. These technologies are too dangerous to continue. The price to pay for women as individuals and as a social group worldwide is unacceptable. These technologies contribute to the worldwide oppression of women and they must be stopped now".

Trick or Treaty?

You've seen the ads on TV telling us the 1990 celebrations are okay, so why isn't everyone buying it? Bernadette McCartney explains why

the Early Childhood Workers Union opposes the celebrations.

For many groups around the country, the decision to support or oppose the 1990 celebrations has not been an easy one. The Early Childhood Workers Union (ECWU) has chosen to oppose the celebrations until the Treaty of Waitangi has been honoured, and also not to apply for money through the 1990 commission.

It was felt that by applying for 1990 money the union would be in part condoning the celebrations and by rejecting 1990 funding it would be making a strong stand against the Commission's major role in next year's activities.

What is the Commission?

The 1990 Commission was established by Government in 1988 to organise and fund commemorations for the year. Before the Commission was established, Project Waitangi, a Wellington group aimed at education and action toward honouring the Treaty, made a submission to Government on the make up and focus of the Commission. They suggested the Commission should reflect the realities of the Treaty: its membership should be 50/50 Maori-Pakeha and include women, men, young and old; every member should have shown an active commitment to the Treaty and accepted it as a basis for the Commission's work. Maori members, Project Waitangi recommended, should not be chosen by Pakeha.

But from the beginning the planning for 1990 has been organised on monocultural lines - Pakeha models and decision making processes have been used. The Minister of Internal Affairs, Dr Michael Bassett, established the Commission as a 12 member, predominantly Pakeha group with few members demonstrating a record of active support for the Treaty. A later similar submission was referred to the Commission's Maori Committee, placing the onus of discussing these crucial issues on only one Treaty partner, reinforcing the myth that the Treaty is solely a Maori issue.

Some Commission members are blatantly anti a Treaty focus. Bassett made his stand clear at the launching when he said New Zealanders had a choice of moving forward as a nation in unity or focusing on our grievances and losing the opportunity to strengthen our partnership. Keith Sinclair, one of the 12 commissioners, has stated that New Zealand has a "remarkable democracy" and that "the best thing for Maori people is to assimilate to the Pakeha way of life". He said Maori Sovereignty was impossible and that power sharing under a partnership was unrealistic.

Treaty Not the Major Focus in 1990

Unfortunately, although 1990 is the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, this is not going to be the focus of the planned activities. It is only one of several anniversaries the Commission will commemorate/celebrate. Much emphasis is being placed on the anniversaries of Auckland and Wellington, the welfare state,

unions, the electoral system, and the Gallipoli landings.

One wonders if, in the case of the Auckland and Wellington centennials, the Commission is going to educate Pakeha New Zealanders about how these cities were founded and for whose benefit. It also raises the question of where the ECWU will stand in 1990 – how to commemorate our herstory and move further toward our policy of honouring the Treaty of Waitangi.

Over 100 1990 committees have been established. The range of activities is enormous, the cultural make up of most of those committees is similar to that of the Commission. Activities include special family day racing meetings, local Treaty commemorations, family reunions, multi-cultural food festivals, A&P shows, kiwi fruit festivals etc. The Commission has \$30 million to spend on 1990 events. There will be three royal visits between January and June next year.

The Treaty will be buried under this enormous pile of celebrating.

1990 is also election year in New Zealand. Both the Labour Government and the opposition will attempt to use the celebrations to help them win. If the celebrations are disrupted no doubt law and order will become an election issue. Blame will be laid at the feet of those opposing the celebrations, but in fact the blame should lie with the unwillingness of the Commission and the Government to ensure that honouring the Treaty is the central focus of 1990. "The whole world is watching" – sound familiar? An image of New Zealand as an example of unity, tolerance and perfect race relations is what the Government wants to beam to the rest of the world.

Commission Mirrors Government

Like the 1990 Commission, the Government's track record in respect of actioning their stated policies about the Treaty is pretty dismal. Instead of listening to an increasing number of individuals and organisations, the Government appears to be interpreting the Treaty in their own terms – including Treaty rhetoric in their corporate plans and mission statements – with little evidence of any substantial change.

The 1990 Commission seems to be following suit. They have stated policy regarding the Treaty being a central focus of the commemorations, but to date have failed to advocate for a Treaty driven society. Most of the over 3000 activities predicted for next year make no acknowledgement of the Treaty, and most are concerned with celebrating our "nationhood" and "unity".

Project Waitangi commented in their July newsletter that "the Government's 'grand plan' – seems to be to confuse the public by supporting a wide range of events... Many events are blatantly racist, the vast majority could be described as neutral – with no particular focus on the Treaty at all. A wide range of Maori projects have been organised with the emphasis being on unity, harmony and the treaty of Waitangi".

The fact that some Maori groups and

organisations support the celebrations should not be used as an excuse by Pakeha people for not acknowledging injustices and acting responsibly as Treaty partners.

The 1990 Commission is playing down criticism. In their March newsletter they speak of overwhelming support from the public and editorials. They conducted a national survey in March that showed that 51 percent of New Zealanders had become aware of 1990 with 3/4 of them expecting 1990 to have a positive effect on the country as a whole. We didn't find out what the nine percent who thought the year would have a negative effect had to say! The Commission has a responsibility to present the truth to the people of New Zealand in 1990.

How the Commission Could Work to Honour the Treaty

Project Waitangi recommends that the Commission should have only one function – to commemorate the signing of the Treaty. They believe that the principle aims of the Commission should be to: acknowledge and make good past breaches of the Treaty; help Maori and Pakeha understand their own attitudes and discover what brings each to a bi-cultural partnership; set in place Treaty based models in the institutions of NZ society.

1990 should be used to calculate the impact of the Treaty on this nation and to put in place new structural and organisational models that give effect to the Treaty.

What Action We Can Take as a Union and Co-Signatories to the Treaty

State publicly our opposition to the 1990 celebrations by communicating our concerns to local MPs, the Commission official 1990 project organisers, media and businesses such as Ansett and Radio New Zealand who are official supporters and will make a lot of money from the celebrations.

Refuse to participate in activities that do

not honour the Treaty.

Continue our active commitment to honouring the Treaty and plan creative actions to commemorate 1990.

Take responsibility for becoming better informed about Treaty issues eg Pakeha history and culture, racism, strategies for honouring the Treaty. Support and challenge each other sensitively.

Support, and share our resources with the Runanga and continue our commitment to acknowledging their status as Tangata Whenua.

Become Treaty advocates in the groups and organisations we belong to especially in our centres. Advocate for the Treaty in the writing up of Charters and for the process of decision making to be Treaty based. Network with other national and regional groups who are opposing the celebrations and/or organising alternatives.

Challenge the 1990 Commission on its monocultural structure and resource material and its lack of commitment to honouring the Treaty.

Send representatives to Waitangi for Waitangi day and the week preceding it.

Prepare educational material for people who know nothing about the Treaty.

Don't be afraid to make mistakes.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs

Pat Rosier has been looking at some recent "outputs". "Outputs" seems to be the current word everywhere for talking about - and measuring - what we do. (It's a nasty piece of language, that focuses purely on products and says nothing about how things are done or their impact on people or the environment, and contributes to the invisibility of work

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The Ministry has got very good at them – outputs that is – and is producing some useful documents – like *A Women's Guide to Housing*. It's a good "everything you need to know..." booklet and looks specifically at groups of women – those who are older, Maori women, women with disabilities, single women, lesbians, women leaving violent relationships and so on – who are often ignored. If it's information about housing options you want it's probably in here.

Then there's the latest issue of *Panui*. My fears that with re-structuring the Ministry would either cease to produce this newsletter, or charge for it, have been allayed: it still comes out regularly, free. The latest issue reports on many of the Ministry's activities, most of which involve discussion papers, input into policy and reports. One of the discussion papers, *Valuing Women's Unpaid Work* concerns a major project the Ministry is undertaking over the next two years to gather information about the unpaid work women do. This is a great idea. My disquiet with the discussion paper is that there is nothing in it that indicates any way in which the information, the way in which it is gathered or its application will challenge the status quo.

The discussion paper refers to the need for policies (unspecified) to go "hand in hand with changes in people's thinking" for there to be "significant improvements in women's lives". Anti-racism workers will testify that changes in policy and attitude are simply not enough, it takes a combination of legislation to make institutions act differently and direct challenge at a personal and group level to get things to be different. For example women who have male partners who do some sharing of childcare and domestic duties have to turn their partners' supportive attitudes into action.

Another weakness in the discussion

paper is in the way that all voluntary work is treated as the same. There is no attempt to look at it in a frame-work that is looking for basic social change for women. Just to argue about meals on wheels doesn't undermine the system. Some forms – like Kohanga Reo or Rape Crisis – do challenge the status quo, while others – such as Rotary, councils, Plunket – do not. The crux of this is that those groups that include some social change orientation find it much harder to get money. Also, women who do paid work at places like HELP, which often also have voluntary workers, spend a lot of their time applying for money. If changes in policy and attitudes do take place as a result of this project, which voluntary work will get financial support?

However, I do not wish to imply the project is not worthwhile, it is. We need information about what women do.

The Ministry's annual report has also been released. It's readable and includes welcome statements like "The Ministry is not yet fully confident that the general emphasis on 'consumer-driven' services led to a satisfactory outcome for women...". The most interesting part is the appendices. The one on organisational structure shows the three-layer hierarchical nature of the Ministry - Chief Executive, Judith Aitken on the top level, three managers on the second level and the rest of the workers on the third level. The appendix on operations describes the work done during the year and the statement of accounting policies is just that. The Ministry cost \$3,173,000 last year – that's got to be good value for money.

The Statement of Intent for 1989/90 has also been produced. It's a lot better written than the last one (See Ministry Intent" in *Broadsheet*, Jan.Feb 1989), easier to follow and gives a good idea of what the Ministry is planning to do. Some key words that recur often on its pages – identify, advise, ensure

legislation, policy advice, projects, proposals and reports, reports, reports.

I looked in vain for some indication that there was a real (paid) role for community women, and for structures that allow us-women-out-there to feel it is ours. It isn't, it's for us, which is quite a different matter: a Ministry of experts, with the processes of any bureaucracy.

Okay, okay, many of you are sick of me going on about wanting something different from any old government ministry. My persistence comes from a conviction that if real change is going to occur it will be from doing things in a different way, not from adding more rhetoric and continuing in the same ways. Many of the reports that come out of the Ministry are saying what needs to be said about the status and position of women. Change comes from doing things differently.

Save St Helens

It's only a matter of time before the doors to St Helens Maternity Hospital close for the last time. But Ann Clark and Laura Hatfield are still campaigning to keep them open. They talked to Lisa Sabbage.

"Amalgamation" with National Women's Hospital is what the closure is being called. No ifs or buts, the hospital will fall victim to the Auckland Area Health Board's enforced cost-cutting measures. There is even some talk that the hospital will be sold to private enterprise to recoup some of the board's \$46 million overspending.

The Area Health Board appointed a Maternity Services Taskforce to "develop a maternity service that will meet the needs of the people of Auckland". Yet head of the taskforce, Dr Ray Naden is adamant that its position on the closure of St Helens is "quite fixed". Prodded a little, he said "The Commissioner [Harold Titter] has made the decision that St Helens will close, we don't have any say about that". Whose needs then, is this maternity service aimed at – those of the consumer or those of the health board? Unfortunately the two seem to be mutually exclusive.

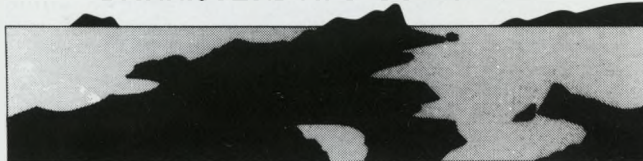
Ann and Laura don't see the logic in closing St Helens, even when looking at it in the AAHB's terms, as it is one of the board's most cost-efficient services. It actually costs less to have a baby there now than it did in 1980.

For staff at St Helens the "amalgamation" has proved to be yet another example of political double speak – there has been no consultation with them whatsoever. This is in spite of protocols agreed on at the beginning of the year that unions and workers would be involved in changes in the health system. Nursing staff are being offered other positions within the Area Health Board, but for the hospital's clerical and domestic staff, chances of re-employment are more grim.

St Helens is a base hospital for maternity "patients". It has a wide catchment area, with mothers from central and West

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Auckland as well as from the North Shore. Its relative proximity (compared to National Women's) is important to women for reasons of accessibility during time of delivery. In 1988 for instance, 3,600 babies were born at St Helens – this excludes the additional hundreds of mothers transferred to St Helens from other maternity hospitals with complications during pregnancy or labour. With the closure of St Helens, these women will have to travel all the way from Waitakere or North Shore Hospital to National Women's at a time of medical crisis. Many patients have already expressed their fears that the extra distance they will have to travel may lead to a tragedy.

However, this is not the only reason why women are adamant that St Helens should not close. "The value of St Helens is that it's close to the community", explains Laura who is a staff midwife in the hospital's post-natal ward. She says the hospital reflects the community it serves. "Pacific Island women seem to prefer St Helens to NWH because we have a large proportion of Pacific Island staff – word gets around that treatment is sensitive and that speaking in one's first language is accepted".

Ann Clark points out that many women choose St Helens because unlike National Women's and Middlemore, it is not a "training" hospital. "There is much ill feeling toward National Women's and its status as a teaching hospital. Over the years many women have reacted to the intimidation they have felt – for example from interns being present during ante-natal checkups without their being consulted – by attending St Helens".

Ann is concerned that all women's health issues are being put under National Women's control. She is adamant that women as the consumers of maternity services should have the right to choose a non-training hospital.

Quality of care is a special feature of St Helens, and many are not convinced that "amalgamation" with NWH will preserve this quality. "Our delivery unit is not as high pressure, we mostly achieve a one to one ratio of patient to midwife care. At NWH the ratio is more like three to one, and in times of crisis inevitably someone else will step in and the continuity of care is disrupted. The wards are so much bigger at NWH, but they don't have the increased number of staff to cope with patients. I'm not convinced that ratio will improve even if St Helens staff are shifted to NWH".

Demographically, closing St Helens is a big mistake, explains Laura. In the 1970s there may have been a case for closing the hospital, but moving into a new decade people are returning to having three or four children. There is also a strong trend toward remarriage and older couples beginning "new" families. "I don't see either of these trends reversing. By 1998 the Area Health Board will be complaining that there aren't enough maternity beds and that they have to build a new hospital at a cost of \$500,000 per bed which the public will have to pay for".

It's also a mistake for the public to assume that they will be able to receive maternity care through private medical services. If St Helens is sold, it will not be retained as a maternity hospital but converted to an accident and emergency clinic. Why? Because there's no money to be made in babies – insurance companies only cover medical and surgical requirements. In simple terms there is no private maternity service. And if there was, Laura estimates that it would cost \$5000 for a delivery, including meals, hospital stay and anaesthetist if necessary, but neo-natal care or extra requirements out of complications would incur more expenses.

Perhaps of most concern to both Laura and Ann is the talk of reversion of antenatal clinics from the hospital to church and community halls. Laura explains that these clinics are very poorly attended because women feel that without scan machines and non-stress tests for babies heartbeat they don't have the same significance as hospital clinics. Moreover who will run these clinics? There is such a shortage of midwives as it is, both women find it hard to believe the AAHB will be able to establish such a service. The quality of care offered at the clinics could not possibly be of the same standard as at St Helens where other staff are responsible for clerical work leaving the midwife to devote good quality care to each individual woman.

"This is the cheapest way for the AAHB to deliver maternity care; it costs them less and less but the standards of care also deteriorate. Returning to church halls and community centres is quite simply returning to the dark ages.

"All we want is to keep St Helens open, we're not even asking for more money, just the right to have what we've got now".

If you are concerned that the maternity

services should not be run down and St Helens Hospital should not close, phone Ann (09)894-462 or Laura (09)862-494.

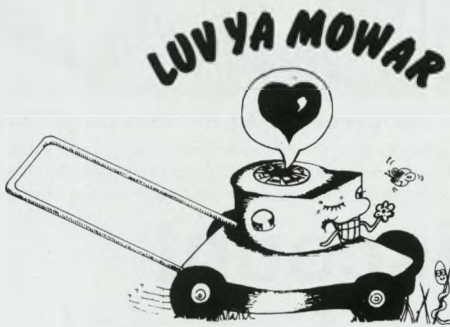
PAY EQUITY UPDATE

Rachel Brown writes from Wellington. The government has promised pay equity legislation by the end of the year. Recent reports in the media suggest there is a battle over the legislation. The battle is between the Ministry of Women's Affairs and an alliance involving the Labour Department and State Services Commission. This wrangle is contributing to delays in introducing a Pay Equity Bill.

The Employers Federation says the gap between men and women will be closed by improving women's job opportunities. The Coalition for Equal Value Equal Pay (CEVEP) knows the gap will close only through effective legislation. CEVEP's concern is the government compromise between the two positions.

Effective legislation includes the ability for a group or class of workers to take a pay equity claim. This class or group must be an occupational group and not a few named individuals working say for one employer in one region. The legislation must allow for the pay rates resulting from a pay equity claim to be out into the relevant award.

The choice of the comparator (that is, the male-dominated work group with which the female-dominated group is to be compared) must be taken from as wide a group as possible. New Zealand uses an international standard to classify work into nine major industries. These are numbered from one to nine and are known as the one digit level. Each of these nine categories are further broken down into 35 industries (the two digit level) which are broken down further to 91 industries and then again to 251. The



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legislation can work if the comparator can be found at the one digit level. Otherwise the the comparator group becomes smaller and therefore less meaningful.

Class actions, the ability to put the new rate into the award and a wide choice of comparators are necessities for effective legislation. Write to your MP asking that all three be there when the Bill comes forward. If you need further information or wish to buy an information kit (cost, \$1) contact CEVEP, P O Box 16149, Wellington.

WHO'S population problem?

Sumati Nair writes about population control and new hormonal contraceptives in *Imperialism and the Control of Women's Fertility*.

Pat Rosier summarises.

This chilling little book was published this year by The Campaign Against Long-Acting Hormonal Contraceptives. Its message is clear: the western world has two interests, one the bogey of "population control" (they are having more babies than we are), the other the need for a cheap way to test new hormonal contraceptives. These two interests come together quite nicely, with the support of organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO), in population control programmes in Asian and African countries.

