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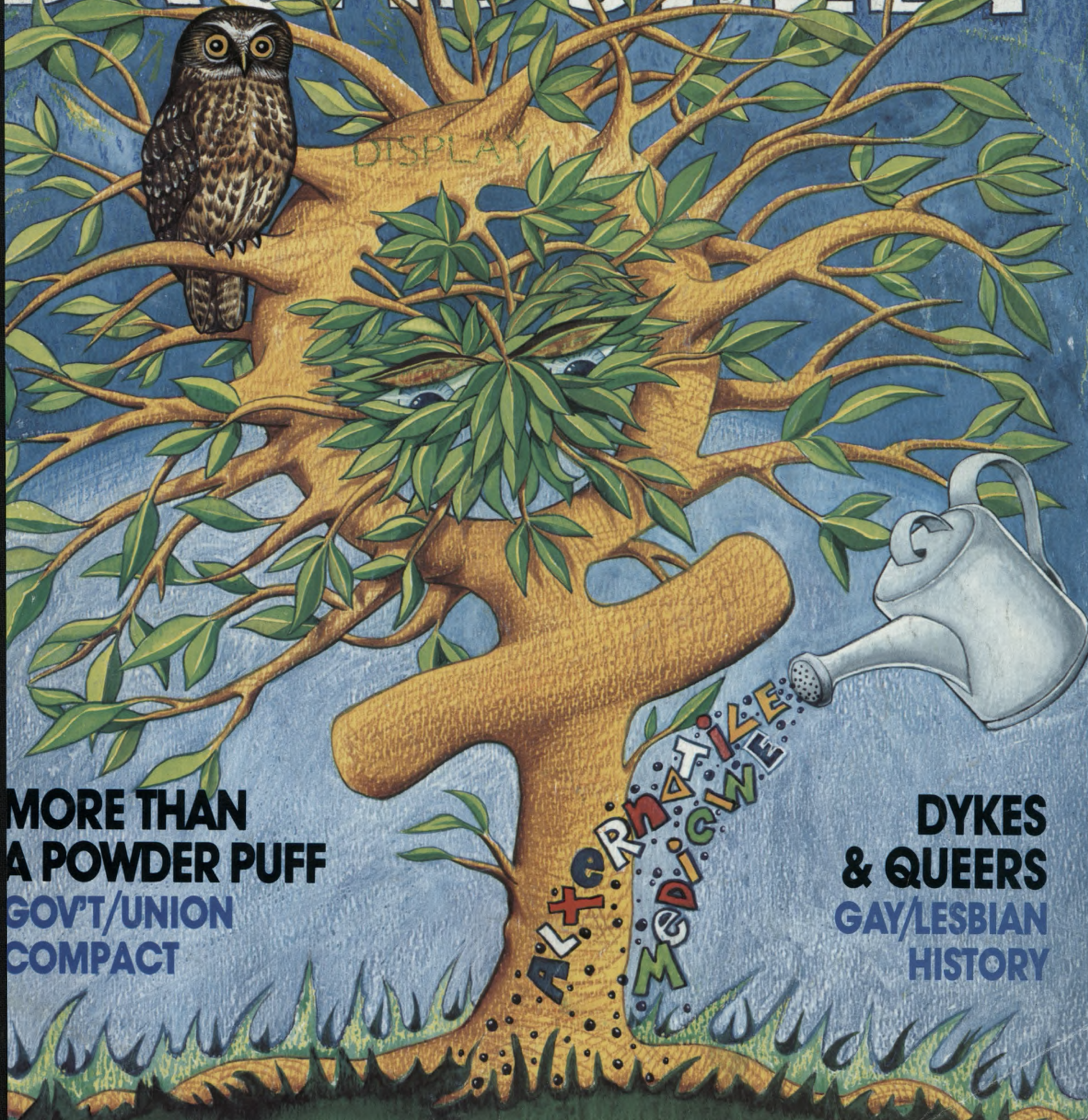
BROADSHEET

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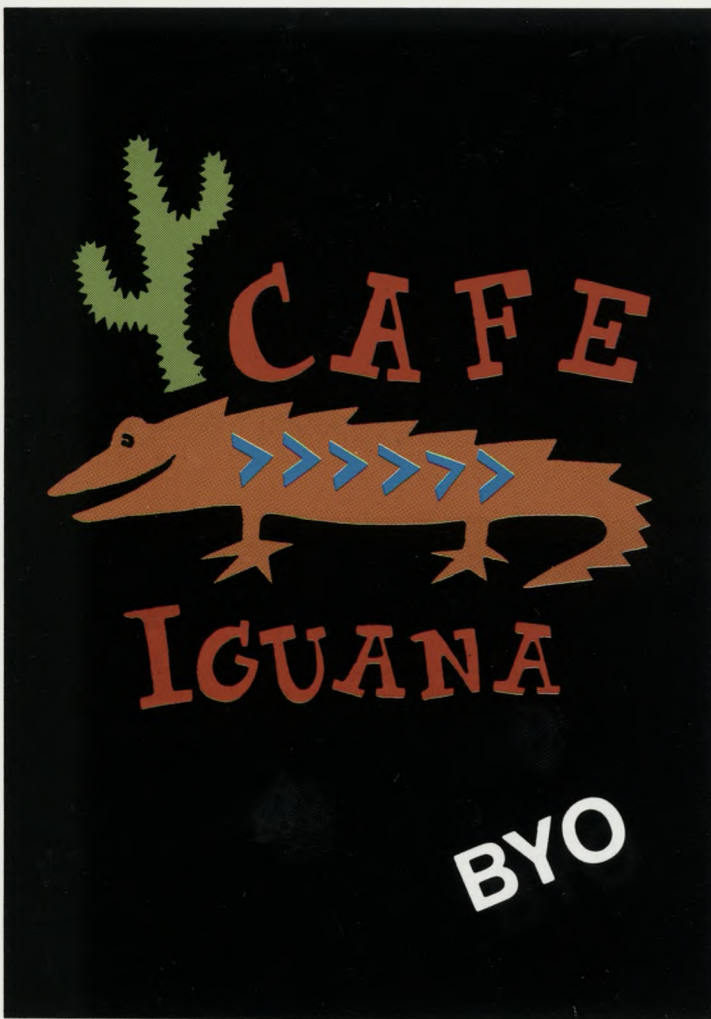
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BROADSHEET

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HERSPECTIVE is written each month by a member of the collective or an invited contributor. This month's writer, Claire-Louise McCurdy, is a collective member.

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 We do not publish personal attacks.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. 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.