The myth of "over-population" has been exploded in many quarters but it still holds sway here. Nair quotes a recent brochure of Population Services International, an organisation that distributes contraceptives in third world countries: "Most experts agree that widespread and chronic famines will inevitably occur if present (population) growth rates go unchecked. It is plain that

such a situation will confront the US with dangerous military vortexes and booby traps of the Vietnam type. Beyond that, we shall face the loss of vital raw materials that keep our industrial economy going. Serious shortages and disruption of supply lines will cripple our production and push prices up. We also may face demands from desperate nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America to create the 'new world economic order' through which they could effect an immediate redistribution of the Western World's worth." Well, that is certainly self-interest clearly spelled out. The welfare of the people in these third world countries is of no concern, they are just a threat to the US economy.

So having established, to their own satisfaction anyway, the need to control populations in other countries, they (a combination of governments, industrial interests, pharmaceutical companies and organisations like WHO) can use the women of these countries to try out new hormonal contraceptives. There are many advantages – poor people without resources, no liability for adverse effects, the co-operation of governments who depend on aid (there are clear cases where aid has been dependent on accepting population control programmes), and even a sense of "doing the right thing". And so "a whole complex of governments and inter- and non-governmental organisations and private interests has developed to carry out population control policies."

It's no accident that the types of contraceptive promoted for this control are those that give a minimum of power and control to the women concerned, such as Norplant, which is implanted under the skin and active for years. They also need years of trials on women before the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in the US will approve them for use in that country. Never

mind that the women who have the least resources to deal with side effects, and the least potential for calling the experimenters to account for mistakes and disasters, are those being experimented on.

The examples that Sumati Nair uses in her book are mainly from India and Bangladesh, but the situation applies all over Asia, Africa and Latin America. It's imperialism of the eighties and nineties, it's big business and it's wrong. The evidence is that improved economic conditions are the most likely change to cause birth rates to drop, not further control of people's lives by decision-makers far distant in place and wealth.

At the end of the book is an appendix which includes a list of the six major institutions into which US government and foundation funds are now channelled (including a WHO programme); interconnections between the US government, population control organisations and the drug industry; organisations that receive financial support from the contraceptive industry; and major agencies involved in population control, their source of funding and activities.

The Campaign Against Long-Acting Hormonal Contraceptives has a number of demands for which they are seeking support. These demands are:

1. Withdraw the WHO Guidelines and draw up recommendations that will protect women from abuse.

2. Stop the exploitative trials with long-acting hormonal contraceptives.

3. Stop the promotion and use of unsafe hormonal contraceptives in family planning programmes of third world countries because: a) no information or choice of method is provided and women have little control over the methods that are made available; b) neither are the contra-indications for the use of these methods observed nor is adequate health or follow-up care provided; c) women are pressured by circumstances or the family planning programme into accepting the method promoted.

The Campaign can be contacted at: Fokke Simonszstraat 12 A 111 1017 TG Amsterdam, The Netherlands or 173 Archway Rd, London, UK.

Racism is bad for our health

Christine Dann writes:

As if we didn't have enough problems of our own, New Zealand is now recruiting doctors from South Africa. White male doctors of course. Eighty-three percent of doctors in South Africa are white, 3.5% are black. (The rest are Coloured or Indian.) The Otago University Medical school currently has a significant number of South Africans on its staff – many more are South Africans than are Maori. South Africans are also taking influential positions in the health hierarchy in New Zealand. For example, one is a senior manager in the head office of the Health Department.



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These South Africans will claim they left South Africa because they disliked the apartheid system. This is probably true up to a point. However, it is also obvious that they have no commitment to actively oppose it, either inside or outside



South Africa. For example, none of the South African staff of the University of Otago Medical School came to a slide talk on the health system in South Africa and ways of changing it given by an anti-apartheid colleague recently. Furthermore, they bring to New Zealand attitudes towards non-white people which have been shaped by apartheid.

Two South African opponents of apartheid were in New Zealand recently sharing information about the racist nature of the health system there, and New Zealand's collusion with that system in providing support for white doctors and allied health professionals. As well as hiring South African doctors, New Zealand medical organisations support apartheid in other ways. New Zealand occupational therapists (most of whom are female) are affiliated to the World Federation of Occupational Therapists which includes the South African association. After eight years of pressure (including the resignation of the Norwegian association in protest at the South African presence) the South African organisation now has a non-racial constitution. However, occupational therapy training and practice is still racially segregated, with separate schools and hospitals for blacks, whites and coloureds. The net result (as in all the other branches of the South African health system) is that whites end up with a First World standard of health care, while the other races endure a Third World standard.

Heart transplants symbolise the difference between the standards of care. While wealthy adult whites receive new hearts, black children die of kwashiorkor, tuberculosis and other preventable and curable illnesses associated with poverty and malnutrition. One of the South African anti-apartheid campaigners remarked wryly that it was a pity that white South Africans receiving heart transplants did not also experience a real change of heart.

The campaigners were therefore asking that New Zealand engage in a bit of "heart surgery" on the South African regime. This would also be good for our own health, as New Zealand has no interest in importing racist medics or training our doctors in a racist system (significant numbers of New Zealand medical students receive part of their training in South Africa, and obstetrics and gynaecology is a favoured speciality.)

The first step in the surgery is a sharp cut - expelling South African professional

bodies (both medical and non-medical) from international professional organisations until such time as they play an active role in opposing apartheid. South African doctors, for example, already have the option of belonging to the Medical Association of South Africa, which implicitly supports apartheid, or the National medical and Dental Association, which actively opposes it. How racist is the Medical Association of South Africa? One example really shocked me to the core - the South African Paediatric Association, which is an affiliate of MASA, has recently formulated a code for the white regime on "how to handle children in detention". Translation: when black children have been arrested and imprisoned merely for protesting such obvious injustices as the fact that A\$130 per annum is spent on the education of each black child and A\$1,300 on the education of each white child, then it would be nice if they weren't beaten, suffocated, deprived of sleep, tortured with electric shock or placed in solitary confinement quite as much as adult detainees.

This is Nazi "logic" and if it takes expulsion from their international organisations to bring South African doctors to their senses then the sooner this is done the better.

Another medical measure which would be good for both South African and New Zealand medical professionals is isolation. The African National Congress is currently calling for "selective support" rather than a blanket boycott on professional contact between South Africa and the rest of the world. Individuals whose professional work is judged by anti-apartheid organisations inside and outside South Africa to be promoting social change will be encouraged to continue and make the necessary contacts. For everyone else the ANC is promoting a boycott. This means that South African professionals who are not actively working against apartheid would be banned from attending international conferences, publishing in international journals, lecturing overseas and so on. Similarly, foreign professionals who are not actively anti-apartheid are not welcome in South Africa.

Isolating the white regime in order to pressure it to change is thus no longer a matter for sports bodies alone. A lot of women belong to professional organisations (nurses, physiotherapists, dentists, occupational therapists, teachers, university lecturers etc) which have links with South Africa. These organisations have an important role to play in opposing apartheid. Perhaps a more important role than the sports bodies, because no-one actually dies from having to play sport only with people of the same race. But when a paediatric ward in the white hospital in Durban is closed because the occupancy rate is only 60%, and the facilities are not made available to the paediatricians in the black hospital (where the occupancy rate is 130%, ie, patients sleep on the floor) children's lives are at stake.

Does your professional association sup-

port apartheid by condoning the racist practices of South African affiliates, continued contact with pro-apartheid members of those affiliates, and/or the employment of white South African professionals in New Zealand? Maybe it's time you conducted an exploratory operation to determine whether radical surgery is needed...

Mothers Alone

Joy Liddicoat and Robyn Wilson report on a project to produce new resource handbook for women who are parenting alone..

The Women's Legal Resource Project was founded in late 1988 and is the first women-based community legal service in Aotearoa. To date the handbook project has made contact, through a national survey, with over 200 groups (including every known community centre) and individual women throughout Aotearoa. Maori women have been consulted and are in the process of widespread consultation within their community. Pacific Island women are also consulting widely.

The project is based in Wellington and has been working closely with the Mothers Alone group, a support group operating out of the YWCA. This group originally identified the need for this handbook and play an important role in its development.

The aim of the handbook is to empower women through the provision of information about their legal rights and services. It will be written from the perspective of women parenting alone and women's groups who are working closely with these women. It will illustrate some of the difficulties women face and practical and legal solutions they have found to help deal with those problems. It will also identify some of the existing resources available in Aotearoa and places women can receive support.

The handbook is due to be produced and launched by early 1990 and will be distributed nationally. The project team are hopeful of reaching women with the least access to legal resources. It is envisaged that it will be available in Maori, English and possibly Pacific Island languages.

Areas covered will include paternity, custody and access, adoption, family violence, matrimonial property, social welfare, guardianship, wills, human rights sexual abuse, housing, women in paid employment, accident compensation, credit and consumer rights, women in prisons and psychiatric institutions. The handbook will address issues of particular concern to Maori and Pacific island and lesbian women who are parenting alone.

Financial assistance has been received from the Department of Internal Affairs and the project is hoping it will receive more funding. If you would like to make a donation or receive further information please contact the Women's Legal Resource Project C/- Wellington South Community Law Centre, P O Box 6528, Wellington, Phone (04) 850-289. ■

Keri Hulme

Keri Hulme was in Auckland recently to promote her book *Homeplaces*: Keri wrote the words and Robin Morrison took the photographs; Hodder and Stoughton published. Janet Charman interviewed her for *Broadsheet*.



PHOTOS: GIL HANLY

Janet Charman In this country the government helps fund the arts. I read somewhere that Jean Paul Sartre turned down the Nobel Prize because he thought accepting grants would compromise his integrity.

Keri Hulme He had the luxury of income, whereas here, without government assistance hugely less creative work would get done. And that includes weaving and carving.

Some people do tailor their output towards the awards. I've just judged a short story contest where a lot of the entries were based around some very implausible versions of Okarito.

How do arts' funders promote talent rather than mediocrity?

On the Literary Fund we have a wide group of people, each with our own sympathies. I'm quite blatant. I would pick those of Maori origin and women writers and young writers before anyone else. Each member has their own prejudices, which is fine as long as the applying public are aware of our perspectives. We don't have the funds to promote mediocrity. The Literary Fund has gone from \$150,000 to \$750,000 per annum in the five years I've been on it, but that's still a minuscule amount. It worries me immensely that there are still good beginning writers out there who do not get the encouragement.

Do you think talented young Maori artists and writers are getting the recognition they deserve?

No. There's a heck of a long queue. And although there are others on the Literary Fund who share the same values I do, Terry Sturm for instance – and I don't think that's coincidental; I think it's very common for people of Maori background to do this – we just don't have the money to support everyone who has the potential.

What do you look for in emerging artists?

Usually you've been published in a few places, or you've produced some superb work and we want to see more of it. A good third of the people we give money to don't have an established writer's track record. I had a decade of applying for grants and being drip-fed them. They were inordinately welcome. I fondled all over the cheques when they arrived. And I was not an established writer during this time.

Can I believe the Literary Fund is as egalitarian as you say? This seems to be a very 60's philosophy. How have these attitudes survived in the "more market" 80s?

It's survived, speaking for this Literary Fund, because the group of people on it had their ideas moulded in the sixties. We are liberal humanists who are not ashamed of that label. But a change of government and a change of appointees can mean a change in thinking, then, who knows?

Do you support a quota system for New Zealand music on the radio and New Zealand drama on TV?

Emphatically, yes! And it seems stupid to me that they would import poms, like Julian Mounter, to take the key media jobs.

Is there a creative writing course or residency in New Zealand you would like to be part of, as a teacher or participant?

No, I'm not interested in Menton or Sargeson. "The Menton" is a Katherine Mansfield scholarship for a writer in residence in France and "Sargeson" is a scholarship for a writer in residence in Auckland. I look forward to support and patronage but I want to work in my own setting. I get enough stimulation from my family. Writers' colonies work for people who find the solitude of writing irksome.

Whereas I enjoy it very much. As for teaching, I'm not a teacher.

Can bad teaching wreck the potential of an artist or writer in the way they say it can wreck the voice of a singer?

It surely can. If you're put in a straight jacket and they only want realism, that could affect you really badly if you want to write about how you see the things inside of you rather than the outside. A very authoritarian teacher's voice can loom large in a child's eyes, as early as primary school. I don't have warm memories of school. I agree with the axing of school certificate.

But you're very well educated. Was that in spite of your schooling?

I'm naturally curious. I have the support of my family, too. Only conservative business people are interested in the narrow range of information exam results can give you. School should be about educating the whole person. It's a glory and an honour to progressive teachers who are in the system that they are slowly changing it. Fine, if people want to take outside exams. Let the range of possibilities be as broad as possible. Education should be there for everyone to dip in and out of, not just children.

"A prophet in their own country is seldom heeded." Would a bleaker ending for *The Bone People* have alienated too many readers here?

There is a version where I've written Simon off. I have the only copy. Two overseas reviewers thought it should have ended at part three. That would have been utterly depressing. There had to be growth. A future to look forward to. But I never thought about the audience's attitudes. I wrote it for me. It had its own imperatives. That doesn't mean writing should ever escape the writer's control. If it does get wild you come back and re-

write and re-edit.

How are you going to mark 1990? Some groups have called for a boycott, but a sort of amnesia doesn't seem like a very good idea. On the other hand, we don't want a 365 day telethon.

No, we do not. We need recognition of the past and meditation on it.

Private or public recognition and meditation?

I'll be with my family and community. We have a joke at home. We plan to declare Okarito a republic in 1990. (That's a joke.) The sort of festive binge Australia had is entirely inappropriate for us.

And inappropriate for them?

A lot of Koori people thought so.

To change direction completely, have you tried surimi?

Yes. I have some Japanese Surimi knives to make my own. I use them for sushi too. They are like a hand-worked mincing machine. It's a wasteful way to use fish but one the Japanese have been using in their cooking for a very long time. It's a waste of bloody good Hoki to turn it into commercial surimi here.

In *The Bone People Kerewin* stuffs a flounder with pineapple and celery. Do you have to bone the flounder first?

You cut through the spines with a pair of nail scissors and lift most of the skeleton out. I ruined ten or twenty good flounder before I got the hang of it.

It's a pretty faddy thing to do to a flounder?

Yes, but quite deliberate as far as Kerewin is concerned. She's got the empty time to fill.

Have you got a favourite canned fish?

Sardines.

I was hoping you'd have a fabulous recipe for canned tuna, which I think is very under-rated.

I like to eat it with a dressing of light oil and cider vinegar, piled into half an avocado. At one stage I wouldn't eat canned tuna because of the massive slaughter of tuna going on, but friends in



It worries me immensely that there are still good beginning writers out there who do not get the encouragement.



Project Jonah say that's no longer happening.

In *The Bone People Kerewin* harvests some rock oyster out of season. Is that her right to kai moana?

Yes. It's only law with rock oysters that you can't strip a rock bare. People have been eating them here for centuries using that law.

Do you think the government has the right approach to managing the fisheries of Aotearoa?

They've made an awful hash of it. There was enough out there to feed us forever. A few gross people have grown filthy rich by hitting the breeding shoals. Then they wonder why the numbers drop. They didn't realize that Hoki is a very slow-growing fish, which doesn't breed until it's about 20 years old. There's a lot of feeling about this on the coast. Any fisherman where I live will give you an earful if you raise the subject down there. And my retort to Pakeha people who question the Waitangi Tribunal's decision for Maori control of the fisheries is to say, "Well, what have you done with it? You got rid of the oysters on Stewart Island within ten years of having access to them."

Is life getting tougher down on the coast? My impression here in Auckland is that hard times haven't affected the middle classes. The restructuring and the crash have only meant shelving the overseas trip and moving from Remuera to Ponsonby. Is there a middle class on the coast which has remained relatively immune?

There's always been money on the coast. We are a stratified society. The old

In spite of the communication revolution I don't think there's as much contact between the south and the north as there was 20 years ago.

established farming families have always looked after their own. Tree fellers, miners and fisherfolk have the money sometimes, but they don't inherit wealth. Some of the business people, who were better off than most, have gone down the tubes.

The biggest division that's appeared is with the people at the bottom. We've had an influx of dispossessed, homeless people. Misfits, petty criminals. When the forestry department closed down at Hari Hari, for instance, the social welfare streamed a group of city people into the houses there. It was a disaster. They didn't fit in. There were letters to the paper about them. And vandalism on the houses. Assaults increased. Most have now been pushed elsewhere. Hari Hari means a dance or song of joy. Highly inappropriate. The established community closed ranks against them. Some people were prepared to make them feel at home but they wore out their welcome. Hokitika had the same problem. Westport booted them out of town - marched some of them down to the bus and said "Don't come back!"

This hasn't touched Auckland. It wasn't reported in our media as far as I know.

In spite of the communication revolution I don't think there's as much contact between the south and the north as there was 20 years ago.

Will your new book *Homeplaces* put us in touch?

No. It's designed to tell you peculiarly and explicitly what my places and people are like. Coasters in general are extraordinarily hospitable, they know their communities, they know their genealogies, and yet they have a meanness of spirit.

Would they be offended to hear you say that?

I don't care. I say it to their faces. It's true.

Longtime Labour voters I know say they won't vote in the next election. Will you?

Yes. Our family are committed Labour supporters. Our MP is Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan and our votes as a family are more or less tied together. The first time I

voted I didn't enjoy it very much because I had the feeling it didn't matter a toss. And yet there was such struggle and pain that people before us went through to get the vote. That struggle hasn't been emphasized enough.

I feel hurt and betrayed at what some Labour Party politicians have done. You vote for a certain commitment and then you don't get it. That speaks to the futility of voting. And this is not to criticise the individual input of Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan. I can't spoil a voting paper. It still speaks as a small piece of empowering that's been done by generations past and I must not ignore what they've done.

In your book *Lost Possessions*, Jaban claims the driver's licence and the twenty-first party are "faded futile rites with no mystery or pain attached." Is that going to be true of voting for young people doing it for the first time in the next elections?

I think so. I was standing on a soap box when I wrote *Lost Possessions*. It's being made into a film in Holland. Not many people have noticed it here.

It suggested to me the failure of a patriarch to grasp the creative poten-

tial which could emerge from his imprisonment. He pays very dearly for that failure of imagination.

In a dim way he is aware of another's anguish but he hasn't the imaginative skill to act on that awareness.

Do you like to be involved with the design and publishing of your books?

Yes, and every writer should have the ability to do this. The more control we have of our work the better. Hodder and Stoughton give me this freedom here. With overseas publishers some awful covers can get into print and I have no control. Certain colours are instant turnoffs. People won't pick up a book with a pale blue cover.

How do you view your work on the Indecent Publications tribunal? Are you censoring our reading?

We look at 1200 to 1500 titles a year. They are mostly pictures. I'm happy to censor them. I can't see it does any good to provide violent wanking material. No apologies about that. I will fight for good books. I went to bat for *Black and White*. It was a collection of poetry, short stories and photos of gay males with their white or black lovers. Some people objected to

the constant use of four letter words. But, what the hell, it had genuine literary merit.

As a woman often travelling alone, have you experienced sexual harassment, or subtly worse treatment than you think a man in an equivalent position would receive?

I'm convinced of that. I've been very public about my gender neuter status. People find that hard to handle. They still want to see a man around. Even in as public a place as a hotel bar, people can be as obnoxious as anything and if you say anything about it you're the troublemaker.

There's a women's hotel open in London now. Would you stay at such a facility?

Yes, I read about that. It sounds great.

Jane Austen never wrote a scene where there were only men present. She didn't seem to think a woman could accurately represent a man's world. What do you think?

She was a genius and a woman of her time. I think you can be anyone and anything in your head. There you are not limited by who and what you are. ■

LETTERS

from page 5

— and we are heartened that women are talking/thinking/acting on their housing needs and that these needs have now received government recognition and support.

However we have to correct the information on the role of DSW in the scheme of things.

When the news of the housing funding appeared it the papers we were excited — we thought we "had to be it" because we were already in the process of establishing ourselves as a legal entity and we had a great, achievable project to put forward. We also had heard that DSW was supposed to supply back-up funding. We decided, though, to check this out for ourselves and two of us tripped off to Wellington — "just looking, thanks". Lo and behold, (as we had rather suspected) Housing Corp had budgeted for its share of Helen Clark's package for women but DSW had dipped out completely — there were no wages, no short-fall, no back-up, no administration funds available. As far as we know these services are still not included in this year's DSW budget.

The Housing for Women Trust scheme met all the criteria — Housing Corp were willing and able to give 100 percent

mortgage finance at seven percent interest for the first year, but DSW told us that we didn't fit any of their criteria and we could not have support funding. Our reaction was that if there was no support funding there was no way we would enter into any mortgage agreement. We had no intention of setting ourselves up to fail.

After a flurry of communications between Wellington and Christchurch government departments we were advised to make a direct application to the Minister of Social Welfare, Dr Michael Cullen. This was successful and we received a grant to cover short-fall in rent and some administration costs, but no wages. To pay for a full-time co-ordinator we had to apply to COGS and other trusts.

If DSW had come to the party and covered Helen Clark's proposal for support money for groups such as ours it would not have cost them much. We appear to be the only women's housing trust to use the special fund so far. It would also have relieved us of a great deal of anxiety and extra work and, as well, it would have relieved a little of the strain on COGS' funding.

We do have some written information on the aims and philosophy of the Trust and the pro-

cess we went through which is available to others who may be interested in our particular version of housing. Write to us at PO Box 13476, Christchurch.

DAPHNE TERPSTRA

for the Housing for Women Trust
Christchurch

FEARS, DREAMS AND DESIRES

Dear *Broadsheet*,
Congratulations to Lisa Sabbage for the stimulating interview with Alexis Hunter. Her questions were pertinent and gave an excellent follow-up to viewing "FEARS/DREAMS/DESIRES" held recently at the Auckland City Art Gallery. Well done and much appreciated.

CLAUDIA PONDEYLEY

Auckland

NEW TIMES?

Dear *Broadsheet*,
I attended Allanah Ryan's workshop "New Times" at the feminism meets socialism conference and for me it was one of the most thought provoking I attended. I didn't attend Alison Laurie's "know your isms" but from speaking with women who did and after reading Cushla Managh's review of it I wish I had, if only to reassure myself that it wasn't as simplistic as it sounded.

Is Alison Laurie really suggesting that if you are heterosexual, male, Pakeha, middle-class, able-bodied etc, then you are always and necessarily privileged — and were therefore entitled to be given a biscuit in the workshop? And that women with the biscuits were the most "privileged"?

If indeed the "biscuit exercise" was intended to show who is "privileged" in our society, then the simplicity of the notions underlying it, and their usefulness for feminist practice, are exactly what Allanah Ryan — as well as Alison Jones, Camille Guy, and Gay Simpkin in their workshop — were calling into question. As Alison Jones argued in a workshop entitled "Post-feminism — Let's have a better go at theory", it's too simplistic to argue that as a woman she is always and necessarily oppressed by (all) men, when the material conditions of her life and those of many other middle class "professional" women (their "privileges" if you like) far exceed those of many men — including the man who controls the gate at the University she drives through each day.

Similarly, it is not possible to argue that heterosexual women are by definition in a privileged

continued on page 37

B·A·C·K·L·A·S·H

Pat Rosier

Child sexual abuse figures are under attack in New Zealand from both the reactionary and "liberal" media. Optimists working in the field see this as a sign that feminists have made progress in making sexual abuse a social issue and getting some services operating to deal with it. It certainly is a continuing lesson in the foolishness of taking anything for granted – as soon as change occurs a counter-move to contest it is mounted.

The same phenomena are occurring all over the world. While in London earlier this year I interviewed Liz Kelly and Linda Regan, workers in the child abuse studies unit at North London Polytech, about developments in dealing with child sexual abuse in England since Cleveland (see box), and their work at the unit. It is important to note that social services are organised differently in England from the way they are here: local bodies are generally responsible for the investigation and follow-up of sexual abuse cases, a role that is taken by the Department of Social Welfare in New Zealand.

Can the fact that there is a backlash be seen as evidence of progress?

Liz Kelly I think it's that somehow child sexual abuse encapsulates a lot of the challenges that feminism is making, both around the family and male sexuality. It's opened those up into the public arena in a way that the abuse of adult women didn't. The backlash is coming both from men organising because we're challenging their sexual access to children and young women, and from politicians and others who don't want the feminist issue on their agenda.

In Britain it is complicated. There was a real attempt to shift back into denial with Cleveland – that number of children couldn't possibly be being abused, let alone anally. The inquiry, if you read it carefully, says maybe the problem isn't that children weren't abused but the way the professionals handled it, although that isn't how it was presented in the media.

Linda Regan One of the recommendations that came out of the Cleveland Inquiry was to find better ways for police and social services to work together.

Liz Our concern is particularly that everyone is wanting procedures and models to work from and everything written down, pushed into a legal/medical way of thinking. Somehow, if you can't prove legally and medically that a child was abused, then you can't say they were, even if you have a child who has told sev-

eral people. You can't say a child has been abused unless an investigation that fits into the legal model of proof and evidence can be done. And that is terrifying in its implications for children and mothers.

We know there are organisations that are getting phone calls from mothers every day who are desperate. What are they going to do? They believe the child, but it doesn't fit into this model of how everything has got to be proved. In some cases the man involved is a very powerful individual and I'm not sure how long it will be before we have to get into the kind of methods they are having to use in the US to protect mothers and children, which is basically underground networks. People want certainty, they want a model. They won't work with the complexity and difficulties of what child sexual abuse actually means.

Child sexual abuse encapsulates a lot of the challenges feminism is making, both around the family and male sexuality

Linda You get ludicrous cases like the one we had the other day where the child was being abused by her brother. The brother was under age, there was no way there was going to be a criminal investigation, yet the whole thing was treated as if there was. The child was submitted to full medical diagnosis, the whole works, completely unnecessarily. What Cleveland has done to the social service departments concerns me greatly in that it has put the most incredible amount of fear and pressure onto social workers because to take a case to court and lose it means trouble. If you lose it and the child goes home you've lost that child.

Interestingly, in Cleveland, in five cases children who were sent home in precisely those circumstances have since been re-referred.

What do you mean cases?

Liz They never came clean in the Cleveland report and said "this is the proportion of children actually abused and this is the proportion who weren't. There were only 12 families involving 26 children in which there was some question about whether there was abuse or not. And since the report was published five of

the families – so it involves more than five children – have been re-referred to the social services department because someone still has concern about those children. It was never picked up by the press that it was only in these 12 cases that the Cleveland Inquiry looked at that there was any doubt that the children were abused.

Would you talk a little more about the ideas you are developing around not taking the child out of the family.

Liz There are several levels to it. As feminists we want abusive men prosecuted. But given how the legal system is constructed at the moment the possibilities of doing that, especially with really young children, are fairly low. We feel that workers ought to know that and work with it. So if you are talking about protecting children the best route that you have is to work with and enable mothers to believe and support them. And when the abuser is a household member, to work with the mother to exclude that person from the household. It doesn't necessarily have to be the police who remove them. A woman can take out an injunction with a local authority – there are proceedings that local authorities can use to get the court to remove the abuser. What some local authorities have done is take the mother and the children out so they can have some space.

But the biggest problem is how people think about mothers.

In a lot of theoretical understandings mothers are seen to have a role in causing the abuse, so there's a need to challenge the family dysfunction ideas that actually suggest it's women's behaviour that causes men to abuse their children.

And then there's how you think about how women should respond once the abuse has happened. A lot of people expect mothers, when they're told, to be able to just respond immediately, be the perfect mother and immediately protect their child, instead of understanding that you are telling her possibly the worst thing she could imagine, other than that her child had been killed. She has all sorts of emotions and difficulties and feelings around it and she has to be given the opportunity to say those things without it being seen that to mean she is not going to protect the child.

One of the things we do in training to try and enable workers to think about that is to say, "don't think about other women, think about yourself. How would you feel if someone came and told you that the

man you had chosen to live with, you had had children with, had abused your children. What would you feel?" Most of them say "I don't think I'd be able to believe it, I'd want it not to be true." Which is precisely what lots of mothers say. People read that as saying "I won't believe it" which isn't what mothers are saying. But if you do read it like that you take the child away.

Who has the woman got? She's often only got the man. And she can only have him if she believes he didn't do it. I think that's what happened in a number of cases in Cleveland. Because work with mothers wasn't done sensitively enough, they didn't recognise what it was they were telling women.

Linda There is one local authority I know of where they have guidelines that say you need two workers - one specifically to work with the mother and one to work with the child. Then they target the mother first and foremost - providing there are workers available, which is the other major problem. There is a whole resources question.

In fact, the situation in some social services departments is past breaking point with massive numbers of child abuse cases - physical and sexual - unallocated, with no worker on the case at all. Because they have a statutory responsibility to do investigations, in a lot of cases they are doing very good ones, but they've got no follow-up because they just don't have the workers. Some workers have actually said to me that they feel that sometimes it's better not to go in at all if you can't guarantee you've got the right kind of follow-up.

Liz Our way of thinking is that mothers are the best people, along with the social worker or whatever to do the therapeutic work with children, with support for the mothers. Issues don't come up with children when they've got their one hour a week or fortnight therapy session, and if we are talking about the numbers of children we know are being abused, we haven't got the resources, anyway. So actually working with people in the child's network - and it may be their granny sometimes or whoever - so they can cope with whatever it is that comes up and help children deal with it and have support to deal with their own feeling around it, then that's going to be the best way for the children.

Mothers can be just as distressed as the child about what comes up so they must have support. There's one amazing account by a mother of going through the

experience with a child and what it meant to cope with the nightmares, the rage, the fact that (in that case it was the grandfather who abused the child and he called it "I love you kissing") whenever she said "I love you" to her little daughter the daughter thought she wanted to do what the grandfather did. The despair and the pain that that brought up! She was a very strong woman who had a supportive network of women friends, but if you are not in that position there are ways in which you can silence children and not allow them to work through things because you don't know how to deal with them yourself. It's not that mothers don't want to but because it's hard.

What do you see as the role of pro-

In Cleveland, England, in 1987, reported cases of child sexual abuse rose from an average of 30 a month to 110 in June of that year. There were longstanding disagreements between social service workers and the police on procedures for dealing with this abuse, and a public outcry developed which led to a judicial inquiry. The report of this inquiry (known generally as The Cleveland Report) was widely - and often badly - reported throughout Britain. The circumstances of "the Cleveland affair" were complex and have been written about in *Unofficial Secrets* by Beatrix Campbell, published by Virago. Public outrage was vented more on those diagnosing and reporting the abuse than on the perpetrators; in fact the outcry was fueled by some families of the children concerned. There was wide public discussion about the use of anal dilation as a diagnostic tool. (Beatrix Campbell points out that it was seldom explained what this term means. She explains it thus: "an anus which very regularly accommodates incoming objects not only shows small scars and a smoothed verge but also opens spontaneously. It was a familiar sign in the literature of forensic pathology and had long been regarded as suggestive of buggery." But apparently when observed in young children, as was the case in Cleveland, it was not to be considered to have the same meaning, even when - as was usually the case among the Cleveland children - other evidence of sexual abuse was present.)

professionals? I mean social workers, therapists, child sexual abuse "specialists" and so on.

Liz It's complicated and has lots of levels. The role they don't take that I think they're going to have to take if they are going to keep this work, is a political role. They can't just be professionals. The real problem is people who see it as just a career path. That both stops the movement of knowledge and expertise outwards because people become protective because it's "their" area, so they're not empowering any other workers. That's a huge problem that we notice here in England, because it's become so professionalised. Women who work in refuges for example feel they can't do work on child sexual abuse because they don't know enough. What I always say to them is "You spend your whole day working with women and children on really diffi-

cult issues, there's lots of parallels between domestic violence and child sexual abuse, lots, and it's because the professionals have taken over you think you can't do it, not because you haven't got the skills, because you have and you use them every day."

I also think we have to acknowledge that working in an area for a length of time means that you develop a certain expertise but then there's what do you do with that. Do you share it and want to pass it around as much as possible and discuss it to be challenged about it, or use it just for yourself?

Linda When it comes to follow-up in a lot of cases mothers and children are not given any choice, the whole family is just referred to whatever the professional thinks they need and that's it, whereas it might be the last thing the mother or the child wants. And because family therapy is so dominant, is what you do in these cases, families get shoved into it without individual wishes being taken into account.

Liz And what does choice mean in that context as well? When the mother and child know that if they don't co-operate the child might be taken away or whatever, even where their views are sought, do they really feel they can say it's not what they want?

There's a whole issue about choice and autonomy and involving children that's ongoing here as well. And an issue about whether it might actually be important for the child that somebody else takes responsibility for the decisions at this stage. Usually the abuser's strategy has been to make them feel as though they are responsible for everything that might happen if they tell anybody, so keeping on asking the child do you want this, do you want that, may reinforce the message they have had all the way through.

On the other hand, when you're talking about adolescents and older children, there are a lot of questions about autonomy. We know a lot of teachers who are committed to working with young people and find it very confusing to have children tell them something and say "but you're not to tell anybody else". One part of what they believe wants to accept that from the child and another part of what they believe makes them feel maybe there should be some outside intervention because the child is carrying just too much responsibility.

So there are all sorts of issues that we are talking through and discussing but there aren't any easy answers - and that's what everybody wants. We have to face

that there aren't any easy answers. We have to face that sometimes, even with lots of support, women choose abusive males, and that's really hard to do.

We've also got to cope with the fact that a few women sexually abuse children, and that's really hard to deal with as well. That's just beginning to come up in discussions between women. There are adult survivors who have been abused by women and we have disallowed them from saying that, and our services have not been available to them because we have not wanted to hear it. We've got to be brave enough to face that.

One of the fears about that is the way it is used against women.

Liz Yes. But us not speaking about it just gives them more space to use it against us and we've got to work out what a feminist understanding of and approach to that would be so they we're not pushed into a corner each time somebody mentions it, or we can't defend our analysis because that's what thrown at it.

Linda We know so little about women who sexually abuse and that's the main problem. We haven't looked at it, we don't have the information.

Liz And we don't know what's the same and what's different for the person who's been abused. It's a mistake to assume both that it's all the same or that it's all different. I think there are at least two things going on. There's the debate in the wider world and there are the discussions we are trying to have with each other as feminists.

There are all sorts of issues we need to talk about around racism, for example, for Black women and children. And around disability and how we find ways of enabling children of different abilities to communicate if their experience is that they are being abused. There are so many levels on which we are having to work while at the same time deal with the juggernaut of professionalism and professional takeover that's happening out there and do our own work and take things forward. You can feel like you are kind of sinking under this mountain of issues.

Can you talk a little about the work of this unit?

Liz What's special about it - and I don't know how we manage to exist in some ways - is, as far as I know, we are the only institution within an educational institution that is committed to developing feminist theory and practice in relation to any area of sexual violence. There are lots of groups in the voluntary sector but actually with institutional support - of sorts - we're unique.

We do lots of different things. The extent to which we can do them is dependent on the fact that we don't have a lot of funding and we are fairly marginal. We

do training - mainly with social workers - that's how it started. And we train nursery workers, clinical psychologists, and more recently we've been getting into doing training with women's groups who have developed around other issues but are wanting to develop in this area - like refugees. The two other women who work here have a project for next year devising training for trainers - like social work trainers. They are developing this model of how to use what is our basic three day training course to also do one day courses on very specific detailed things.

We do consultancy work - lots of people phone us up about specific cases. A lot of that work I think is networking. We put a lot of people in touch with each other. Sometimes it's talking through issues ourselves. We do a bit of research consultancy too. Then we are a resource and networking organisation. We have a feminist bibliography that's updated every six months. We organise a series of seminars for practitioners where we try and face some of the difficult issues we have raised today and people come from all over the country to those. Then we do research.

To protect children the best route is to work with and enable mothers to believe and support them.

And we do political work. We've been lobbying MPs and when issues come up in the House of Commons we send long letters trying to explain what the issues are from our perspective. Also we are trying to facilitate the emergence of a feminist coalition nationwide against child sexual abuse, bringing together feminists from the voluntary sector and feminists who work in professional capacities. We're hoping there will be a conference in December.

We actually put out a statement on the Cleveland Inquiry, which wasn't picked up by the press, but has been picked up by women's groups up and down the country. So that's another level on which we are trying to work, trying to build something stronger than a network, because if there isn't a strong understanding amongst grassroots feminists and radical professionals then we can't respond to a backlash effectively.

I think lots of women think because child sexual abuse is so obviously a huge problem there's no going back. They don't have a sense of history and knowing these issues came up before, in the late

19th and early 20th century and then disappeared for 20 years. Sexual abuse didn't go away but feminist organising around it became less effective.

All these things we do better at some times than others. Until very recently I was the only full-time worker here and we have minimal resources. We don't have any core funding. We get the office, my salary was paid for a year and after that we had to get half of it from money we earned doing training. Now Linda and I are both funded by an external research grant and our two colleagues have to earn the money by doing training. So now all the institution gives us is the room. That's got to do with all sorts of things like cut-backs in education. We very much want to stay in touch with the grassroots and what's going on for women's groups

And then we do research. Linda and I are working on a prevalence study. There hasn't been a "good" prevalence study in Britain, so we've just got funding to do that. It will cover 1200 16-21 year olds. We've only just begun. It's an 18-month project. We're trying to broaden what's been done in earlier studies, to broaden the kinds of things that we're asking to include physical abuse, which has until recently been the major issue that social workers have dealt with, and also physical and sexual violence between young people themselves. It's going to be done on a questionnaire basis.