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HERSPECTIVE

I first became involved with *Broadsheet* because I was on a path of discovery – discovering myself, the world around me and the people in it. I had been at home caring for my two children for eight years, gaining many skills that I certainly never had before they came into my life. It was an interesting time, but I needed to return to the work force – I needed to get out of the home, away from the housewife number. So I began as a *Broadsheet* volunteer. Working with these energetic, intelligent, caring women became a very essential part of my week.

I became stronger and more aware of feminism; what it meant, where it had been, and where it was going. The time came when I decided I really wanted to get back into the workforce, and support me and my children. So I dusted off my certificates and my NZRN Badge, and began the rounds of the hospitals. Imagine my deep disappointment to find I could not get a job – mainly because I had been out of nursing for so long. One nurse administrator who interviewed me said that I should put on my application all the courses I had done (receptionist, typing course, interior decorating, and running my own pottery/workshop business for the past four years) so that it would be seen that I had not been at home, and I quote, “going soggy in the head”.

After weeks of trying to get back into the hospital system, I decided it was time for some very radical changes. I began thinking about a new career. At age 39, and with two children this was going to be a big step. Many possible careers appealed, but I soon discovered my school certificate qualifications were quite inadequate for nearly everything I wanted to do. I had a further hurdle to jump. I needed more qualifications.

Eventually I decided I wanted to do Electronic Engineering and for that I needed Advanced Maths and Physics Stage Two. I was accepted for the Higher Education Course at Manukau Polytechnic where I am now a fulltime student. I have been attending the course for seven weeks, and have my end of term exams in May. It has not been easy, my maths and physics knowledge was to fourth form level and 24 years ago. All the work is new to me, but I have been pleasantly surprised at how well I am able to assimilate all the information thrown at me every day.

Coping with full time study, a household to run, two children and a crazy cat makes for a very busy life. I am fortunate to

have a very understanding and supportive partner, who more than makes all this possible. I doubt I could cope with this alone and without that support. Every night there is homework, and if time allows, study. I find I put in two to three hours a night – there is always room for more, but once tiredness creeps over me that time becomes unproductive. The mornings are a rush – my partner rises at 6am, me at 6.30, kids before 7am. Breakfasts are a “get your own” affair these days; lunches to cut, daughter's long hair to brush and last minute things to attend to. I have to be out the door by 7.50 and most mornings go smoothly. Others – like today – don't.

It began at 5am when I roused from a lovely sleep, wet! Was my leg perspiring? Only one of them? Unlikely! My partner's then? Again, one leg is not likely, but here I was in a wet bed. “The bloody bed's wet” I yelled. That woke my partner, who was not amused. The cat had been on the bed – now all that was left was a very wet patch. How dare it pee on me – the very hand that feeds it! My partner grabbed the offending moggie, admonished it “gently” (softy!) and helped strip the bed, wash the mattress, turn it over and remake the bed. I put one load in the washing machine and leapt back into bed in an attempt to salvage some of the night. Now without complaints in my ear that I could have “ignored it, rolled over and slept on a dry bit”. I attempted to doze. Alarm number one went off at 5.45 – partner exits and readies for work. Partner departs just as alarm number two goes and now I rise and wander to the shower. Slop, slop. “What the hell?” The floor is awash – now the machine has “peed” on the floor too. Out with the mop, clean up the mess. “I don't need this right now” I grumble. Put the next load in the machine and go to the shower. Spend 15 minutes fighting off the cold wet curtain which always seems to find my bum! Time is running short, so it's out of the shower, and slop, slop! “Not again... I don't believe it”. Yes again, another mopping up.

So far, not so good. Rushing now. Kids lunches made and packed; windows shut. “Make sure you lock the door, kids. Bye.” Kisses all round. “See you Mum – have a nice day at school!” Now what have I got first? Maths, then physics, communication skills, and computer studies. Books in arms I'm out the door.

LETTERS

DEPTH CHARGES

Dear Broadsheet,

I am writing to you to comment on the Women with Disabilities article (*Broadsheet*, April 1989, 166). I am hoping like crazy that the rest of the series will not be, as this is, a series of picture portraits of individuals.

I shall be deeply disappointed if this is so, because you will have failed to grasp and write about the larger scale issues that are of such a great influence on our lives. We as a group, are on the receiving end of oppression which is embedded in the system. It is shown in things like incomes (did you know for instance that 56 percent of women with disabilities in Avery Jack's 1982 survey had an income that was *under* half that of the average female wage employment, housing and health?) But I see few articles on women with disabilities that make these influences clear. Racism, sexism and classism have received much needed attention to make the links explicit. We need that too.

Although the parallels with sexism are clear, it's not correct to say that the situation arises as a result of being female – as wrong as saying it is due to having a disability. It's both, and neither alone.

It is not wrong to get at the attitudes of fear, avoidance and ignorance by the use of individual's stories. I think that is a good motivation. But it's simply not enough to leave it at that individual level, when it's so much more.

I believe *Broadsheet* is a magazine that carries much that is alive and stimulating. It exhibits that rare commodity, thinking. So I'd like to see some thinking on this issue of women with disabilities, and I challenge you to do this.

WENDI WICKS

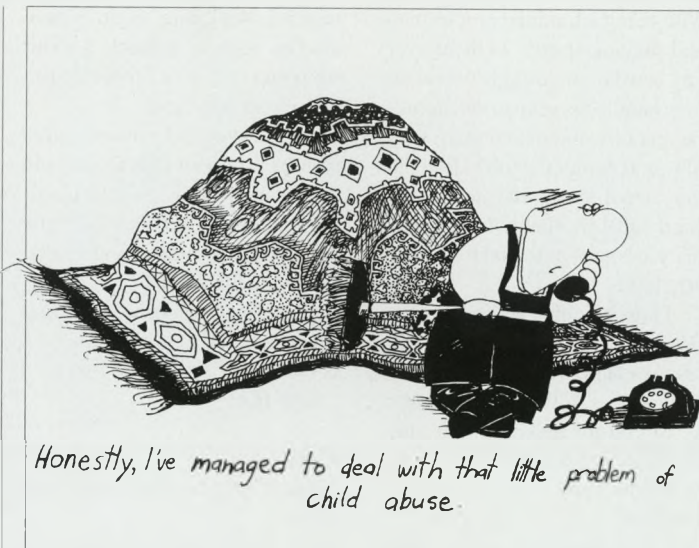
Palmerston North

[Ed Note: Avery Jack's report is called "Disabled Women – A Double Disadvantage?" and is a Department of Health paper.]

NO THANKYOU

Dear Broadsheet,

Broadsheet 162 published a letter



COURTNEY © 1989

written by Lindsay Johnson to which I would like to reply.