How will the group be selected?

Linda From tertiary education colleges across courses, designed to try and get the balance right in terms of race, class, gender. It will be around the country so we get rural and urban mixes.

Where has the funding for the project come from?

Liz Something called the Economic and Social Research Council, which funds most social science research. It's the first official grant that I know of to do with sexual violence, granted with the knowledge that the research is to be feminist. There are lots of women who have done research but they have usually done it as part of their PhD or something similar and haven't had a formal grant.

Linda One thing we are doing that is different is going in ahead and set up back-up facilities before we go into the schools. So not only will we be around if any of the young people who respond to the questionnaire want to talk but there will be ongoing facilities there for that to happen. One of the problems about doing anything like this is that young people are being asked to remember something they may have buried, and we want to ensure we don't just leave them with that situation, that if something does come up there will be people there who can help them deal with it. ■

a STORM in

As the abortion battle takes on global proportions, Lisa

Anti-abortion fanatics like to portray themselves as "The Gathering Storm" of the moral right, raining down upon the "evil" of abortion. They have a lot invested in this metaphor of gathering clouds, also popular with the media, because it implies a gathering of power worldwide against the pro-choice lobby.

Certainly feminist women around the world can hear alarm bells ringing as they witness a reactionary backlash against gains they thought they had already won. Issues like the recognition of sexual abuse, the principle of pay equity, lesbian and gay visibility and now, a woman's right to choose an abortion, are once again under threat from conservative politicians fuelled by fundamentalist christians. They would have us go back to procuring illegal abortions and women dying painful and degrading deaths.

The United States Supreme Court decision in July this year gave each state in that country the legal right to deny women abortions, a decision which has given rise to renewed feminist activism – see Eleanor Bader's report on this later in the article. The July decision came after years of whittling away at the 1973 Supreme Court (Roe versus Wade) ruling that women *could* choose abortion.

This year's about-face by the Supreme Court was not made in a vacuum. It comes after a decade of intense campaigning by fundamentalist christian groups staunchly opposed to abortion.

The most recent manifestation of this campaign is Operation Rescue. More organised and sophisticated than previous anti-abortion groups, its tactics are to blockade abortion clinics nationally, harassing women entering and leaving the clinics. In January this year, led by arch anti-abortion campaigner Randall Terry, the group stampeded a family planning centre in New York, trying to ram through the doors. The group aims to close clinics by having so many people barricade the doors that the police cannot handle

the crowds.

Operation Rescue has been carefully constructed by Randall Terry and other far right extremists like Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell with the media in mind. Tabloid television has a field day with Terry's campaign to "save babies", and his strategic use of emotive words like "murder" is a ratings gift as far as TV is concerned.

Pro-choice advocates (these are women who may not personally choose an abortion, *but support a woman's right to choose*) are attempting to unmask Randall Terry to the public at large. A number of lawsuits have been filed, including one by the National Organisation for Women which charges Terry with racketeering, extortion, antitrust violations, and trying to close down a legitimate place of business – the clinics.

Tabloid Television has a field day with Terry's campaign to "save babies"... a ratings gift as far as TV is concerned.

It seems that the finances of Randall Terry and Operation Rescue are as questionable as their anti-abortion attacks. According to a report in the April issue of *MS* magazine, Terry has not filed for non-profit status, which demands the release of financial information. Attorney Mary Gundrum has the testimony of Terry's bookkeeper that she no longer deposits cheques, but gives them to Terry who in some way or another cashes them. This is incredible considering the size of some of the cheques – \$10,000 from Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority for instance.

Various local pro-choice groups have taken more immediate action, winning injunctions and fines to stop the Operation Rescue sit-ins. They stress that they're not opposed to people demonstrating, but that

it should be done across the street, without blocking clinic doors or harassing women. Terry and Operation Rescue each owe NOW \$25,000 for blocking a New York City clinic, but collecting fines is proving almost impossible – not surprising if Operation Rescue's financial status is as shady as it appears.

... you can almost smell the hellfire and brimstone.

Pro-choice activists are also placing their faith in the general public – there has been an outcry at Terry's tactics which have jaded the reputation of the anti-choice movement to some extent. Recent developments among other fundamentalist-based groups – the revelation of Jimmy Bakker's "moral" and financial corruption for example – have also left the US public with a bitter taste of right wing religious politics in its mouth.

What of this "gathering storm" metaphor? Things look pretty bad in the States, what about the rest of the world? A quick look shows that clouds of anti-abortion groups have been appearing and are very strong in some countries. But in others they have been dispersed by feminist groups conscious of the need to remain alert, or have proven ineffective where *women's rights are entrenched in the law*.

Across the border in Canada the courts have been tested by men attempting to prevent former wives/girlfriends from having abortions. In July an injunction brought against Chantal Diagle by her former boyfriend barred her from having an abortion. The Quebec court upheld the injunction, but its decision was overturned by the Canadian Supreme Court on the basis of a woman's "security of person". An almost identical case in Ontario had the same result. Women's rights groups in Canada are extremely mobilised, working at provincial levels as well as with central government.

a TEACUP?

Sabbage asks whether we need to review our strategies.

Australia's abortion laws are governed state by state – it's still illegal to have an abortion in Tasmania for example, and women there must fly to the more liberal states of Victoria, South Australia or New South Wales. In Queensland, a state notorious for its conservatism, a man sought an injunction to stop his estranged wife from having an abortion. As in the Canadian cases, the court found in her favour, ruling that a man cannot force a woman to carry a foetus. According to one source, there are too many women at top levels of the public service in Australia for anti-abortion legislation to be passed nationally.

In parts of Europe some governments not only permit abortion but have taken measures to *guarantee* that women have access to abortion. In Sweden, Denmark and the German Democratic Republic for example, governments ensure that there are abortion facilities in every region, and national health insurance covers the cost of the operation.

However in England where abortion is, in principle, available free-of-charge on the National Health Service, in practice the majority of abortions are carried out in private clinics and privately paid for because the NHS is unable or unwilling to treat all the women in need of abortions. Under Thatcher, the NHS has been cut to shreds so it is hardly surprising that abortion services have been reduced.

You may be saying "so what?" to yourself – all of this is happening on the other side of the world after all. Unfortunately, it doesn't work like that. New Zealand is not as isolated and insulated as we once believed. A report in the August 23 issue of the *New Zealand Tablet* testifies to this:

"Operation Rescue, the American campaign to halt abortion, will soon be seen in New Zealand if an Auckland Catholic has his way... Phil O'Connor [who teaches at Sacred Heart College, Glen Innes] plans to launch Operation Rescue-New Zealand...

"For the past 18 months... change has been in the wind, through the actions of

Ross Bolton, the SPUC advertisements on television, the anti-abortion stances of two American Presidents (Reagan and Bush), Operation Rescue in the United States and the stances of the New Zealand Bishops with Cardinal Thomas Williams referring to abortion in this country as 'legalised murder'.

There is a feeling of bitterness...toward many MPs who have refused to support liberalising abortion and failed to condemn harassment of staff and women attending clinics.

The man O'Connor refers to – Ross Bolton – has been arrested 13 times and sentenced five times for trespassing at Epsom Day Hospital. New Zealand's own brand of christian fundamentalist, Bolton is no different from Americans like Randall Terry, characterising abortion as "evil", "illegal" and "murder". He links abortion to "the denigration of motherhood by lesbians and feminists who are trying to prevent other women from their own motherhood...". He calls lesbians "not-mothers" and concludes: "It is not difficult to see where this road leads, when champions of women's rights burn with lust for their own depravity and actively work to deny normal mothers their motherhood – the end of the road is the extinction of the human species". It would be laughable if Bolton didn't believe every word of it, but as it is, you can almost smell the hellfire and brimstone.

In New Zealand, abortion is governed by the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act, which requires women to obtain certification from two doctors that

having a child would be medically or psychologically damaging. Abortion is criminal if it does not meet these regulations and as such appears in the Crimes Act, currently being reviewed by the government. Despite lobbying from abortion reform groups like ALRANZ (the Abortion Law Reform Association of New Zealand) and WONAAC (Women's National Abortion Action Campaign), the draft bill reviewing the Crimes Act does not mention decriminalising abortion.

Ideally, abortion would be taken out of the Crimes Act altogether and the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act would be repealed so that abortion could be freely available to women who decide they need one.

WONAAC and ALRANZ have had a bill drafted for some time now, but have been unable to find an MP willing to introduce it as a private member's bill. There is a feeling of bitterness among women and lobby groups toward many MPs who have refused to support liberalising abortion legislation and failed to condemn harassment of staff and women attending clinics.

WONAAC, for example, is angry that "backbench women have been totally ineffectual. Margaret Shields has chosen to distance herself from the issue, failed to hold her Cabinet colleagues to manifesto promises, failed to support women seeking abortions publicly... Her Ministry is powerless, silent, bogged down in endless bureaucratic exercises. Shield's excuse was that she did not want to jeopardise the Ministry – what from: the criticism of anti-women groups? The Ministry did not even do a submission on the abortion sections of the new Crimes Bill."

The other factor angering many women is that access to abortion in this country is also constrained by where you live and the attitudes of local doctors and area health boards. Although the C S and A Act sets down that access to abortion must be geographically equitable, in practice this is far from being realised. For example, women on the West Coast of the South Island now have to travel all the

The "gathering storm" of anti-abortion re-activism around the world is in fact nothing new.

way to Christchurch since the West Coast Health Board voted not to provide an abortion service. (Under the Act, area health boards are not obliged to provide an abortion service). Women in the lower central North Island are also forced to travel. Strong lobbying for an abortion clinic to serve the Palmerston North/Wanganui/Dannevirke area has been bogged down. The Health Board has deferred the decision meeting after meeting.

In the face of this blockading of law reform, and of conservative area health boards, what political tools are we left with? Lobbying may seem draining and pointless, but it must continue, especially with the likes of Ross Bolton spreading the right wing word. Pressure for law reform must continue to be placed on the government – remember that Labour is aware of how much they need women's votes to win the next election.

Accountability provisions adopted by

the New Labour Party at its June founding conference offer women only a glimmer of hope for reform. The party's ruling council has 50 percent women membership and although personally not keen, Jim Anderton would be obliged to introduce a private members' bill decriminalising abortion if the ruling council agrees to take on the issue. Women in the NLP are pushing for Anderton to do this, but he may persuade the council that such a bill would hinder its 1990 election chances. On the abortion issue, then, the NLP remains an unknown quantity – WONAAC suggests that Christchurch women see Anderton locally and that other national groups write and lobby the NLP.

We should never discount the threat fundamentalist anti-abortion groups pose to our right to choose abortion, but they need to believe their own propaganda to be effectual. Perhaps we should counter their "gathering storm" with a "tidal wave" or simply blow it away with a "hurricane" of support for the right of women to choose abortion.

The conditions in countries where anti-abortion groups have so far proved ineffective suggest the need for feminists to be visible and vocal on all issues, to work for a political climate in which the rights of women are recognised at a legislative and popular level.

In this light, the devolution of the pub-

lic health system has important implications for women. Hospital Boards have been replaced by Area Health Boards which are constrained by budget cuts imposed by the government. While guidelines have been drafted indicating what services area health boards should provide, it is questionable whether these are binding. It is feasible that health boards could see abortion services (or for that matter maternity services or AIDS education) as low priority and expendable. Perhaps we need to shift some of our energy toward ensuring that Area Health Boards, (as well as central government) are committed to providing abortion services. Lobbying at a local level of individual board members may become as important, if not more so, as lobbying MPs. WONAAC and ALRANZ do much valuable work and we need to support them in that work.

The "gathering storm" of anti-abortion re-activism around the world is in fact nothing new. It is symptomatic of a wider attempt to silence feminist voices. Women must have the right to choose and have access to abortion until such a time as the conditions which make it necessary are deconstructed. Until that time we must continue to protect those rights we have gained. Abortion is just one of them. ■

One woman's choice

It was something that was always a possibility – getting pregnant again – but somehow I didn't think it would happen to me. I didn't think I'd ever be put in the position of having to decide what to do about it. Actually, deciding wasn't the problem. I knew without a shadow of doubt that a termination was the only answer; there was no guilt or confusion about what I'd decided, but it's not something I did glibly or coldly – it was best for everyone concerned. And feeling okay about my decision was not easy considering I was brought up in a family where guilt was served with breakfast, lunch and tea!

Having decided, I went to the local doctor to find out just what I needed to do. That was my first big mistake because he turned out to be anti-abortion and went to great pains to convince me to keep the child. At this point I broke down a little, but I soon began to feel indignant that he was trying to change my mind in such a manipulative way. I also imagined him

doing the same thing to some woman less sure than I was. I told him how irresponsible it would be of me considering I was already a single parent with two jobs and insisted he give me the reference and phone to book me in to the Epsom Day Hospital. The receptionist (his wife) gave me the number and told me I'd have to arrange it. The hospital informed me that the appointment would need to be organised through the "consenting" doctor. I phoned the surgery again to be fobbed off and in desperation rang the hospital back to explain what was happening. "Oh, they must be anti-abortion" came the reply from the receptionist – "leave it to me!"

Eventually the appointment was made for me to have the various preliminary tests. I arrived at the hospital at the due time to be confronted by three (obviously "christian") anti-abortionists who paraded placards which read "God loves you and your baby", "We can help you keep your baby", etc. I later

found out that these people are on roster duty and are always there during working hours. I walked by, finding it very easy to ignore them, but feeling extremely angry at their laying yet another guilt trip on women who'd already made a difficult choice.

Reception was full of signs saying, "The people picketing the front of this building are ANTI-ABORTIONISTS and have been asked many times to leave. You do NOT have to talk to them" which was probably reassuring to women who felt intimidated or obliged to stop and talk to these people. They acted like pushy salesmen!

Once in there, I went for my scan, the blood and urine tests, the internal examination – all the clinical bits, the stuff women are so used to but so fed up with. Every woman working in the Epsom Day Hospital was supportive and informative and at no time did I feel uncomfortable or confused about anything. I was around seven weeks pregnant (the earliest one can have an abortion) and was to come in for another appointment the following week, where I would be seen by another doctor (two referrals from doctors are needed). My operation would be the day after.

I arrived at 9am on the said day (if ever you have to go through this take a packed lunch – I didn't leave until 4.30) and sat in the waiting room with about 15 other women. I searched frantically for a copy of *Broadsheet* among the *Cleos* and *Women's Weeklies*, but had to settle for a battered *Omni*. I looked around the room. There was an Indian woman with her husband, young child and nanny; a young Pakeha woman and her mother; a young Maori woman and her two mates, all of whom looked as if they should have been in school; and various other women from all walks of life.

The first stage was when I was called in to see the nurse who did all the regular blood pressure testing, weighing, health history etc. It was a good time to raise any questions and she was most interested to hear of my involvement in alternative health. We had quite a good talk about her asthmatic son and what natural remedies there might be for him. This took me out of the "powerless patient" position and made me feel human again.

It was then back to the waiting room where there'd been a few changes. Some women had gone in for counselling or check-ups and new arrivals had taken their place. A real camaraderie built up in a strange way, although not much was said. A group of about eight of us were called into a room by a wonderful woman whom I'll call Ruth – what a character! She was there to fill us in on the legal side of abortion and answer any questions we might have. We all gave our names and talked briefly about our situation. It ended up being a fascinating hour – we got into a great political discussion on the various MPs and their attitudes to women and abortion. She encouraged us to write to our MPs about the need for abortion clinics such as this one, which she seemed to think was on the verge of closure (these were pre-Helen Clark days so maybe it's not such an immediate worry now).

Next it was a check up with the doctor – a woman – what a relief, and a lovely gentle one at that. I've been to many doctors, men and women, and am amazed at how brutal even some of the women can be when giving internals. We talked at length about the operation itself. She told me the process from beginning to end with diagrams and models and I had the opportunity to ask any questions until I was satisfied. I was fearful of the pain involved and she didn't try to allay these fears unrealistically but explained that it would be uncomfortable and that the degree of pain varied with each woman.

On the way back to the waiting room I bumped into Ruth who asked me if I needed counselling. I'd read one of those awful SPUC advertisements which talked about the "crushing

of the baby's head and the tearing apart of the limbs as it is vacuumed away into oblivion". Now normally this stuff wouldn't get to me, I know how these people work and it's nothing but propaganda. But I was emotional and in a stressed state, and the thought of this small version of an adult being dismembered in this way was tearing at my gut.

I voiced my worries to Ruth who was very understanding. I asked to be shown a photo of an embryo at seven weeks... well that put all my fears to rest – it was the size of half a thumbnail and had no properly formed limbs – it was purely an embryo. To me it was like the difference between a seed and a peach tree. I thanked Ruth and went home peaceful about that issue, but scared about going through the actual pain of termination the following day.

It arrived all too quickly. My friend took me to the hospital and I nervously went and sat in the waiting room yet again. My name was called; I was a vulnerable little girl again. I was taken to the pre-op room which was warm and somehow felt secure. About 15 beds, with women on one side of the room about to go in and those on the other side who'd already "been through". Some were lying quietly with a cup of tea – one woman was bleeding and cramping heavily and two women side by side were chatting away animatedly about how easy it had been and how they hardly felt a thing. This didn't relieve my anxiety – I'd heard women talking of the joy and ease of their children's births and mine had been hell, so I wasn't going to be comforted by their cheerfulness!

It was in the theatre itself that I broke down and started sobbing – great heaving body-wrenching sobs, a combination of feeling vulnerable, powerless, angry and helpless – much as I'd felt during the birth of my child. Here I was in the same position with my feet up, sobbing uncontrollably in front of this man who was going to magic away my troubles.

At this stage, the woman in the theatre was just incredible. She held me, stroked my head and talked to me as if I really mattered – I felt such gratitude and even love toward this woman for just being there – momentarily being my mother. The needle which was meant to make me less sensitive to the pain – didn't! My cervix was then dilated with a series of rods of increasing dimension (this was intensely painful for me) and the suction applied with a sort of mini vacuum pipe.

It was all over – the relief was immense, a huge weight was lifted from me and my breathing became immediately lighter. The motherly one gave me a big hug which felt genuine and from the heart. I was wheeled back into the recovery room where I had a lovely hot cup of tea. I was kept for an hour before allowed to be driven home. I was feeling liberated, back to my old self, and not a trace of guilt or remorse – I knew I'd done the right thing. It's not something I ever care to go through again but if I had the decision to make over I'd do the same thing. I was so grateful to all the women at Epsom Day Hospital for their concern, caring and sensitive treatment that I later sent them a letter to thank them all. I'd hate to think where I'd be today if I'd not been able to make the choice to have an abortion.