No thank you Lindsay, I do not wish to be called European. I find the word to be both offensive and insulting, suggesting as it does colonialism and other philosophies which I reject. *I am not a European.*

Pakeha is what I choose to call myself. It is a lovely word. I am non-lesbian and non-Maori and I enjoy reading *Broadsheet*. I find the articles cover a wide range of topics and viewpoints. Pakeha New Zealander.
BARBARA DAVISON
Wellington

ROCKET LAUNCHER WANTED

Dear Broadsheet,

I'm becoming concerned at a possible split personality I'm developing as a result of my reactions to aggressive male drivers. Now that I'm older, and more assertive, I seem to have developed a short fuse where they're concerned. Normally I'm a fairly mild person.

I have followed various foolhardy motorists into petrol stations, caught up with others at traffic lights, cornered others in parking places and confronted them about their life-endangering motoring tactics. Having always been met with either smugness or verbal abuse, I now often find myself winding down the window, screaming at them as they viciously cut in

front of my vehicle or countering their lack of driving skills with all manner of "fuck you" hand signals.

To counteract this, I've been practising deep-breathing and mental shoulder-shrugging as yet another male, clothed in his four-wheel suit of armour, charges blindly out from a side-road directly into my path. Provided I'm not experiencing PMT at that particular time, the mental exercises seem to do the trick.

After having run the gauntlet yet again this morning, I'd like to advise that I could be in the market for a rocket launcher capable of being mounted on an Avenger 1600 – or maybe I'll settle of an outer cladding of 50cm thick rubber foam... or maybe both?

TINA EVANS

Auckland

CRY OF PAIN

Dear Broadsheet,

Oh, sisters; hear my pain.

I cry as my grief washes over me.

What I tried to do was so full of newness it needed new language to explain the concepts – concepts that already have their glimmers in today's philosophy and spirit – teachings but are certainly not widespread in present time.

I call myself an evolutionary. Evolutionary implies the conscious act of strengthening certain trends so that they eventually become a main stream.

I tried to create an "Education Centre" that placed equal importance on spiritual and material values. It was a place the Goddess could walk freely, without excluding God. The female system, has no conquerors or rulers, there was acceptance and room for the principles of both.

This "place of learning" had five key words to set the energy foundations upon. The first is Respect: the freedom to do whatever one wishes provided it does not hinder the freedom of any other being (including one's future self and the super sensible).

O sisters, hear my pain. For respect to be fully adopted, any act of Subjugation or suppression of females had to be released; children had to be seen as beings in their own right and a variety of educational doctrines tolerated. I didn't get past the first step. I suspect it was fear of steps two and three that halted it. They are Responsibility: the ability to respond to another person's needs; expressed or unexpressed – and Balance: the philosophical understanding that all elements have their equal and opposite.

I thought people would be excited that Matriarchal Values were to be reinstated. I naively thought people would be pleased that space was still allowed for "Patriarchal Values" (I wasn't chucking the baby out with the bathwater, so to speak). I had seen the difficulties occur when one system was adopted exclusively and thought others would see or comprehend the same.

My failure was in underestimating how thoroughly I functioned in the "Female System" of values and failing to comprehend how entrenched and unchanging the "White Male System" was in our society – even in our "alternative" society.

So, five years of plans, preparations, and dreams eventually crystalized into diamond at my heart Chakra. Immense forces of pressure and heat created it. I cannot see how that crystal will manifest in the world anymore. My seeing is broken. My body, like tom

seaweed ripped up from its bed and tossed viciously to share its dry and crackled with defensiveness and fear.

So, sisters. Send my healing. Send me your loving. I tried. I tried, and something may have happened beyond my ken but I am not in touch with it.

I have spoken; hear me; join me, if you will in my grieving
ANA

Takaka

SPORTS FAN

Dear Broadsheet,

I'm a new reader of *Broadsheet* and I really enjoy it. There is always something in each issue that I find interesting and informative. It's well thumbed by others in my household too and you'll be pleased to know that I'm going to make them all subscribe.

There is one thing I would like to see more of though – articles on women and sport. New Zealand has many wonderful sportswomen who do not get the media coverage they deserve. As a self-confessed sports fan I get sick of watching nothing but rugby, racing and iron-men on TV for six weeks before getting one item on women.

I'm under no illusions about getting top sportswomen to talk to *Broadsheet*. From my limited contact, I know that many women fear being identified with *Broadsheet* because feminism is such a dirty word – often mistakenly taken as meaning lesbianism (and therefore "butch manhater"). There is also the risk of losing sponsorship

in a sports world that seems to be extremely homophobic and fearful of women's equality.

However, I (and I'm sure there are others with similar interests out there) would love to read about other ordinary sportswomen around the country. How do they cope with being a feminist or a lesbian and playing sport – is there ever any conflict or struggle? How do they handle the sexism and homophobia of women (and men) they play and compete with? How did they start in sport, what needs does sport fulfil for them? It's an area that has lots of potential for a good article(s).

I hope that this will spark off a few ideas and maybe inspire others to share their thoughts and experiences with you. Thanks to all of you for making life a little brighter each month.

MIRA BLAKE

Papakura

[Ed Note: We'd love to hear from readers about some of the points that Mira has raised. What are your experiences in sport? Good or bad, send them in to us.]

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Dear Broadsheet,

I wonder how many women like myself are wondering what to do when it comes to the 1990 elections. I don't want to see a National government elected as I am in no doubt that it would signal the repeal of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill, and regressive steps away from abortion law reform, pay equity, and the Treaty of Waitangi. However, I am not happy

with the performance of the present Labour government, which seems to be saying "good luck" to the rich and "hard luck, buck" to the poor.

So what options do we have? By not voting, I would effectively be giving my support to National, which I don't want to do. I have always been a staunch Labour supporter, but now I feel that I'm in no-woman's land.

Meanwhile, as I grow ever more confused, Labour slips further and further in the polls, and the possibility of Winston Peters as Prime Minister draws nearer and nearer. What is a girl to do?

Readers, do you have any suggestions?

KATHLEEN HOLMES

Lower Hutt

SOAP

Among the sparkling waves she played;
She was more fair than words can say;
Then in slow motion came the maid
before the TV camera.

"Just take a tip from me," she said.

"I use All Over every day.

Its Magic Freshness, here to Stay,
Comes from a Secret Formula."

And as the telly lens zoomed in,
She in her scant attire was seen;
Her hair, her lips, her eyes, her skin,

Enlarged, enhanced, in Colour.

The viewer sprang out of his chair,
The advertiser's message clear:
"To Hell with the bar of soap," he said.