Abortion in the United States

Eleanor Bader, *Broadsheet's* correspondent in New York writes of feminist tactics since the July Supreme Court decision.

Within hours of issuing its decision in *Webster versus Reproductive Services*, US feminists and pro-choice supporters were organising demonstrations, pickets, civil disobedience actions and speak-outs. "We got 5000 telephone calls between 3 July, the day the Supreme Court issued the decision, and 7 July", says Tamar Abrams, press secretary of the Washington DC based National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). "No one believed it would happen. Then it did".

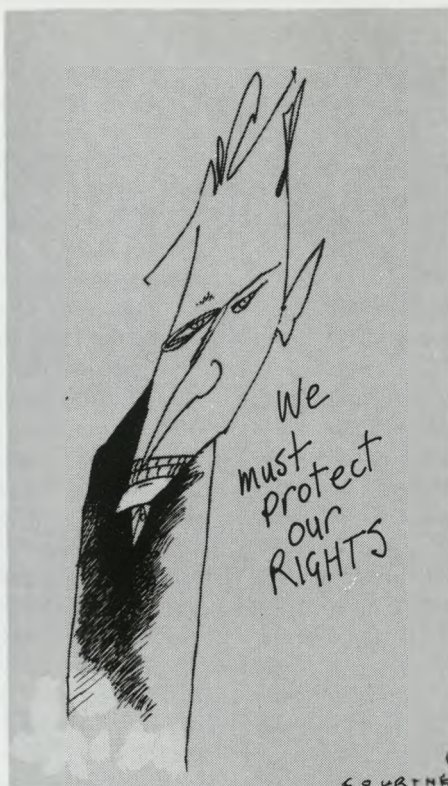
And nothing has been the same since. For although the Supreme Court did not go so far as to make abortion illegal in the US, it opened the floodgates to reaction by granting each of the 50 states permission to restrict a woman's right to choose. States, for example, can now prevent publicly funded hospitals from providing abortions, and can require doctors to perform costly and time consuming fetal viability tests on any woman suspected of being 20 or more weeks pregnant. Furthermore, the nine Supreme Court justices gave states the power to express the "value judgement" that "life begins at the moment of conception" when enacting legislation.

Already dozens of bills have been written by both sides, and electoral battles are putting the question of a woman's right to choose squarely on a front burner.

Clearly, the fact that Americans may completely lose the right to abortion has hit home. According to Tamar Raphael of the Fund for the Feminist Majority (FFM), seven states are currently poised to ban abortion should *Roe versus Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that gave women the right to terminate unwanted pregnancies, be overturned. Only six would maintain the legal right to abortion: Alaska, Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Vermont and Washington. The remaining 37 are likely to restrict abortion, or are battlegrounds, split between one anti-choice and one pro-choice legislative chamber.

DEMS NOT FRIENDS

FFM strategists are quick to point out that those opposed to legal abortion are both Republicans and Democrats (equivalent



to NZ's Nats and Labour): of the seven states that would ban abortion, five are controlled by Democrats. For this reason, rather than relying on the whim of state legislators to preserve the right to abortion, a bevy of groups including the National Organisation for Women (NOW), NARAL and FFM are investigating citizen initiated voter referendums.

Although only 21 states allow citizen initiatives, the three groups are excited about the possibilities such a tactic presents. "Citizen initiatives are the only place where women have an equal voice", says Patricia Ireland, NOW executive vice-president. "This would throw anti-abortion legislation on its ear and show that we don't have to play the game of electing a slick white guy who says he's pro-choice". She added that it would also allow the pro-choice side to take the offensive, organising the 63 percent of the population who identified themselves as pro-choice several weeks after the *Webster* decision.

But pro-choice groups are not resting on this one option. Instead they are pursuing a variety of projects and accepting the fact that they can do different kinds of things in pursuit of the same goal.

For NARAL, this means heavy concentration on electoral work. Not yet ready to abandon work within the two-party system, they are supporting candidates - with money and hours of valuable volunteer time - who are solidly pro-choice. Already a small victory has buoyed their spirits. Tricia Hunter, an outspoken pro-choice Republican won an election for a vacant state assembly seat in California, beating seven other candidates all of whom were anti-choice. "The pro-

choice lobby was very motivated", says Tamar Abrams. "They did a phone bank three weeks before the election, calling every registered Democrat, urging them to cross over and vote Republican on this single issue alone. Polling figures show that people who never before voted single issue will vote single issue on the question of abortion and the majority are voting in support of a pro-choice position".

The Hunter victory behind them, NARAL is now focusing on two gubernatorial races scheduled for November. In both New Jersey and Virginia, the choice is between a pro-choice and an anti-abortion candidate, and NARAL is planning to spend "in the six figures" to insure a pro-choice win. Through phone calls to registered voters, full-page newspaper ads and programmes on cable television, they hope to reach the masses of voters with clear, pointed messages.

They are also pouring time and money into two special legislative sessions that have been called for the purpose of "restricting abortion to the fullest possible extent of the law" in Florida and Pennsylvania. The Florida session is slated for mid October and has the backing of Governor Bob Martinez and Congressman Craig James, a man who put his cards on the table by standing up in the House of Representatives and declaring that "safe and legal abortion promotes promiscuity and increases the spread of AIDS". While public sentiment seems solidly against this anti-abortion effort, NARAL is taking no chances.

Likewise in Pennsylvania NARAL is bucking up for a fight with Stephen Freind, the man they dub "the most rabid anti-choice legislator in the US". Freind is the author of the infamous Rape Hormone Theory, the notion that women secrete a hormone when they are raped that keeps them from conceiving. Those who fail to secrete the anti-pregnancy chemical, says Freind, were simply not raped, for they clearly enjoyed it so much they allowed sperm and egg to meet.

A WOMEN'S PARTY?

Like NARAL, the National Organisation for Women (NOW) is keeping an eye on the electoral scene and is gearing up for major battles in many of the states. But their approach is pragmatic, sceptical of representatives who oft-times promise one thing and do another.

NOW is in the process of putting together a commission to study the feasibility of forming a Women's Party outside the Republican and Democratic molds; the commission is expected to begin work shortly after the November, 1989 elections. Although NOW's Patricia Ireland concedes that the call for a Women's Party can "be seen, or become, a strategy to play a game with the Democratic Party,

rather than a serious attempt to implement major changes in political life in the US", she says that she sees the call as a way of bringing a feminist philosophic perspective into politics. "We pose a challenge to liberal organisations that we'll get out of our little corral, that box concerned only with birth control and abortion, and start paying attention to issues like fair housing, child care, international affairs, the environment, foreign policy".

Although some feminists have denounced the call for a Women's Party as suicidal and silly, many grassroots women seem excited, giddy even, at the prospect of their own political entity that could challenge business as usual and effect global political change.

But even for the most enthusiastic, the formation of a Women's Party is a long way off. In the short run, virtually every pro-choice group is working to get more women elected to state office. "The problem is that women are only 17 percent of state legislators and seven percent of the judiciary", said Tamar Rapheal.

Remedying this by getting more progressive women elected to statehouses across the country makes the 1990 census (a national census is done every 10 years and leads to the re-drawing of legislative districts based on population shifts) all the more important to feminists. Reapportionment will lead to legislative seats being up for grabs, and will serve as the easiest way to get women, African-Americans, Latinos and Asians elected. Since the two major parties act as "incumbent protection clubs," said Raphael, women's groups will be encouraging and assisting progressive feminist candidates to compete for newly designated seats.

PRO-CHOICE LEGISLATIVE THRUST

The pro-choice community is also planning to introduce its own legislation into Congress. Meetings with pro-choice Congresspeople are ongoing, and it is hoped that a bill will be introduced sometime this fall (our summer). Many activists are pushing for a bill modeled after a New Hampshire ordinance that passed both statehouses only to be vetoed by Republican Governor Judd Gregg. That law proclaimed that "government shall not compel a woman to either terminate or continue a pregnancy".

Such a guarantee would undercut the Webster decision's provision granting states the right to decide abortion policy. It would also recognise that states' rights have historically been bad for women and people of colour. "We ultimately have to have a constitutional or federal guarantee against interference with states", said NOW's Patricia Ireland. While pro-choice forces have to "put out anti-abortion

brushfires in the states", she cautions against writing off federal protection for abortion. "We're just one vote from losing Roe: Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. If President Bush gets to make a Supreme Court nomination, and the Senate, which is under Democratic control, approves another conservative like Justice Requist, Scalia or Kennedy", we will have no choice but to fight in state after state. "Until that time, focusing on local bills alone lets Congress off the hook", she argues.

In an effort to keep a grip on the need for federal action, NOW president Molly Yard has issued a call for a 12 November mobilisation in Washington DC. Yard announced the plan on a television talk show, rankling many pro-choice activists who felt excluded by her unilateral decision to call such an action. "The initial reaction was 'Oh God, what did she get us into?'" said Ireland. "But the feedback has been overwhelming. People who didn't come to the April march and rally are saying they're coming this time. This is an opportunity to make real fundamental pushes forward". Given the fact that the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear arguments in three additional abortion cases this fall – one challenges onerous requirements on abortion providers and two focus on minor's rights to abortion – NOW and other pro-choice groups feel it is imperative to keep the heat on the nation's capital.

FREEDOM CARAVAN LAUNCHED

In addition to the usual methods of revving up the troops – phone calls, mailings and local organising – NOW plans to reach out to the unorganised via a Freedom Caravan for Women's Lives. Using a combination of civil rights movement and religious tent-revival models, activists will organise a vehicular caravan throughout a locality. On a particular evening, pro-choice speakers will address scores of people and sign them up for "action teams". Local organisers will then train team members in the rudiments of

Ann Verdcourt



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grassroots activism, from lobbying to running candidates for office, planning demonstrations and debating the anti-abortion movement.

The caravan will travel through New Jersey, Florida and Virginia and may visit bellwether states such as California and New York.

But in addition to coordinated plans for national activities, countless thousands are prepared to engage in local organising, from clinic defense to electoral support for pro-choice candidates. Unprecedented coalitions – AIDS activists, feminists, elected officials, lawyers, students, trade unionists, lesbians, gay men, healthcare workers, people of faith and long time socialists – are planning myriad protest activities and getting involved as never before.

In conservative small towns across the country phones are ringing off the hook, with women and men saying "I'm scared, what can I do?" reports NARAL's Tamar Abrams. New NOW chapters are being formed and moribund chapters are springing back to life.

"People who never realised what it meant to be pro-choice, that the personal and private decision about having a child should be made without government intervention, are realising it now and are up in arms", she concludes.

The task is to find ways to channel their rage into political action – and win. ■

Labouring with LABOUR

Margaret Wilson talks to Pat Rosier.

Margaret Wilson was President of the New Zealand Labour Party from 1984 to 1987. Her book about this experience, *Labour in Government, 1984-1987* has just been published by Allen and Unwin. At the beginning of the last of three years leave from her position at Auckland University's Law School, Margaret has just taken up a one year position leading Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer's political advisory unit.

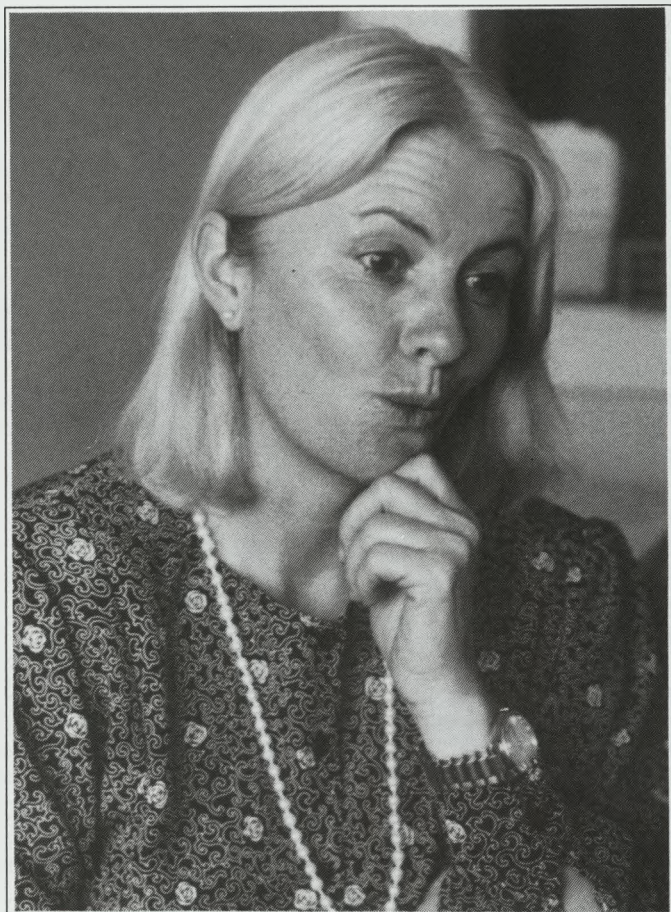


PHOTO: GIL HANLY

One of the things that really interested me was the way the process in which the organising of the Labour Party works was made very clear, and so was the dynamic between the parliamentary and non-parliamentary wings of the party. You refer a couple of times to lack of trust between the parliamentarians and the party organisation and the need for a balance of influence between the two. Do you think the situation now is any different from what it was in 1987?

I don't think it ever will be – there is an inherent and necessary contradiction, and I would argue a healthy one, between the two. Those who are in parliament and those in the organising wing see the world differently and also have different objectives and expectations, and they must because they have different jobs to do. So that tension and contradiction is always there but at times it is emphasised, particularly when you are in government. But the two have got to work together.

You refer in a couple of places to – and these are my words, not yours – the high-handed actions of politicians at times making the whole thing more difficult. I know that in the Eden electorate a number of long-standing party members have actually resigned in the

last couple of years, and their reasons seem to be a combination of distress at both the process and the way policy has gone. The combination has become unbearable.

Yes. I understand that. I think that for the party to be viable there has to be a pro-active role for party members in terms of policy making, and for me the vast majority of people who join a political party do so because they want to have a say in policy – not to fund-raise! I can perfectly sympathise with that.

You obviously believe also, from the book, that women as a group and trade union people have an important role to play in developing Labour Party policy. Do present processes allow that to be effective?

I would hope so. I'm not evading your question, it's just that I feel out of touch. I do believe we have to have separate organisations. I believe in the separatism and the mainstreaming. You've got to have separate organisations, particularly for women, and I'd argue for unions too, and for the other groups, to then enable you to go into the mainstream with a clearly articulated position, so that you're not then at the whim of a few people.

Would you comment on the statement you make that economic decisions

are not socially neutral.

You can't have a neutral economic policy: it is a vehicle that produces social policy. In other words we need money to do certain things, provide certain services – we need other things as well, but money is an important ingredient – therefore economic policy should be driven by that. Therefore you can't make an economic decision and not expect it to have some consequences. Say for example you want to reduce the deficit, or you want to cut back on public expenditure. Cutting back on public expenditure is a social decision, it has social consequences, and I would argue you should take that into account when you are making that economic decision.

You talk in several places about the need to temper decisions with exploration of consequences and the process of applying the decision being just as important as making it.

That's right. I don't have any trouble with making decisions, but what is difficult is making that decision mean something, making it work. And often that is left to others, and frequently to women. Now that seems to me to be what frequently happens in gender relationships – men make decisions and women carry them out. So we will go to the pictures

but you decide which one, how we're going to get there and whether there are going to be any seats when we arrive. The decision of going to the movies is irrelevant if you can't get there or get in.

You also make the point that changing service provision from state to market led won't in fact produce equity for women, which leads me on to talking about pay equity.

It seems to me that as part of an overall political strategy pay equity is a necessary step at this time. It's an important issue for me because it is a place where the economic and social factors directly intersect. For me self-determination is dependent upon women having control over money and for most of us that means the wage or benefit we get. I've concentrated on the waged sector, and that led me to look at how wages are determined and that led me into this whole understanding of how the industrial relations system works. And you can't understand that without knowing it's very male driven. You also can't do that without understanding it's changing, and you can't actually say that women can achieve economic equality without changing the way in which the value of their work is determined. So it's quite a fundamental concept we're dealing with here and I don't think it's always fully understood, by both men and women. We're going to the heart, not only of the industrial relations system but of the way in which income is distributed. We're saying that the methods that have been used lead to unequal outcomes, which is supported by the facts. And all we've argued in pay equity is that there's an element that is due to prejudice. It's not due to women

not having the same education or the same skills, it's not due to any of those "human capital" factors, it's due to good old prejudice. Now we have to acknowledge that to remove it. And that's the hardest sort of thing for men who control the system to acknowledge.

So I'm not a bit surprised we've run into difficulties. It was raised of course before the 1972 (Equal Pay) legislation, it's not new, so we're coming back to have another go at it.

I'm reasonably optimistic that we can get some legislation. I think the legislation, as always, will be a compromise. More of a compromise than I would have hoped, because of the restructuring of bargaining and of the union movement that's going on at the moment. Pay equity is being introduced at a time of enormous structural change and therefore it's really hard, there is no structure to graft pay equity onto with any certainty yet this is why we need it so desperately.

Do you think we will get legislation this year?

I think it will be introduced, it won't get passed because there wouldn't be enough time for the select committee process to take place.

There was something in the paper recently about severe divisions in cabinet about it.

I didn't see that, but there would be some people who would not agree - I think Roger Douglas is on record as saying he didn't agree with it. My argument's always been that there has never been a proper discussion of the issues, partially because it's a woman's question and therefore not treated seriously. The bureaucracy hasn't devoted much energy

The vast majority of people who join a political party do so because they want to have a say in policy - not to fund-raise!

and resources to researching it. So therefore people tend to talk about it at an incredibly superficial level.

We have received a newsletter put out by the National Bank which has some appalling statements about pay equity...

I wrote a letter to the chair of the board of the bank about that but it never got acknowledged. I said we were quite happy to talk it through with them I pointed out that the arguments presented were laughable, and if that person produced those arguments in another context they would question their competence to do their job. That's what I find quite interesting - that someone can get away with such an ill-researched comment on that because presumably it's not to be taken seriously.

The other boggy that seems to be being used is the difficulty that is put up around assessing and evaluating women's and men's job. I suggest that if there was a will to do it, it would be quite easy to do.

And the measurement of jobs is not a new concept, it's used for senior managers, it's used across industries. Methods of measuring work are not new. What we are saying is that we want to use almost a scientific method to compare jobs and pay rates, realising of course that nothing is totally objective. It's almost like they fear exposing something through using those sorts of relatively neutral tools and they are not sure what they are going to find.

And they are not sure they want to find it. After all, it's the men at the top who benefit from women being concentrated in lower-paid, lower-status jobs, they are not motivated to accept changes in that.

That's why this is a truly revolutionary change, not only because of the consequences. What is going to be interesting is not the measuring of the dollars and cents, although that is very important, it's the actual exposure of the way in which things are done and why they are done that way.

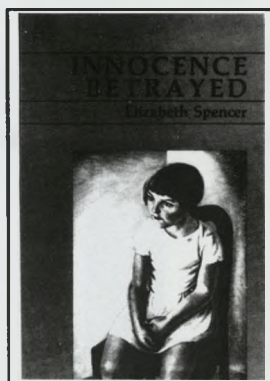
I guess what concerns me is that it seems that the very people that are opposing pay equity are the same people who you refer to as an "elite group of powerful pressure groups" in your afterword, where you refer to some

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concern about the shift of power in that direction.

I think that is reflecting the historical position of women. For the first time though, at least in New Zealand, women do have some influence and a presence in places we haven't been before, and so we have access to information that is important in the process of decision-making, and that's what's different now. I'm not saying that women have power, just that women are where they were not before.

To move on to your present job as head of the Prime Minister's political advisory unit...

It's really difficult for me to talk about that because I haven't started it yet - that's next week's task.

Do you see yourself as having a particular role there?

That's still to be worked out. It's not just like me going into the office, it is in fact a total restructuring of how the Prime Minister gets advice, a separating out - of the Prime Minister's Department, which gives the bureaucratic advice, and an office which has an explicit political role - to make sure that all perspectives are considered.

So that makes the job really important in that you can work to see that the women's and the union perspective at least get a look in.

Yes, sure. And at the appropriate times. It's like ensuring that all the arguments have been considered, not only those that some bureaucrats think are important.

Are you looking forward to that? Does it have a time limit on it?

Ye-es. I'm looking forward to it in the sense that it will give me an insight into another part of the system and how it works, and I'm appreciative of that opportunity. It's for a year. I'm on leave from the university and I return there at the end of next year.

You are clearly identified in the publisher's blurb on the back of the book as a feminist. What does that mean to you?

I suppose it means quite simply a right for women to determine their own futures and so it comes back to economic issues, really. It's a right to control. To be able to achieve that, you've got to change so much else! I've identified myself with a sort of socialist feminism, simply because I think those economic issues are so fundamental to where I see change coming from. At the same time I think you can't achieve those issues without understanding the importance of radical feminism and so on and so on.

You have to get things through a system - assuming you're not talking about revolutionary change. You can also argue that those with a more revolutionary perspective are necessary because they question other possibilities. For me I can't be exclusive, but I can tell you where my priorities lie.

I would focus on the economic base probably because of the influence of my background and all those sorts of things. I don't believe you can do everything, therefore I think that sanity comes from making lists and I've made my lists a long, long time ago. Of course I keep striking things out and adding to it.

You've never given any indication that you have any interest in the political side of party politics for yourself.

It seemed to me that if change was to come you had to get more women into parliament, therefore you have to do an analysis of how you can achieve that. You could go into parliament, in which individuals can make a difference, but at the end of the day you are only one person. If you actually work it back, then the party was the place to be, not one vote in caucus or cabinet. In my view there were others who could do that. Besides the lifestyle is



PHOTO: GIL HANLY

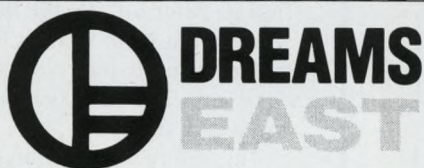
You can't have a neutral economic policy

ghastly. Even though it is easy to criticise MPs I wouldn't like that lifestyle.

What was your motivation for writing the book?

I think just so more people could understand how it worked during that period so that the reason for some of the decisions could be seen more clearly. For instance, the party gets a lot of flak each time we come to select candidates, which always used to anger me because it was made to sound like a terribly Machiavellian process and in reality it wasn't. It is a very competitive process, I'm not denying that people go to great lengths to win, but there are rules that we actually follow.

And then, establishing the importance of political parties. Like if you don't have active political parties then where are the checks and balances? Most people feel that to be associated with a political party is slightly disreputable, and is not going to really enhance your future well-being in terms of your career or what have you,



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to know you are a member of, particularly the Labour party, but if you don't then what you have said in effect is that those people in parliament have the sole right to make the decisions. Many of them don't want that, they want their electorates and a party membership which they can go back to. If you don't have an active party you have a real threat to the whole system in my view. The party can get arguments through that may or may not be got through by the media or a pressure group. The party has access and that's very important.

I think it's probably fair to say there is a high level of exhaustion, disillusionment and cynicism among people around the whole consultation process, both because it's been so much work for so many of us and it's not had much impact.

It seems to me that Geoffrey Palmer is particularly committed to a more consensus approach. But the question is then how to you make it mean something, so you don't exhaust people by having them write submissions that you're not even sure whether anyone reads or not, or going to endless numbers of meetings and being patronised to death by whoever is chairing them. So I think we've got to establish, at the first level, that it's not a privilege to be consulted, it's a right, and having done that, it's not sufficient to say that we've consulted, now we've got to find ways to make that consultation real. And to do that raises a really interesting question of shared decision-making. So what you're getting to is some quite fundamental questions about the way in which you organise power. Who makes the decisions? So you've got to find a way - without resorting to traditional pressure groups...

Yes, that's how existing power bases are reinforced -

It may well be that you do fall back on pressure groups, but you have a more representative set of them. I don't know the answer to that but it seems you've got an acceptance and a willingness for consultation and some limited shared decision-making.

So what we need is to develop some more sophisticated processes for doing it?

Exactly. How you do that in the context of the existing constitutional framework, or whether you have to change that framework - or the whole governmental process. The Labour Party has been experimenting with this for about ten years now, we've been changing the constitution. How can the party members have a real say in policy?

At the moment a lot feel very cynical about that because they feel they don't.

So what you've got to do is somehow have a system so the policy party mem-

As part of an overall political strategy pay equity is a necessary step at this time

bers come up with is fully consulted through and then once they start implementing that policy there are systems and methods, not only for party members, but for those members of the community who are going to be affected by it, to continue to feel involved. Now that should to some extent be accommodated through the bureaucracy, which is meant to give advice on implementation. So there are state resources available and it's always seemed to me - perhaps I am naive here - why should only those people in the bureaucracy have the right to give the government that sort of advice? Lots of interest groups do, but unless you've got the money to sustain that...

You do actually make that point in the book, about the expense of democracy...

That's why we got the Ministry of Women's Affairs. If my taxpayer's money was going to sustain the bureaucracy I wanted a little bit with which I could identify: a group of women that are specifically responsible for the interests of women

within the bureaucracy. One of the difficulties was the Ministry was expected to do too many things and be all things to all women. Given the resources it has got, that was really hard.

It seems to have now developed into a policy advice vehicle for the government, rather than as it was earlier...

I think that gets back again to how it can most effectively influence decisions. I've never seen the Ministry as being in the vanguard of creating issues. I think the community creates those issues and shouldn't be told from people in the centre what the issue is this week. Its role is to take care of our interests where most of us are not, which is on the officials' committees, and then we work out the reporting and accountability functions.

The latest statement of intent certainly includes writing an awful lot of reports. My worry at the decreasing contact outwards from the Ministry is how is the content of those reports going to be influenced by what we out there want, or is the Ministry becoming more and more separate from the groups they represent?

I think you are right. They have the resources to write reports but those reports must be informed by women in the community.

It seems to me that structurally the Ministry doesn't allow for that to happen any more.

I can't answer that. My understanding is that they are going out and doing sessions with women around the country. They are often asked to respond very quickly.

Another question I have is, is their power and influence - limited though it is - as bureaucrats or as women in touch with women, or a combination of those? And that is not clear from their statement of intent, which very much emphasises their "outputs" to the Minister. It very clearly indicates how they expect to have an influence, it doesn't at all indicate how they are going to be influenced from out there.

I can't see how else they can be informed. For instance I think they actually turned the superannuation report around - suddenly it was on the agenda that if you have a contributory scheme then women are going to miss out, you've got to have a universal scheme.

I can see that their primary function is to be where you and I can't be, otherwise there's no justification for them being there. How they do that role is the other question and that means there is more expectation of accountability on them to come back to the women in the community. ■

CO-ORDINATOR

Wellington Sexual Abuse
Help Foundation

The Wellington Sexual Abuse Help Foundation is seeking a co-ordinator for a full time position. The co-ordinator is responsible for the overall management of the Wellington Help Centre.

Duties include: assessing children for sexual abuse and counselling women and children who have been raped or sexually abused. The work is extremely varied and includes co-ordination and supervision of the counselling provided, liaising with community groups and government departments, and day to day management of the centre.

The position would suit a woman knowledgeable in the areas of rape, sexual abuse and social service networks.

The successful applicant will have counselling experience, the ability to co-ordinate the overall service and have a commitment to a feminist perspective and active anti-racism practices.

For a detailed job description and conditions of work please phone the Wellington Help Centre (04) 892-472. Written applications close Monday, 11 December and can be sent to PO Box 16129, Wellington.

STROKES AND ART ATTACKS

FROM RAZORS TO LASERS

Author and screen-writer, Fay Weldon was in the country recently for the Women's Book Festival. Athina Tsoulis and Pat Rosier talked to her about technology and the Salmon Rushdie affair.

Broadsheet: From some of your recent books – *The Shrapnel Academy*, *She Devil*, and *The Cloning of Joanna May*, you seem to be getting more and more interested in technology and the impact it has on society, and who is in control.

Fay Weldon: Yes, I think one's preoccupations change according to what comes to you from the world, what seems most terrible at the time. And in a kind of way, I suppose the relationships between men and women seemed so awful at the time because nobody realised they were awful, that you felt impelled to write about them. Then you suddenly realise, as we did in Europe about the time I wrote *The Shrapnel Academy* when the powers-that-be seemed to be planning to wage World War Three, that we're going to be lucky to say anything at all. The other thread feeds through that interest. *Heart of the Country* goes right back into relations of women in the state, rather than women and men so much. *She Devil* is about how difficult it is for women to live without men, how they will keep running back to men, even when they needn't. It's interesting that it is being filmed now with Meryl Streep and Roseanne Barr, and so far as I know, what they've done is to stop it half way through when it's ideologically sound – when Ruth has her revenge on her husband, without the she-devil turning round and taking cover.

The Leader of the Band is about the way Europe pretends there wasn't a war, how everybody goes around as if it never happened, as if someone else was responsible for the fact that we were tearing each other's throats out. I feel that's what the matter with Europe, it's without conscience, without history, it's too ashamed of the past to be able to incorporate it.



PHOTO: GIL HANLY

The Cloning of Joanna May goes into reproductive technology, I suppose because it's not practical to set our minds against it totally, that it is bad. Chernobyl is there because if you're trying to write something that people believe to be Science Fiction, but isn't, for people to understand that just as Chernobyl happened and is still happening, so too these moves to engineer people are actually with us.

Broadsheet: The amount of power you give the character of Karl May in *The Cloning*, is really quite frightening – he can do anything, he can knock people off and make new ones.

Fay Weldon: This is true, this is what big business does, it happens, this is what people do, what governments do – they knock people off all the time.”

Broadsheet: In your interview with the *Herald*, you talk about feminists or “quasi-feminists”, how much of this was in response to the flak you've had from feminists for your stance on the Salmon Rushdie affair?

Fay Weldon: Now I was having a go at the feminists, including myself, because they're so frightened of being called racist that they have just allowed Muslim men to condemn Rushdie without a murmur because when they have the Muslim brothers have turned around and called them racist, bigots, and told them they have no right to interfere, and they have

backed off.

Broadsheet: One of the problems though, is that when you read something like that it's tempting for someone to say that Fay Weldon doesn't consider herself a feminist, because it reads as if feminists are “them”.

Fay Weldon: In their usual accusing way the interviewer on Pacific Radio asked me “are you a feminist” and I answered yes – show me a sensible woman who's not a feminist.

Broadsheet: There was actually a group of Muslim women in Britain who spoke out in support of Rushdie and said they were tired of the Muslim men talking for them.

Fay Weldon: Yes, terribly brave of them because there was such feeling against Rushdie and anyone who rocks the boat. Also I think the whole thing is increasingly about the position of women – I feel the whole multi-cultural aspect in England is a male thing, men love what they call this diversity, but what they really mean is their idea of women going round in bracelets and saris, serving men. That's what they mean by rich cultural diversity, and they keep it there as a kind of lesson for these horrible, strident women as to what women should be.

I think the whole Rushdie affair is mostly because the book describes a brothel (a rather male fantasy of a brothel as exuberant) – but the name of the brothel is the same word for the mask/veil that married Muslim women wear. So many Muslim reactionaries instantly said that Rushdie was calling all Arab wives prostitutes, insulting all Arab women. What they really mean is they feel they have to shroud their women because women are only walking sex objects, if they show a limb they tempt men to fornicate. Rushdie sees this and goes deliberately behind this mask, he wants this curtain lifted. It's all quite extraordinary, but I think that it's all to do with the desire to keep women in their place.

Broadsheet: That's one of the dilemmas for feminism, in a multi-cultural society where you want children to grow up proud of their culture...

Fay Weldon: I don't want children to grow up proud – I want a uni-culture. I think this is somehow the view of children's parents, not of the children who want to live where they live with friends of all colours and races. I think it's often an excuse for everything that goes wrong – because somehow I missed my culture. I want the culture that's the best of all cultures.

Broadsheet: Who's going to decide though, this is the problem?

Fay Weldon: It can't be beyond human wit to decide what is better.

Broadsheet: But a culture is more than what is visible from the outside. If you have a culture for example which says old people should be cared by the family...

Fay Weldon: That's a value that should come into the other culture.

Broadsheet: But there are others who would say that women are the ones who have to look after these old people, so it's another burden on them as well as looking after the children.

Fay Weldon: Well of course it is not straight forward. But I do think that the kind of idea we have in England – it's too dreadful a society to ask anybody to join it – when you say you want one culture it is interpreted to mean that you want a dominant white, Christian, European culture. However this is not what we aim for in the next hundred years – it's not saying that "they have to join us" as it were.

Broadsheet: But you know that is what would happen.

Fay Weldon: Well then I don't know what the solution is, except that we will have streets of young men running around crying "kill, kill, kill", because they feel so furious. You can't let it happen. You can't let the women of Islam continue to be beaten, killed and treated like animals because it is the custom of the country. You can't accept this and say isn't it wonderful, it's part of a romantic culture, let's have it. All that means is don't let your children marry ours. I think the whole thing – the ghettoizing of cultures – is an excuse for a xenophobia which says "we want to keep ourselves to ourselves – we're sorry for you, you come from a poor culture, do all our dirty work, but don't let your children marry our children". That's what our brand of multi-culturalism amounts to.

Broadsheet: But also the danger there is to imply that white women in British culture have got it easy.

Fay Weldon: They still haven't got it easy, but by God, they've got it better than Muslim cultures. You can say that it depends which country and women you look at, and I would agree with you that some Muslim women have a better time than some English women. Any woman in a decent, kindly, educated home, has a

good time. But a religion in which is written a view of women which reduces them to slaves, one step up from a camel, is not something you need to encourage in civilised society. Of course you have to clean up your own society before you can call for change, but you can't go on as it has been saying "oh it's alright – lovely Muslim women going into the mosque and working in the sweat shop around the corner". Of course women all over the world have a hard time, but in some societies there are attempts to ensure that women have a better time. This has to feed over in this respect. Now there may be things in Muslim culture which are better than anything we can offer, if there were I would work with it.

Broadsheet: Some Muslim women who wear these black robes actually say it's quite liberating for them.

Fay Weldon: I'm sure they say it's liberating, because they too see themselves as sex objects or are so frightened of sex that they believe themselves to be offensive to someone who looks at them sexually.

Broadsheet: Well, they would use the argument that they don't have to bother about their appearance like western women do.

Fay Weldon: Western women don't have to bother about their appearance, they can go out dressed in an old blanket if they want to. Nobody's stopping them. That's what you work for – not that everyone covers themselves up, but that you don't care or mind what other people think of you, that you don't see yourself through the eyes of other people. You see

yourself from the inside out.

Broadsheet: Agreed, but there is still a danger of some sort of hierarchy of oppression. I would prefer to say that all women are oppressed, and that their oppression is different, according to which culture.

Fay Weldon: I would say that some women are a great deal more oppressed than others – when you look at statistics for instance, to find out the age at which they die. You must be prepared to make some value judgements, because we have got into the habit of actual inactivity, of doing nothing, because there is always an argument against it, so that what is common sense and under your nose becomes almost impossible to do.

Broadsheet: Yes it is important to have value judgements, but again, whose value judgement is the correct one?

Fay Weldon: Yours. And mine. Really you have to be prepared to look at something and say I know better than my neighbour. If you don't, nothing happens.

Broadsheet: On an individual level, okay, but when you're talking about a whole movement it's very dangerous to say what is civilised behaviour and what is not.

Fay Weldon: I think you can say this is civilised behaviour and that is not civilised behaviour. I think we would all agree that to rape somebody is not civilised behaviour, yet many men would say that it is. We know we are right – let us extend that to other areas, and not pussyfoot around saying "this woman is a Muslim and therefore her husband is allowed to beat her".



K.D LANG – ANGEL OF TORCH AND TWANG

For those of you that think K.D is a distant, musical relation of David Lange, Gloria Hildred will set you straight with her interview with the hottest thing in country music since Patsy Cline.

Born and raised in a small town called Consort, population 650, in Alberta, Canada, K.D Lang started as a performance artist. Then, deciding she wanted to sing country more and more, she found players, chose the material and started getting gigs. Sounds pretty straight forward.

Since then she has clocked up a single "Friday Dance Promenade" followed by an independently released LP *A Truly Western Experience*, and by the end of 1984 signed with Sire records and released *Angel with a Lariat*. This was the

album Rolling Stone magazine called "an auspicious debut on a major label by an artist whose performance is already legendary". Then came *Shadowland*, followed by Rolling Stone critics' pick for the Best Female Singer (tied with Tracey Chapman), Canada's Juno and Casby Award for both Female Vocalist and Country Female Vocalist of the year. She was nominated in three categories for the 1988 Grammy Awards – Best Country Vocal Performance for the *Shadowland* single "Down to my Last Cigarette" and twice for Best Vocal Collaboration for *Shadowland* as well as her duet "Crying" with the late Roy Orbison which took the award.

So what has this woman got?

Coming from a small town myself, I asked her whether she got bored growing up in Consort, pop. 650. She replied in appropriate tones.