"I'll go and buy the girl instead."

Christina Ward

DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION

We are looking for women to promote and distribute Broadsheet Magazine.

Promotion (two days a week) will entail promoting the magazine in retail outlets, and working to increase subscriptions. We envisage the promotions person as raising the profile of Broadsheet in New Zealand through the media (speaking on television, radio and so on), visiting schools and other institutions, organising publicity stands at conferences etc.

Distribution. (Two days a week). Initially this will involve setting up a distribution network by collating information from bookshops and readers as to likely outlets, and be selecting outlets in various centres that are most

compatible with the sale of Broadsheet. Once the distribution network is established she will need to ensure the posting out/delivery of magazines to smaller outlets, invoice outlets and keep check of returns, analyse sales changes, and liaise with outlets.

The Broadsheet Collective is flexible about whether one person applies for both these jobs (as a four day a week job), or if two women would like to job share, or if the two are kept as separate part time jobs. However, there will need to be close liaison between the two positions.

Anyone interested please contact Athina on (09) 604782 or write to P O Box 56-147 before 12 May.



What's next

COMING UP IN THE JUNE ISSUE

- ★ The "Colour Purple" controversy
- Technological Frankensteins
- ◆ Working in a Women's Centre

FRONTING UP

DEADLINES

For the June issue 26 April, for July/Aug 26 May.

ADVERTISING

Our advertising rates are very competitive. Basic rates for Black and white advertising inside the magazine (excluding GST) are: full-page \$660; half \$360; quarter \$185; eighth \$120; classified 30c per word prepaid, 40c per word if we bill you; classified display box \$40. Further details on request. Phone Tanya, (09) 608-535

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This year we lose the special postal rate that has meant we could send you your magazine for 40 cents instead of 80. We cannot absorb this increase, so have to increase subscriptions and renewals to \$44 from 1 April. Overseas sub rates are on page 2. Regular readers please note: we get a better return from subs than from bookshop sales.

BE A BROADSHEET SPY

Please, readers, let us know what shops in your area are stocking *Broadsheet*

We are also seeking suggestions for new retail outlets all over New Zealand, particularly places where feminist women shop - health food stores, women's co-op shops and so on. They can make a profit selling the magazine and we can reach more women. If you know of any such places, please send us the information and we will contact them.

OUTDOOR WOMEN

A group of active outdoor women have banded together to ensure that women's place is seen as being in the great outdoors just as much as the great indoors. Sue Weston talked with three of the founders of *Women Outdoors New Zealand*.

Known as WONZ, the group acts as a network to put outdoor women in touch with each other, to introduce new women into recreation, and to lobby sporting and funding groups. The WONZ network already includes keen kayakers, rafters, trampers, skiers, climbers and cavers from throughout the country.

Marg Cosgriff trains physical education teachers in Wellington and is herself a keen kayaker and skier. She is one of a number of women working in the outdoors as teachers, instructors, community recreation officers, park rangers and commercial operators. Marg says, "WONZ was born of a need to support women who were actually working in the largely male environment of outdoor centres. A number of us were also really interested in increasing the numbers of women in the field socially – making outdoor recreation more accessible and acknowledging that some women prefer to learn from women."

Marg and other outdoor women describe what happens when women go outdoors in mixed groups: "Very often roles are still fixed in terms of sex. It's interesting to see who leads and makes decisions – and who does the cooking!" While some women have achieved success in the outdoors and never felt disadvantaged by their sex, Marg believes others may benefit from leadership courses which WONZ is thinking of running.

Jan Nisbett has been a community recreation officer for ten years and before that was a physical education teacher in schools. She has also worked in Outward Bound in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. Jan now runs outdoor programmes for the Kapiti Borough Council near Wellington and also operates Women's Outdoor Adventures with Sarah Leberman. "Kapiti is a great area" she says, a real asset



"So many women are not brought up to assume their role is a physically active and adventurous one."

right there on the doorstep of Wellington and the Wairarapa.

Both Jan and Marg think that popular images of what girls and women "ought" to do can limit outdoor recreation. "The whole conditioning thing is enormous," says Marg. "So many women are not brought up to

assume their role is a physically active and adventurous one." Jan echoes this view. Her experience in working with girls shows that role models are very important to the 12 and 13 year age group. "It's a turning point for a lot of girls – there are often negative images of getting dirty."

Probably the stage at which women are most active in the outdoors is as single women with a disposable income and time. Some women will continue their activities over a whole life-time, but for many becoming a mother and being part of a single-income household signals a retreat indoors. "A lack of finance and childcare are really relevant for many women" says Marg. "Women also often put themselves last in line for time out."

When scarce recreation dollars are directed to partners and children, lack of outdoor activity can become a long-term habit which older women find hard to break. While Jan's Kapiti Borough Council recreation programmes cater for all ages and both sexes, she sees special potential for involving women in their 50s and 60s. Of older women she says, "I find many like to do things with women first to get their confidence, especially if they are coming to activities later. Sometimes older women's self-esteem about sport and outdoor activities has been rundown over the years by children saying, 'Oh Mum, you can't do that!'" She has found that canoeing lessons and trips in the sheltered waters of the Otaki estuary have given a gentler introduction to a past-time than is possible in groups dominated by super-fit younger and mixed age groups.

Jan is planning a four-day women's trip on the Wanganui for later this year. Making a video of the trip to gain wider publicity for the idea is also high on her list. She says, "The video is a way of saying that there is a whole core of people in my community who are capable of doing it – seeing is believing!"

Another woman working in the outdoors is Martha Bell, a Canadian now resident who has five years' experience as an outdoor instructor in the United States and Canada. She has recently completed a two-year contract as an instructor at the Outward Bound school at Anikawa in the Marlborough Sounds.

Martha was one of only two women on the staff at Outward Bound. She says that the school has changed from "being a place where you send boys to make them into men, into a co-educational personal development centre for 18-17 year olds." Last year Martha took a nine day women-only course (these have now reverted to co-ed courses) which included activities such as sailing, a 12 kilometre run through bush, rock climbing, and a group development exercise which involved getting over a five metre wall. She says the wall climbing relied more on group effort than strength, and she comments that "women often look back for each other better".

As a person whose fitness is her job, she comments on "the importance of women feeling physically capable - men expect to feel physically capable. Women discover muscles they didn't know they had." Martha will soon be joining Whenua Iti, a small outdoor pursuits centre near Motueka set up and run by Hazel Nash.

WONZ members' activities aren't just confined to the great outdoors. They keep in close touch with other organisations such as the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors' Association, the Department of Conservation, the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council and the Hillary Commission for Recreation and Sport.