"Well, yeah, Consort is in the Prairies quite a way from any major cities. I think that's one of the things that conjured me up to be imaginative and creative,



ECOLOGIES
 Proba Gallery
 September 1989

because there wasn't a lot to do to amuse yourself. Actually my parents weren't farmers, my father was a pharmacist and my mother was a teacher. I started on music when I was six, studying concert piano like all my siblings did (two sisters and a brother). My family are very supportive".

So what made K.D want to leave the piano and start singing country, was it the influence of her country upbringing?

"There's been a lot of everything involved. Actually Country Music was one of the smallest influences, but one with the most emotional impact. I had Rock and Roll in my earlier years, now Jazz is playing an important role in what I listen to. Because I grew up in the area in which I did I had a very strong emotional empathy toward Country Music. I understood the perspectives, morals and values of Country Music, but because I didn't grow up liking it, in fact quite the opposite, I also understood what was funny about it and what people didn't like - what was kitsch and corny. I have a very broad understanding of Country Music and what people like and don't like about it.

There's been a large spectrum of influences on K.D's musical development: "Oh yeah, there's been thousands. I've listened to a lot of important vocalists, you know, Joni Mitchell, Kate Bush, Rickie Lee Jones, Emmylou Harris, Linda Rondstadt, Carmen McRae, Nat King Cole - the list goes on and on - I love a lot of different people. Many musical styles have influenced me, I don't think I could deny that, and they have made an indentation on my style and taste."

Shadowland, the album K.D did with Patsy Cline's producer Owen Bradley, must have been exciting for her.

"Yes it was definitely that. I have been

obsessed with Patsy Cline for quite a few years and I felt that working with Owen Bradley was the closest I could ever get to actually singing with her, or being there in that heyday of Country Music - for me the most romantic period. It was very exciting, very fulfilling, and very dream-like".

After doing an album in the vein of *Shadowland* which was quite different from *Angel with A Lariat*, does she find her audience can cope with the diversity of her style?

"There are people who like *Shadowland* who don't like *Absolute Torch and Twang* [her latest album] and vice versa. I try to have a balance, allow a bridge for both those types of people. *Shadowland* was a great opportunity for me to dive into nostalgia, but the development of *Torch and Twang* is what I've wanted to do for a long time. I think it's a matter of time before the other listeners realise that progressive country is probably the most important to me. Whether or not they come with me doesn't matter because I have to do what I have to do".

What's great about K.D's songs is that they're not the usual "boy meets girl, love, twang a lang a lang". One of K.D's original songs "Nowhere to Stand" from the latest album, concerns an almost taboo subject - violence against children. Does she feel she's been able to do what she wants with her music?

"Yes, but I think I found it most difficult when I realised I wasn't a mature song-writer. *Torch and Twang* was my first effort to really establish myself as a song-writer, which I'm really serious about. Ben Mink and I produced and wrote most of the material, I write the lyrics, but we're both catalysts for each other. I feel more comfortable singing my own songs, but I

Land cut into pieces, made barren. Land under threat, balances easily upset. But always land which rebels, fights back, and defies being segmented. These are some of the themes which emerged from Allie Eagle and Joanna Paul's exhibition of watercolours.

The exhibition was inspired by the concern of both artists with the erosion of land. Allie's landscapes are of Te Henga on the west coast of Auckland. It is an area of beach land, sand dunes, and fresh water swamp.

"The marsh is the largest fresh water swamp of its type in Auckland. Fernbirds, ducks (both native and introduced), pukeko, black swans, little shags, kingfishers and grey warblers live here. Some,

also think interpretations of other's material is an important art.

"One of the things that intrigues me about Country Music is the potential to expand its seams and lyrics and perhaps broaden the conscience of mainstream Country. "Nowhere" is about all sorts of abuses we put on children - basically it's a look at how we disallow children to have rights and points of view.

"I'm a woman, we experience things that men don't and I think that being a woman in the music business is different, it's a little more difficult. I try not to allow myself to be affected by those sexist barriers, I try to be oblivious to them".

And does she think it's important for her listeners to know K.D as a person?

"Well, I think it's important to know the basics of my personality - that I'm constantly striving to do my best and that I'm honest - you know, they pretty well get what they see. I think anything beyond that is necessary to the way I approach music, but unnecessary to the listeners' knowledge".

What's happening now and in the future for K.D and her band, The Reclines?

"K.D Lang and The Reclines are finishing an extensive tour of the States and we should be doing Canada in the Fall [our winter], then hopefully we'll get down to New Zealand and Australia late February-March. Nothing's absolute yet. I think it would be quite a bit like Canada, I'm quite in love with the idea, getting down there is one of our goals next year".

So now that you know a little more about K.D than her music, let's hope that the tentative becomes the absolute.

PHOTO: VICTORIA PEARSON





like the fernbird, do not fly and are entirely dependent on the area for feeding and breeding. Protection of the swamp is vital", explained Allie.

Allie uses watercolour playfully in these works. In some, unexpected colours like purple splash up against green,

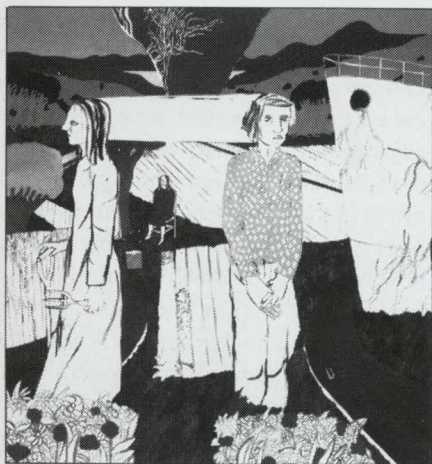
orange and yellow, suggesting a vibrant and alive land. In *Late Afternoon*, Taumaiti the melting form of the tree in the foreground initiates a strong movement across the picture, echoed in the lines of the headland and the strokes of purples, pinks and grey in the evening

sky. This is not a static, "captured" picture of the land.

Joanna Paul's landscapes of Kakatahi are very different, combining drawing with a very sparse use of watercolour. She draws only a few outlines and uses pastels and watercolour sparingly to suggest trees, sky, or other forms here and there. In this way the white of the paper dominates the compositions and conveys an impression of stripped land in which new growth struggles to win itself back. There is an urgency in these paintings, which are in fact more like "records" of destruction. Some incorporate vertical and diagonal lines bisecting the land, suggesting attempts to map and literally divide it. Again the land itself is shown as fighting back in small ways, refusing to be "landscaped" into neat and tidy squares.

Although the styles of Allie Eagle and Joanna Paul are very different, their work shares the same conviction that land is not passive or powerless, but that we have a relationship with it that must not be exploited.

Lisa Sabbage



A MESSAGE FROM HARPO

Marilyn Duckworth
 Hodder and Stoughton \$19.95

Marilyn Duckworth's novel opens in 1986. The year of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill. Duckworth peoples her tale with five characters who will be directly affected by its passage. However, the main focus of the book is on Jess, a woman in a stable, heterosexual relationship. Married to Sam for over a decade this heroine is evaluating her life with increasing discontent. The reappearance of her first husband, father of her daughter Hittie, is the catalyst for some long overdue change.

The portentous cover illustration, "Figures in a Landscape" by Jeffrey Harris, is at variance with the tone of the



novel. Duckworth keeps it light and reasonable. Her long-suffering heroine nearly always sees the funny side of even the worst shocks. And if she doesn't someone else will point it out to her.

Jess is a liberal. She is careful to counter any criticism of her brother's gay status, affirms her daughter's lifestyle choices, and supports her Alzheimer's affected mother. She helps out in her husband's restaurant uncomplainingly and is completely non-judgemental towards her half-sister, a tearaway thirty-five year old with teenage twin sons.

These kinship networks are the bread and butter of this novel. The female characters brood over their choice of husband or lovers. The male characters, practically without exception, have a thoughtless self assurance which makes them seem unattractively arrogant. Yet they continue to charm Duckworth's women.

For instance, Hess's daughter Hittie goes through more than her share of downs; as an American field scholar, at the hands of the overbearing son of her host family. This episode depicts the bumbling sexuality of two curious kids. He is arrogant and full of bravado. She is innocent and vulnerable. It's distressing, but only too believable, that these adolescents adopt such stereotyped sex roles. Worse, Hittie's mother has experienced a similarly hostile reception to her sexuality when we meet her as a teenager. One generation after another women are treated as sexual

prey. Is Marilyn Duckworth suggesting that this is "the way of the world"? If she is, it looks as though feminist politics are ineffectual.

Duckworth's suggestion of alternative expressions of sexuality is tentative. Hittie hovers at the border of "coming

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out" for most of the novel. She is fascinated by her lesbian friends and appalled by the growing discrimination her uncle Russell and his lover Joshua are subjected to as the day for the parliamentary vote on the decriminalisation of homosexuality approaches.

Duckworth doesn't give Hittie a fully realised love interest. This means renouncing a plot device which has proved a real crowd pleaser in, for instance, Lorae Parry's play *Frontwomen*. Parry also had a mother and child in a refreshingly non authoritarian relationship. Parry supplied one of them with a marvellous lesbian lover, Duckworth

doesn't find a princess charming for Hittie.

She does allow Jess a rather unlikely prince charming. It's a choice of hero that makes it hard to take this novel as an escapist read. Duckworth obeys the rule that true love conquers all but reminds us in the next breath that conquered territory may be rather suburban and predictable.

A *Message From Harpo* has the basic ingredients of a blockbuster romance. Three generations of women, each with their loves and heartaches. There's an exciting finishline hovering at the end of the book. Will the bill fail and send some of these people out into the wilderness

again? There are some skylarking sex scenes to balance out the dolorous ones.

Yet Duckworth alters the recipe in crucial ways. We all know the bill passed. So no real suspense can build there. And she won't let us forget what it means to live "happily ever after" in suburbia.

Her final requirement of the reader is acknowledgement that there is something to life that has so far eluded her heroine. Perhaps in her next book Duckworth's central character will get some luckier breaks. And we will find out what the elusive "something is."

Janet Charman



BREAST CANCER

Linda Dyson

Heinemann Reed \$19.95

This book is not just for anyone who has discovered an unusual lump in the breast. For example, Chapter two, "If premenopausal, bilateral breast cancer does run in your family, you ought to be seeking medical help for early detection from an early age". Regular mammograms ten years before the age at which your mother first noticed her symptoms is the advice it offers. Its heavy emphasis on mammography as the only means of finding breast cancers at the earliest possible stage and thereby saving some lives, is, I believe, both correct and timely. In 1987, aged 50, after worrying about my health for several years, I discovered by self-examination a malignant lump in my breast which was bigger than two centimetres.

Low dose mammographic machines are more available now but we are still several years away from full-scale breast cancer screening in New Zealand. Every woman who cares about being health could take note of this book's advice that "the best programme for a woman with no symptoms may be a mammogram every year between the ages of 40 and 49 and one every two years after that".

The last few years have also seen the arrival in New Zealand of newer techniques of conservation and reconstructive surgery, as well as adjuvant (helpful or preventive) chemotherapy. These have given the breast cancer patient a choice of treatments. To persuade a surgical team like the one I was under at Auckland Hospital that you would prefer conservative surgery to the reconstruction of mastectomy that they lean towards, you need the kind of information that is in this book. It should lead to more discussion about surgical options that takes place now between women and their doctors.

Survival prospects are the same regardless of choice. Each has disadvantages and advantages but you are the one that is going to live with them so you might as well do the choosing.

My friend Sandy liked the book but found the chapter on hormone therapy not as detailed as she would have liked. I was surprised to learn from it that not all New Zealand surgeons do a receptor test on your tumour yet. More women will now know to ask before surgery for it to be done which is important because it affects any treatment you may later need. Dyson says adjuvant chemotherapy is now offered to pre-menopausal women whose nodes are involved but I know women now without node involvement who have been offered it. The scene is a rapidly changing one as researchers worldwide struggle to try to break the disease's stranglehold on women.

I asked my friend Glen who has just completed a six month course of chemotherapy how she felt about the chapter on it. She said she liked it because the hospital notes she was given (there's more informed consent these days at Auckland Hospital) did not refer specifically to breast cancer.

The chapter on pregnancy reveals just how much the medical profession does not know about the causes of breast cancer. It has stopped advising women who have had it that they should not have children because it does not know whether they should or not.

I can think of several intelligent young women who died in the last two years before reaching the age of 50 - Anne, Trish, Chris and Noeline - whom I believe would have been as pleased as the friends I have quoted and I are at the publication of this well written and illustrated book, which could save lives.

Barbara Holt

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HEAVY PETTING
DIR: OBIE BENZ

The movie *Heavy Petting* is a light hearted documentary on sex and dating in the 1960s. It shows corny but classic scenes from educational feature films as well as parts of interviews with people who were teenagers in the 60s, talking about their own experiences with sex and dating.

The film had some real cool bits in it, it had Marilyn Monroe and other women from the 1960s. It had all these bits from these old movies in it, my mum kept laughing, she thought it was really funny, I think it was bringing back memories or something.

They also had all these clips of people about my parents' age, like David Byrne out of Talking Heads and Jerry Rubin, raving about their teenage years and sex etc. Some bits were funny but when they raved on for ages it got a bit boring.

The clips from the movies were quite good, they were kind of corny but you could see why our parents are so hung up



about sex, like when this young woman was going out and the father started yelling at her to change because she looked like a tart. It was really weird because she was practically wearing a tent. I thought her mother was a bit wet.

It was quite funny to see how most of the guys were scared of the girls but trying to look cool, really making fools of themselves. Some weren't so bad, but it was really different from today when all

the guys are full of themselves, think they're shit-hot and can get any "chick" they want.

They showed us scenes from these old sex education films. You can tell how much things have changed.

Altogether it was a pretty funny film, worth seeing, especially recommended for adults like my mother.

Kate Lange

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MEMORY

Margaret Mahy
Penguin \$7.95

Published for the teenage market, *Memory's* central character is Jonny, an unemployed youth trying to resolve the death of his twin sister, Janine.

He is introduced drunk, just been in a pub fight and arrested, searching for Janine's best friend Bonny, also known as the Pythoness.

He doesn't find her, finds instead Sophie in her house in a supermarket carpark in the early morning. She's aged and in the throes of senile dementia. She thinks Jonny is her cousin and old forbidden love Alva.

On this pretense, Jonny stays with Sophie in her house in the working class district where he and Janine were children. He clashes with a childhood tormentor, Nev, finds Bonny, helps Sophie and begins a process of emotional healing.

Margaret Mahy has an international reputation for children's books including *The Lion in the Meadow*, *The Man Whose Mother was a Pirate*, *The Piratical Rumbustification* and *The Haunting*. Apart from stories in the Education Department's School Journals, she was first published by English publishers JM

Dent because, as Betty Gilderdale says in *Introducing Margaret Mahy* – the amazing person behind those fantastic books New Zealanders were wanting stories about New Zealand, they were sick of English books.

Gilderdale says Mahy was heavily influenced by her parent's Cornish/Celtic background and the English stories and German fairytales of a New Zealand 1930s/40s childhood.

Memory is a Pakeha book set in Christchurch.

Bonny – "a little bit of unidentified European, a little bit Maori, some Chinese, a drop or two of Indian, maybe" – and her sister Samantha – "a straight Maori Pakeha cross" who takes the name Hinerangi Hotene and becomes a radical activist – were adopted by liberal white professionals. Bonny says: "Children like me used to have to wait quite a while twenty years ago before being chosen... we were the next best things to rejects". But the issue of adoption is undeveloped, flat, secondary to the novel's pace.

There is another unworked area. What does the Pythoness – Bonny wearing silver moons, dark stars, a snake ring and using magic, represent? Some aspect of radical feminism? Why does she give it up when Janine dies? Does she feel her power is responsible for Janine's death? It's not obvious.

Jonny's paranoia is that he is responsi-

ble for the death. Mahy is excellent in unfolding his clumsy, embarrassing, at times brutal kiwi male approach to emotional resolution. At one point he thinks that by having sex with Bonny he would get power over the Pythoness and the past. There's an ugly scene in the kitchen that rings realistic. Likewise the unfinished ending is realistic, unsentimental.

Memory is published for the teenage market but it's an adult book too. It's about relationships, Pakeha society, and it touches on class, ageism, housing problems. It's got pace, action; original and colourful language. It proves Mahy is well deserved of her international (read northern hemisphere) reputation. *Memory* won the Young Observer Teenage Fiction Prize.

Jane Blaikie

THE COMMON THREAD WRITINGS BY WORKING-CLASS WOMEN

Eds June Burnett, Julie Cotterill,
Annette Kennerley, Phoebe
Nathan and Jeanne Wilding
Mandarin \$17.95

Early on the book makes this challenging statement: "For many years it has been unacceptable for working-class women to put class on the feminist agenda. It's seen as divisive, and wandering from the main



point. Socialist feminists, always with an eye to male approval, sit discussing how to reach 'ordinary women', working-class women 'out there', whilst ignoring those of us who are 'in there'. After all, if you've managed to find your way to a feminist meeting and can articulate your opinions, then you can't possibly be working class... Other schools of feminism simply get defensive, or look the other way when class is mentioned, seeing economic class as a mere 'male concept'...

(Early on too, this reviewer would like to state her own class background: more or less, raised middle class by working class parents.)

So what is this book about? It's been put together by a collective, The Common Thread, through "years of hard slog". It's 365 pages with 98 contributors – it's poems, short stories, diary excerpts, her-story, criticism, celebration, autobiography. It's accessible, enlightening, frightening, thought provoking, funny. For example, a poem: "I am a dying breed/ a lost burlesque show/ working class hero/ cockney/ well almost/ sparrow/ enjoying overt crudity/ crying/ at the loss/ of innocence/ poverty/ and cheap laughs/ trying hard/ to merge/ a university education/ and/ a political consciousness/ with a deep-seated/ appreciation/ of glitter".

The experiences are almost all British-based, it's an English publication, and the contributors are so varied as to break down the stereotypes of Flo Capp, Hilda Ogden and Vera Duckworth. "We come in all shapes and sizes, nationalities and ages. We're black and white, Jewish and Gentile, lesbian and heterosexual and we live with a range of disabilities, physical and otherwise".

As a collective, the women have also organised open meetings and readings of working class women's work, encouraged individual women to write, set up working class women's groups, made hundreds of contacts, contributed to other anthologies, written articles, participated in conferences and challenged classism. "For all of us in the Common Thread, the involve-

ment has, literally, changed our lives".

Each contribution was "argued and thought about". Hundreds were received. Each is short enough not to detract if it doesn't appeal to the reader. As a whole it's rich. It's a book to pick up, enjoy some more, put down, and ration out until, surprisingly fast, it's finished.

Originally, some of the collective wanted to produce a book which explored the boundaries of class and the relationship between class, feminism, race and sexuality. But, the book states, the early publicity was vague and invited contributions from working class women on more or less any subject. "We were inundated with material – letters, poetry, prose – from women who had been silenced, unpublished, or denied recognition as writers... So, directed by the pieces sent in to us, a different, but powerful book has emerged...".