The Hillary Commission - a government funded body set up in early 1987 - is also working in the area. A task force on women in sport and physical recreation spent much of 1988 seeking public comment and producing a report with recommendations that will be followed up by a new staff member at the commission.

Major issues which limit women's access to physical recreation and sport were identified in the report and include economic barriers such as lower incomes, unemployment, and inadequate child care as well as the pressure of family commitments. Inadequate media coverage, insufficient encouragement, low representation in decision-making structures and administration, lack of sponsorship, poor facilities and a lack of research on women's recreation were also identified as problems.

Task force member and commission programme leader, Lisa Hayes, says, "The response from women and sports organisations to the report has generally been quite positive, but it will be interesting to see the implementation in practice." She says that the new staff member working on women's recreation and sport will encourage sporting bodies already assisted by the commission to look at pushing women's involvement and to target funding towards women. Lisa believes that the added financial incentive to promote women's participation may be just what's needed - she says that "basically the situation hasn't changed" in the eight years since the 1981

EPO

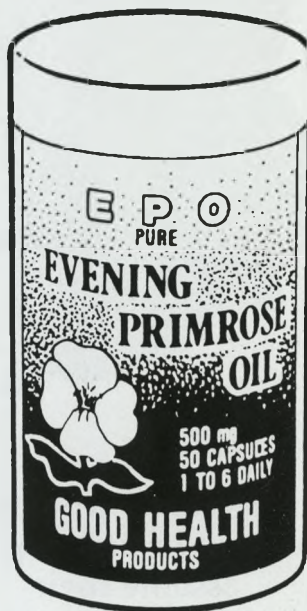
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Women in Recreation Conference which identified many of the problems once again highlighted by the task force.

Of the near future she says, "it will be interesting to compare the involvement of women as competitors, managers and administrators in the 1990 Auckland Commonwealth Games to their role in the 1974 Christchurch Commonwealth Games." Looking at the wider picture of recreation, sport and health, Lisa believes there are "spill-over benefits in assisting women in recreation", not just in terms of enjoyment but in preventative health through physical activity. The commission is also liaising with organisations such as the Maori Women's Welfare League in the preventative health area.

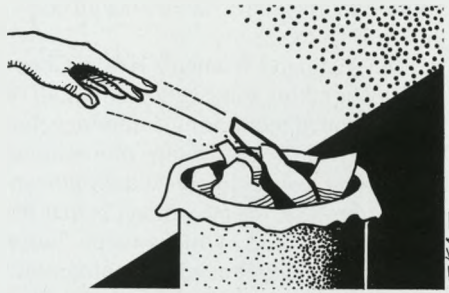
Both the Hilary Commission and WONZ's work are especially relevant in the light of a recent Dunedin survey which revealed some disturbing information about physical activity. Nearly a third of those surveyed did not take any regular physical activity, while eight percent of females were hypertensive and 19 percent smoked every day.

The message is timely. The great outdoors isn't just an enjoyable place, it might improve your health too!

Further information about WONZ is available from Marg Cosgriff, 15 Hatha-way Ave Karori, Wellington.

DON'T USE IT AGAIN, DOCTOR.

Lynda Williams writes about the risks for women involved in the re-use of plastic, "throw-away" specula.



At the end of 1988 women's health groups in Auckland became aware of the fact that some GPs and some clinics were re-using plastic disposable vaginal specula, and that this practice could be responsible for the spread of viral infections such as the human papilloma virus (HPV) which has been associated with the development of cancer of the cervix. The risk of spreading potentially serious infections in this way was also acknowledged at the cervical screening workshop run by the Department of Health in December 1988.

However, it was not until February this year that formal evidence of this practice and the attendant risks was obtained by the Auckland Women's Health Council. It appears that debate on this issue was sparked by a letter to the *Lancet* by Dr Charlotte Paul and Dr David Skegg from the Department of Preventative and Social Medicine at the University of Otago. The letter appeared in the *Lancet* at the beginning of 1986 and stated, in part:

Recently we heard that one large clinic was re-using plastic specula after cleaning in tap water and immersion in "Savlon". This might not kill papillomaviruses. General practitioners tell us that their practices for disinfecting specula vary widely, and some doctors were not fully aware of the risk of transmitting viral infections in this way. It would be tragic if our efforts to increase screening led to the infection of some women with a virus that could cause cervical cancer or another disease.

A number of responses to this warning followed, culminating in the report of a very small study undertaken by doctors in several London hospitals. This investigation revealed that in 29 specula from different women used during colposcopic examinations, "then rinsed briefly in an aqueous solution of chlorhexidine to remove excess mucous and washed thoroughly in phosphate buffered saline to remove adherent cells", HPV19 DNA sequences were detected in at least four, possibly seven, cases. These findings were confirmed by examining cells from another 16 specula. The report ended with the recommendations that all instruments should be autoclaved (sterilised) between patients, and that plastic re-usable specula should not be used "because the duration and type of disinfection may vary and the efficacy of disinfection is not known".

The Auckland Women's Health Council then received a report from one of its members stating that her West Auckland GP was re-using disposable specula and had used one when she arrived in his surgery for a smear.

At a time when the increase in cervical cancer in young women is said to be a cause of considerable concern to the medical profession, it is disturbing to find that obeying doctor's orders and presenting for a regular smear may increase your chances of developing carcinoma in situ and/or cervical cancer, because your doctor is too mean to throw away the disposable speculum after only one use.

The medical profession has been quick to use the popular press to point out that having sex at an early age and having multiple sexual partners increases a woman's chance of developing cervical cancer, but much less willing to publicly warn of the dangers of their doctors re-using plastic specula. Three years after a



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letter to the *Lancet* women finally hear of the problem through hearsay and rumours of reports that prove difficult to track down or gain access to.

One of the responses to the letter by Drs Paul and Skegg also drew attention to the fact that it may also be possible to transmit HPV during the fitting of contraceptive diaphragms to individual women, as diaphragms cannot be boiled without causing the rubber to perish.

It is obvious that informed choices about our health care can be made only if we are in possession of all the facts. Options for reducing the risk of developing cervical cancer must now include the chance to purchase one's own speculum at the clinic or doctor's surgery when having a smear or any other examination that requires the use of one.

TITTER'S TASK FORCE

Two weeks after his appointment as commissioner of the Auckland Area Health Board, Harold Titter has disbanded the cervical cancer monitoring committee and set up a new task force of "professionals". Lisa Sabbage has a look at what this might mean.

While the monitoring committee had a sizeable number of feminist women representing consumer groups like the Auckland Women's Health Council, the new task force has no lay or consumer input. It is made up entirely of medical professionals and board employees. Harold Titter put it like this: "We have got to be careful because we are dealing in the interests of the patients, and the first step is for the professionals to implement the report's recommendations."

The task force would liaise with the Health Department to "look at a process of evaluating the implementation of the recommendations of the report," he said.

Sounds like a lot of bureaucratic double speak, doesn't it? Alarm bells are ringing throughout the feminist community. This wasn't what Judge Silvia Cartwright recommended, she called for fast, swift effective action in order to hasten the recall of the 130 women who had not been adequately treated at National Women's Hospital.

Among women who worked on the monitoring committee there is a real fear that the recommendations made by Judge Cartwright are being ignored. Lynda Williams doesn't feel at all confident in the task force.

"The power has been placed back into the hands of the very people who are resistant to change. I don't think the medical professionals are going to be able to change the resistance still evident at National

Women's Hospital. I think its outrageous. Community consultation is essential otherwise women are not going to be safe."

There are no representatives of Maori or Pacific Island women's groups on the task force and the only two advisers to the task force are the chairperson of the old monitoring committee, Ruth Norman, and former chairperson of the area health board, Judith Bassett.

The Auckland Women's Health Council may be taking some action on behalf of the disbanded monitoring committee, but it is always difficult to budge professional bodies that have entrenched their power.

The big fear for all women is that the new task force will sweep Judge Cartwright's recommendations along with women consumers, under Mr Titter's carpet.

A GLAD LAVA FLOW

We may soon be recycling our faithful protest placards for what is promising to be the second round of the 1985 Homosexual Law Reform Bill.

Lisa Sabbage writes.

You may or may not remember that one of the most hard fought points in Fran Wilde's Homosexual Law Reform Bill was the Human Rights clause that sought to outlaw discrimination against lesbians

and gay men. That clause was lost. Now Labour MP Richard Northey is considering introducing a bill which will go some way toward redressing that loss.

Northey's bill is based on recommendations made late last year by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to extend the Human Rights Commission Act. At present the Act only outlaws discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, religious or ethical beliefs, and race. The Act is used against discrimination in areas of employment, accommodation, access to public facilities and provision of goods and services. The HRC recommended that the Act should also cover physical or mental disability, age, employment status, pregnancy, trade union or political views, parental status, HIV, transvestism or transexuality, and sexual orientation.

Lesbians in Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) have formed a group called LAVA (Lesbian Action for Visibility in Aotearoa) to support the proposed Human Rights Amendment Bill.

They've been busy.

So far LAVA has written to Human Rights Commissioner Rae Julian to request that the wording "sexual orientation" be dropped and replaced with "Lesbian and Gay". They fear that the term "sexual orientation" is broad enough to leave the way open to heterosexual people



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to use it against lesbians and gays, in much the same way as the Race Relations Act has been used by some Pakeha against Maori.

In March, LAVA organised a "Speak Out" for International Working Women's day where lesbians spoke about discrimination practised against them in their own lives. At the Lesbian and Gay Fair later that month, LAVA put together a stall where they sold jumble and very visible, colourful LAVA tee shirts. They also sent representatives to the Lesbian and Gay conference in Auckland at Easter.

It's touch and go whether the part of the proposed bill which affects lesbians and gay men will be included, and doubtful that the legislation will be introduced before the next election. LAVA is putting its energy behind mobilising lesbians to support the bill, to be visible, write to MPs, organise letter writing campaigns, and speak out about discrimination.

One of the groups LAVA have liaised with is Gays and Lesbians Against Discrimination (GLAD). One of the approaches GLAD is taking is to lobby unions to support the proposed changes to the Human Rights Act and to push for non-discrimination clauses in union awards.

In 1985 the union movement was generally supportive of the Homosexual Law Reform Bill, GLAD is hoping for the same support this time round. On-side unions include the Clerical Workers Union, Actors Equity, Northern Journalists, Hotel and Hospital Workers, and the Combined Distribution Workers Union. Less liberal in their attitudes are the Printers Union, Electricians, Carpenters, and of course Engineers. GLAD is encouraging all union members to get behind their unions to get these motions passed.

Here are some groups around the country that can be contacted: GLAD, PO Box 3132, Auckland; Lesbian Links, 9 Opoia Rd, Hamilton; LAVA, PO Box 71 Paekakariki; GLAD, PO Box 11695 Wellington; AARC, PO Box 25165 Christchurch; GLAD, PO Box 1382 Dunedin.

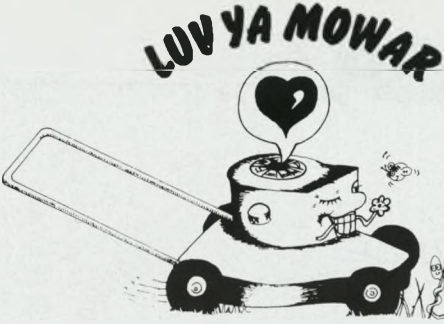
Broadsheet is interested in hearing what other people are doing in support of the proposed bill. Write to us with your ideas and actions.

CELEBRATIONS, WHAT CELEBRATIONS?

What do you get when you cross the anniversary of an unhonoured treaty with the Commonwealth Games?

Lisa Sabbage talks to a group of Pakeha women on the issues surrounding 1990.


Jane Adams, Fe Day, Anne Taylor, and Miriam Kauders, initially began meeting two years ago to discuss a book called





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"The Wretched of the Earth" by Franz Fanon, recommended to them by Pilar Alba. They became inspired by ideas in the book and began to develop and relate Fanon's ideas to the situation in Aotearoa.

Franz Fanon is a black Martiniquan who was very involved in the Algerian revolution. He is also a psychiatrist who worked with both the colonisers of Algeria (the French), and the colonised as the victims of oppression.

In their second year the women changed their focus toward more practical work, embarking on workshops and producing pamphlets. Last year they ran a workshop for lesbians. Called "Who's Celebrating 1990?" the sessions looked at the Treaty of Waitangi, colonisation, 1990 and The Commonwealth Games, and violence. The major aim of the workshop was to leave the participants in a position to come to specific decisions as to what they will be doing.