Yippee for that. *Common Thread* must have a broader audience because of it. This book is the raw material, a basis, the beginnings of a working class social history which is scarcely documented.

Two in the collective have already agreed to co-edit a second book "in which we will seek out land where we... can come together to explore our identities and the links we might forge". *Common Thread* raises the question of how much existing feminist analysis is middle-class, academic angst anyway. To read it (and worse, to understand it) – a boring initiation. To discuss it – an exclusive technique. Isn't the revolution meant to be fun? And who isn't going to come if it's dull?

Which leads to the related question of identity politics (your politics defined by how you identify – by class, gender, race, sexuality, ability). Will it end in successful divide and rule by the oppressors; or will it lead to a stronger, deeper and wider progressive movement?

One final question: Has modern feminism been more easily dismissed because it is seen as being middle class?

Jane Blaikie



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LISTING

Her Wits About Her - self defence success stories by women is a Women's Press publication, edited by Caignon and Grove. While it is not as inspiring and thrilling as it says on the cover this book does redefine rape victims and survivors. Black, white, old, young, in some way they fight back, refusing to become victims ("sacrifices unto death"). Mercifully absent are McGyver strategies and sensationalism. No voyeuristic thrills here. A valuable book.

Saturday's Women by Anne McLean, Judith Challies, Joanne Gumbrell and Rosemary Maxwell, published Hazaed Press, has the sort of cover that would never entice me to pick it up from among the wonderfully-designed array of books available today. However, I found the content quite inspired. Written collectively by four New Zealand women with feminist backgrounds, it covers such topics as energy, healing, chakras, shielding and consciousness. This may sound pretty esoteric to the uninitiated, but it's obviously written from the heart and the everyday experiences of "ordinary" women. I like the easy style and the way each woman records her experience, at the same time keeping a flow which reflects the strong rapport these women obviously have. It reinforces the general message of the book - that all life is connected by a common "energy".

Martine Bouillier

It's very like New Zealand's *Herstory*, but of course the women are Australian. It's *An Australian Women's Diary 1990*, compiled by Lyn Collingwood. The entries are a mixture of past and present. The older women are more "ordinary" - twins who lived for 100 years, switchboard operators in 1881 and so on - while the contemporary women are grander - head of broadcasting, top door to door salesperson, skating champion and so on. But these are differences of degree. Including only one clearly Aboriginal woman seemed a bit thin. The highlight for me was the old photos, especially the one of Canaan O'Reilly's servants, all stiff and grim (as life must have been with the canon) in their best clothes.

Pat Rosier

LETTERS

from page 16

position compared to lesbian women, when we consider the following; some of the most economically disadvantaged women in our society are those who have been deserted by husbands and are struggling to live on the DPB with several dependent children; wife battering and abuse occurs precisely because women are in particular heterosexual relationships; feminist women in heterosexual relationships invariably have to fight moment by moment to maintain or establish an equitable relationship with their partner.

This is not to deny the struggles of, and

discrimination against lesbians, but they shouldn't be assumed in advance as an unproblematic given, just as heterosexuality for women can't automatically be assumed as a "privilege". Indeed a great deal of feminist writing has concerned itself with detailing how heterosexuality, as it is currently organised in our society, supports the patriarchy and invariably doesn't serve women's interests.

This also raises the issue of what we mean when we talk about "privilege". This notion needs to be made problematic - that is, we need to be quite clear what we are talking about when we use such words, rather than simply assuming that everybody knows and that we have a shared meaning of the concept.

What I believe feminists such as Allannah Ryan are suggesting, is that feminism must be careful to recognise the complexity of the various power relations which form the conditions of women's lives, without simply assuming in advance, that particular groups of women "have privilege" or indeed that others don't "have privilege".

KAREN NEWTON

Auckland

[Ed note: in fairness to both Cushla and Alison, the coverage of the conference in the Broadcast item "Red Stockings" was heavily cut because of space limitations. From what we know of Alison Laurie's workshop it showed that "privilege" is in fact something which shifts.]

ANSWER TO NEW MAN

Dear *Broadsheet*,

Your New Man correspondent, Hamish MacEwan, (*Broadsheet* 170, 1989), is wrong, very wrong, when he argues that everything is rosy in the garden of gender politics. Having the gall to label himself as a "feminist man" (I'm sorry but, no, you can't be), he obviously belongs to the group of sensitive New Age guys who have been duped into believing that he gains women rightfully demanded have been won and that feminism is old hat because "post-feminist" woman can do whatever she wants - so long as she can do it on two-thirds of a male wage!

The images of the sharing and egalitarian modern man help to obscure the fact that very little of substance has changed. The effect of the emergence of the media-created New Man has been to reinforce the existing power structure by producing a patriarchal mutation which is better able and more suited to retain control.

Mr MacEwan bemoans the fact that *Broadsheet* only publishes the bad news about men and therefore, strangely, is "sexist". The truth is that men like Mr MacEwan choose to ignore the reality of child abuse, incest, domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape. The New Man seeks to carefully avoid all mention of this other side of the image of men, preferring to highlight the baby-holding, pram-pushing, birth-attending, vacuum cleaning, sweaty-palmed father-to-be who emerges in the feature pages of the local media.

I, too, subscribe to *Broadsheet*, but rather than being shocked at the "horror it is to be male", I am reminded of the need for men to change. Sadly Hamish MacEwan represents the man who is more style than content and whose existence is a ruse to persuade those that call for change that it has already occurred.

RODNEY HARRIS

Australia



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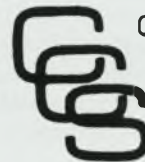
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THE GRIPES OF ROTH



It's That Time of the Year again. Pre Merry-making Tension is with us once more – that creeping Christmas cloud which may spread goodwill to all men, but doesn't do much for women as a rule. This is the family season when we engage with our nearest and dearest in one way or another, and divorce lawyers start their five-finger calculator exercises while women's refuges overflow.

Cheer up though. I must here confess that, according to an article I read in *New Scientist* (the research that goes into this column!) my gloom and doom opening chorus is just reflecting a commonly held, but mistaken belief about Xmas blues. Preliminary findings suggest that the suicide rate and depressives' admissions to mental hospitals don't increase on public holidays like Xmas Day – no indeed they occur a week or two after, ho ho ho. So that's all right then.

With that negative stuff out of the way, I can now turn to ruminating on what I'd really like for Xmas. Apart from global gifts like universal peace, justice and equity, that is.

Well, I already have a subscription to *Broadsheet* which must of course be at the top of everyone's wish list. But I always welcome the old faithful boxes of choxes because they hasten the process of total immersion in end-of-year womanly guilt over past and present deficiencies. When I wallow, I like to do it thoroughly – just as all conscientious women perform the tasks allotted to them.

However, just in case I miss out on the confectionery, I've decided that what might brighten up my humdrum existence is the acquisition of a Mr Right. (Yes, yes, I'm familiar with the sharp criticisms of my heterosexual partnership preferences, but we all have our foibles). Goodness, I hope Santa Claus doesn't get stuck bringing him down the chimney, and thanks for the thought but even gift-wrapped and with the reindeer thrown in, symbolic Santa himself, patriarchal controller of distribution goodies, leaves me cold.

Now a project of this social importance, aimed at encouraging my re-entry into the real, working, coupled world, needs a lot of careful consideration. For example, do I

really fancy a toy boy? The short answer is no, but such a response may well be governed by the reality of my limited income which falls far short of what I imagine someone my age would need to keep such a plaything in play. Anyway, if I could afford a bauble like an expensive sports car I'd give it to me. I wouldn't tell this to everyone but I've always had this very secret fantasy of myself at the wheel of something furiously fast and flamboyant. Silly really, as my hair is too short to stream back provocatively in the wind, and actually if I am exposed to a brisk draught with the roof down, I need a particularly stout shawl to protect my arthritic neck and shoulder. Anyway, motorways terrify me and I am such a law-abiding, timid driver that a friend who sometimes borrows my car claims that she finds it impossible to put it in a parking place that is even the teeniest bit illegal.

Well, that's one option I have to let pass. I'm not madly enthusiastic either about getting involved with a SNAG, a category dreamed up by Dale Spender to indicate a Sensitive New Age Guy. It makes me a bit tired just to think about it. By the time SNAG's finished telling you how much he identifies with you because he too has always felt Oppressed on account of not being good at rugby and has Suffered from the macho image imposed on him and is Caged by the conservative attitudes of his partner and her family who don't appreciate his support for her Liberation, you've missed the episode of the TV series you always watch. And after he's conveyed to you how sexually unadventurous his partner is, besides not really being on his intellectual and emotional wavelength, and just how bleak his existence is, and how he could respond to someone warm like you whose vibes are so positive and caring, you're refusing to be shown how to massage him because you've got one of those nasty AO (Age Old) headaches coming on that requires instant solitude in a single bed.

No thanks. I guess what I'm over-optimistically seeking is a MEDAL, i.e. a Mellow Educable Devoted Affluent Liaison.

Where to look? Where lots of other people go in their search for fulfilment or fun or companionship or sex or A Relationship or whatever, viz the "Personal" column of a

Saturday *New Zealand Herald*. Take its most recent manifestation. My eye did linger on one call for a "Female, exceptionally supple (double jointed) wanted for friendship with Contortion Society man". What rich full lives some characters lead but I must ask: do Contortion Society men have sympathy for feminism and lots of money? Until I have this vital information and have doubled my joints this ad must go into the Pending file.

Then there's a hearty "Hi there. Are you considered gorgeous?" To be perfectly honest that isn't actually a description thrown my way on a daily basis and I don't even know whether I could still fake it, particularly as this "independent guy... sincerely looking for a sincere friendship" suggests that Gorgeous is "into skiing perhaps" and my single joints are prophetically creaking.

But hold it. Here's something promising. "Male, 33, one in a million (*Hite Report* p321) seeks female, any age, for honest relationship." Be still my beating heart while I do some of my calming deep breaths and wipe off my excited steamed-over glasses as my trembling fingers turn to p321. Bit of a let down really – it's just one of the brief quotes: "A sensuous man (one in a million) enjoys a woman's body..." I have a suspicion that this advertiser may well be a potential SNAG who expects a round of applause at the end of his performance.

Well, so far so unsuccessful. What a pity, especially as one of the groups advertising – self styled "human relations consultants" – tells me that: "An investment in your personal life makes sound business sense". But so many investments are proving a dead loss these days as corporations go broke, that this kind of speculation is really risky.

Trouble is, I don't know that I really trust Santa Claus with my MEDAL mission either (a book token is probably safer than a token MEDAL). Maybe I'd do better to settle for less ambitious prezzies that will embellish my life of selfless singlehood, while I dream of a time when we don't have to "work at" or "invest in" relationships because they're not commodities or jobs but are human, equal fun.

Happy Solstice everyone.

Margot Roth

■ **AUCKLAND**

Towards a Nuclear free and Independent Pacific Hui Programme: Fiji - Recognition of Indigenous Peoples Rights in a Democracy, 1 October, Ponsonby Community Centre; US Military Bases in the Pacific, 1 November, Otara Music and Arts Centre; Te Hui Oranga 1989, 1-3 December, venue to be announced. Further information from: PAPANAC, (09) 2747706 (Philomena); PCRC, 375862 (Jane); Tamaki NFIPC, 776128 (Julie or Aloce).

Juliet Batten: Sacred Spaces An art event at 35a Jervois rd, 7pm Friday 17 November. Check details with Juliet, ph 696-123

Women's Programme on Access Radio, Mon.

Women's Film-making ph 303 1657.

■ **HAMILTON**

Patients Rights Advocacy Meetings first wed of month at 7.00pm, 65 Tawa St, Hamilton, phone (071) 435-837

Lesbian Line available for information and support on Mondays, 7-10pm, phone (064) 56833

■ **WELLINGTON**

Digger and Nudger Try Harder by Lorae Parry, Carmel mcGlone and Jean Betts, at Bats Theatre, 1 Kent Tce, Wellington, opens 8 November. Directed by Jean Betts.

■ **CHRISTCHURCH**

Women's House is an umbrella organisation for Women's Action Group on Drug Abuse, The Health Alternatives for Women, Otautahi Women's Labour Pool, Women with Eating Disorders Resource Centre, Canterbury Women's Employment Trust. Women's Counselling Service are also members. Cramner Centre, cnr Montreal and Armagh St, phone Ruth 796-970 or Sue 667-725.

Lesbian/Gay Radio Programme Outwaves every Wednesday 7-8pm on Radio UFM 98.3. Exclusively lesbian content on the first Wednesday of each month.

Aoraki Lesbian and Gay Support Group pot luck tea at members homes third Sunday every month, contact Morrigan (056)34-813, or Brian (056)43-853. PO Box 784, Timaru.

Summer solstice celebration for women. Saturday 23 December, early morning. For details phone Helen (03) 663-248; Nicola (03) 481-076; Ruth (03) 656-943; Sue (03) 810-967.

■ **NATIONAL**

The Treaty of Waitangi: questions and answers. A resource kit for Pakeha produced by Project Waitangi. A follow-on from the Waitangi Tribunal kit. Everything you wanted to know about the Treaty. Available from: Project Waitangi, P O Box 825, Wellington \$9.90.

Kaitiaki paper written for the Resource management Law Reform. Copies from Tanya Cumberland, Manukau Action, 100 Kauri Pt Rd, Laingholm, at \$12 each incl. postage.

NZ Institute of Management women's conference 6-7 Nov, Christchurch Town Hall. For info, phone Jill Coleman (03)792-302.

Not the 1990 Calendar! Produced by the He Taua/Atac Coalition. \$10 + GST per copy to P O Box 68553, Newton (Ak) Tamaki Makaurau

■ **INTERNATIONAL**

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Lesbian Line Thurs 7.30 pm - 10 pm Ph (09) 3033584. Telephone Counselling &

support service run by lesbian women for women. In association with Auckland Gay/Lesbian Welfare Group.

Womanline a confidential non-judgemental listening and information phone line. Run by women for women. Phone (09) 765 173. Mon - Thurs 9am - 12pm & 6pm - 9pm.

Birthmothers support group A support

group for women who have lost children through adoption. "By Birthmothers for Birthmothers." Ph 366 0752 Day or Night for information and support.

Lesbian Support/Coming Out Groups. Phone 585119. PO Box 47090 Ponsonby. Auckland.

"Women's Writing Group: Contact ph (09)764-857 Auckland WEA

AAGHH!
 DEAD
 BODIES....

... SIX DEAD MICE AND FOUR
 DEAD BIRDS ON
 THE DOORSTEP!...
 AND LOOK —
 THERE'S A NOTE
 WRITTEN
 IN BLOOD...

HEH
 HEH

trust in the
 mity
 Leppid!
 she will
 profide!

WELL - WHOEVER DID IT
 CAN'T SPELL FOR PEANUTS...

DEATH
 TO THE
 UNBELIEVERS!!

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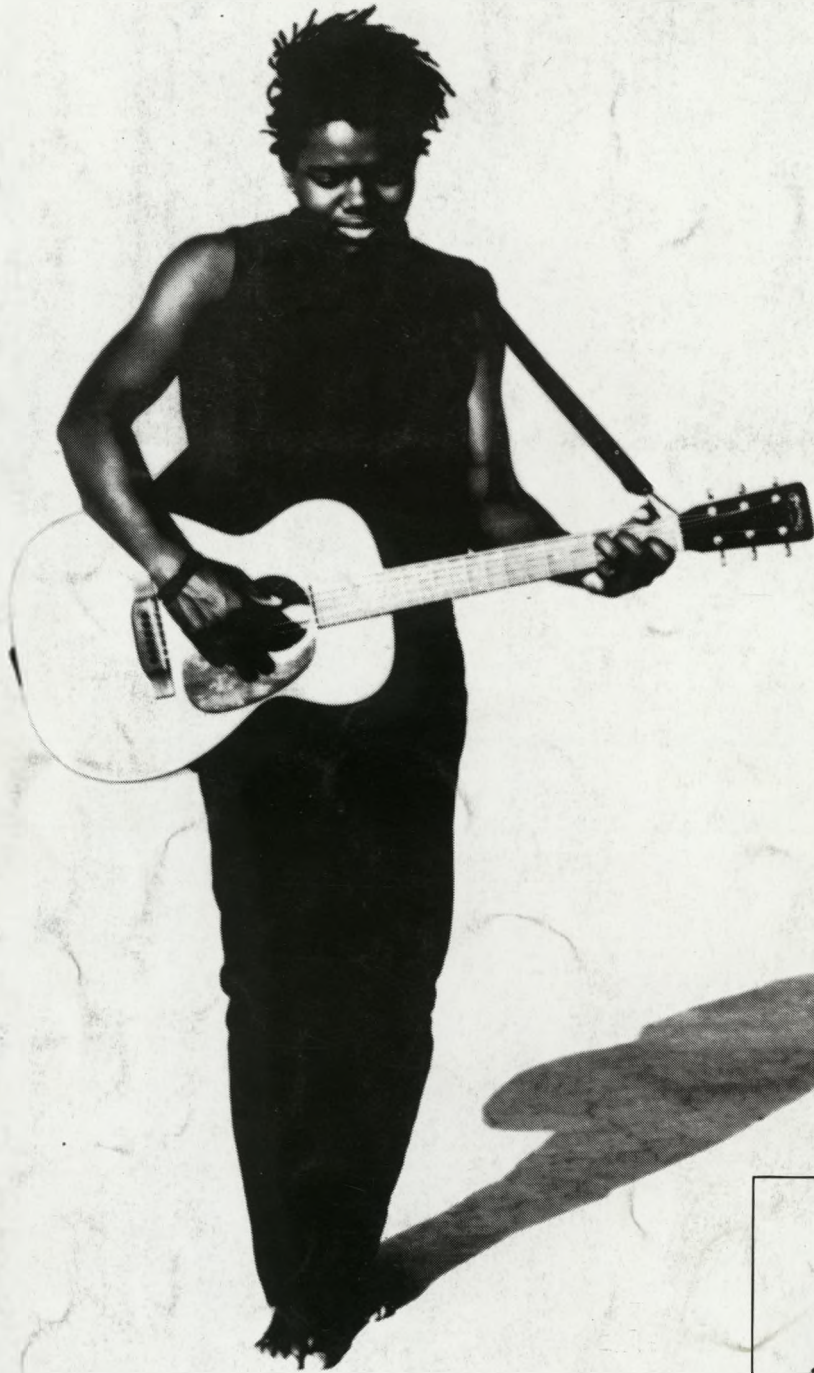
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