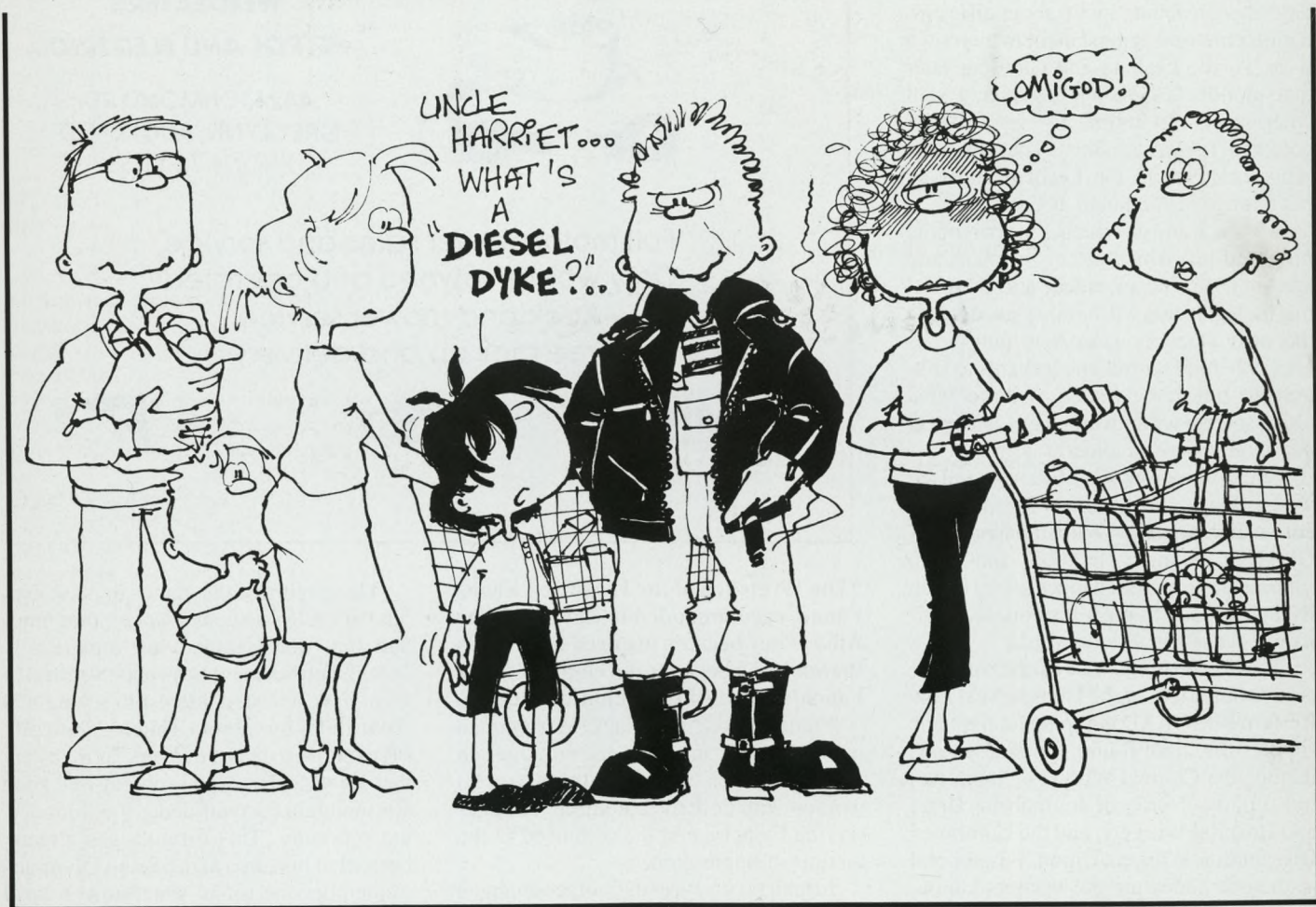
"The basis of our approach is that we recognise that colonisation is still happening and that the process is still violent. We've come to feel more and more strongly that unless you actually face the way that power is held in few hands in this society and how violently that power is defended, you're not able to make effective plans of resistance.

"For non-Maori people, 1990 is basically a celebration of the violence of colonisation. The Commonwealth Games are linked to this celebration and to colonisation. Many people see the games as apolitical, but you only have to look at the words - common wealth - to see that it actually epitomises what we're talking about. The British Empire, became the Common Wealth."

The staging of the games in New Zealand in 1990 is no coincidence - the games and the "celebrations" are inextricably linked. Big business boys and the government have a vested interest in seeing that 1990 glides by without a hitch - a smooth, PR exercise to reassure overseas investors that New Zealand is a problem-free zone and maintain our confidence in a floundering economy. This formula has already been tried in Korea at the Seoul Olympics (remember the urban shantytowns local officials did not want the world to see), and in Australia during the Bicentennial celebrations last year, when the government conveniently decided Australia was a multicultural society after all, but still forgot about the Aboriginal peoples. In 1990, the world's eyes will be on New Zealand and the last thing David Lange, Jim Bolger, Ron Brierley and Hugh Fletcher want are nasty protesters causing a stink.

Jane, Fe, Miriam, and Anne believe it is important for people to make these connections. "When you look at the government's current economic policy which is based on a strong movement away from any social support and 'simplifying' economic policy into 'supply and demand' and therefore encouraging user pays, individual responsibility for her/his survival, and the every one is equal theory, it's patently obvious that it contradicts its apparent commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi."

1990 is going to be a high profile year, and the women are encouraging as many people as possible to get involved. Their next workshop will be held on Saturday 6 May, 10am-5pm at Waima Hall. Lunch will be provided and a creche is available. For more information phone 789-212.

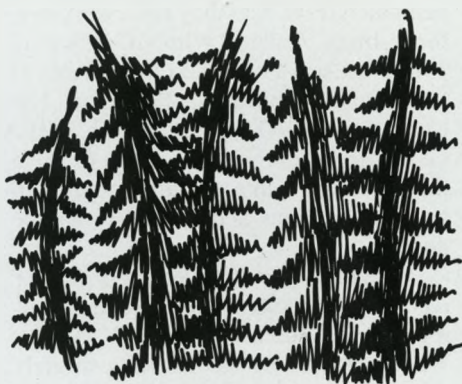


INAPPROPRIATE AID

On a recent visit to the Philippines Maire Leadbetter visited the site of a New Zealand-assisted forestry project. She writes of the problems the project is creating for local people.

Despite all the slide presentations and the graphic descriptions of my fellow activists who had visited the Philippines before me, I really was not prepared for the reality of urban poverty in the Philippines.

So initially it seemed that the time we were to spend touring the site of the proposed New Zealand/Philippines Forestry Aid Project in Bukidnon, Northern Mindanao would be something of a respite. The area, which totals 14,000 hectares, is after all in beautiful countryside, where the grass-clad hills were somehow reminiscent of the Christchurch port hills, erosion and all. In our group were included Janine McGruddy of Peace Movement Aotearoa, Journalist David Robie and concerned



Economically the Philippines government continues to try to reduce its massive foreign debt, but does little to raise the living standards of ordinary people

local people including representatives of the indigenous tribal Lumad people. The truth about the forestry project and its probable impact on the local people ensured that this "exposure" was also disturbing.

The forestry project was devised after Prime Minister Lange visited the Philippines in May 1986 and was the first head of state to greet the new democracy. Clearly the offer of aid was one of good-will to the Philippines people, and forestry is an area of New Zealand expertise which should be shared with other countries. So what is wrong with the project?

This is a joint aid project whereby New Zealand supplies technical aid and 56 percent of the capital cost (estimated at NZ\$5.7 million) and the Philippines government meets the rest of the cost, probably through a loan from the Asia Development Bank, so it makes sense to look first at the political and economic situation. Although barely mentioned by New Zealand government consultants, it can be no secret that the Philippines government is at war with an increasing number of its own people and that 60 percent of the Philippines armed forces are deployed on Mindanao. It has been identified by the United States as an area for testing the strategy of "low density conflict".

Economically the Philippines government continues to try to reduce its massive foreign

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debt, but does little to raise the living standards of ordinary people. In Mindanao more than 70 percent live below the official poverty line, and more than half the pre-school children are malnourished.

No doubt our local hosts were reflecting on past experience when they shared with us the fear that the forestry project could be a means of financial aid only in the meeting of Philippines foreign debt obligations, and even the fear that forestry roads might be used to aid counter-insurgency operations.

Sadly this is an area that needs forestry development, and the New Zealand concept of tree-farming, although not well understood, has appeal. The area allocated for initial development, Malaybalay Forest, already has scattered pines and evidence of people-inflicted damage. But the "RPNZ" project, as it has become known locally, has fatal flaws. What follows is an account of our experience in the area, which I have already detailed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We first met with Kahupungan sa Lumad-nong Kalingawasan (KLK), the group which since 1983 has represented the interests of the Lumad people in Northern Mindanao. Representatives of KLK, including Yul Caringas, explained to us that there are three Lumad tribes in the Bukidnon area (there are 18 in total in Mindanao): Manabo, Higaonon and Bukidnon. Lumad people were formerly nomadic tillers of the land. They have now lost access to the more fertile lowland areas and live largely in mountainous areas. Their traditions centre on communal decision-making and resolution of conflicts, sharing of resources, and deep respect for the land and all it produces.

We were told of a fundamental Lumad precept, "Bungkatol na Baluwan", a concept which defies adequate translation but which is sometimes described as a "jar of virtues". As Pakeha New Zealanders we have become more

aware of our shameful colonial history, and we know that our forebears, led by a desire for land and profit, remained ignorant of the deep spirituality of the Maori people and their intimate connection with and deep dependence on the natural world. We should not be surprised to learn that in the Philippines colonial exploitation, the dominance of elite landlords and multinational companies and militarism has caused not only dislocation but poverty and often despair for the Lumad people. Many are "marginalised", cut off from the nourishment of their tradition and community social supports. KLK works for Lumad rights and for a revaluating and renewal of Lumad tradition and Bungaktol na Bulawan.

I was very shocked when the RPNZ forestry project was described to me as against the Bungaktol na Bulawan and that the cultural marginalisation of the people had been given as a reason why the project should be approved. But these statements were confirmed when our talks with KLK were followed with a session with other Lumad leaders including two barrio Captains, a tour of the area, and impromptu talks with several householders. Of course we met some people who supported the project, but our overwhelming impression was that the people directly affected either know very little about the project or are opposed to it. For many, initial acceptance of the project has changed to opposition as more has been learnt.

The families we visited lived in little raised wooden and thatched houses, often with colourful and carefully tended flowers. Their sparse livelihood is drawn from subsistence farming, sometimes supplemented by other activities such as digging for chromite. Some of the points that were emphasised to us are also contained in a petition drawn up by several datus (Lumad chiefs). The following is a summary:

1. That the consultation process was inade-

quate and rushed. There was an information drive conducted by the composite team of the Bukidnon Provincial Government, and the Bukidnon United Non-governmental Agencies (BUNGA) did a survey census of individual houses. Not all communities were visited and the survey workers acted as "sound boxes" for the project planners and made no attempt to present the negative side. The survey lasted for only two months, July and August 1988, and therefore no time was allowed for the process of community discussion and reflection.

2. What guarantee is there that traditional land claims will not be adversely affected? This has been the prior experience of the Lumads - once their land becomes "profitable" the government or other interests claim it.

3. The promises of jobs and social services will do nothing to compensate future generations for loss of land rights and cultural aspirations. In any case it is anticipated that the jobs will be only on a contract basis and labourers will have no tenure or security. The prospect of jobs may attract many newcomers to a small community and lead to further social disruption.

4. The area has been described as "largely uninhabited" yet there are 2940 households in the area and 14,141 people. In the Bukidnon province the armed forces have used the strategy of hamletting in order to maintain tight control over the civilian population. Will the forestry project create yet more evacuees?

5. All these concerns are accentuated by the fact that the Lumad people have no one in the project planning that really represents their interests. There was no tribal representative on BUNGA and the governor of the province will choose the tribal representative to be on the management committee of the project.

The consultation process showed a disregard for the indigenous population which would have caused a scandal if a similar state of affairs occurred here in New Zealand.

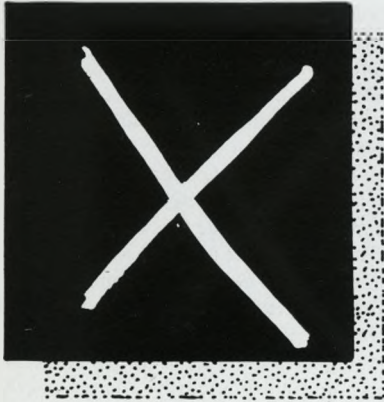
At the conclusion of the Asia Pacific Peoples Conference on Peace and Development a resolution was passed which condemned the forestry project as being undertaken against the wishes of the majority of the Lumad people. Progressive groups in the Philippines have specifically requested us not only to mount a "human rights" watch over the Philippines but also to monitor intervention. Not only military aid but also economic intervention must get monitored, as the United States and its partners work with the Philippines government to repress opposition.

New Zealand's past aid to the Philippines has included funding two geothermal power stations which were extensively criticised for providing power to multi-nationals rather than for the people. Time is short, since the agreements on the forestry project are to be signed very soon, but we have a major responsibility to lobby and educate to ensure that this project is totally re-evaluated and our earlier mistakes are not repeated.

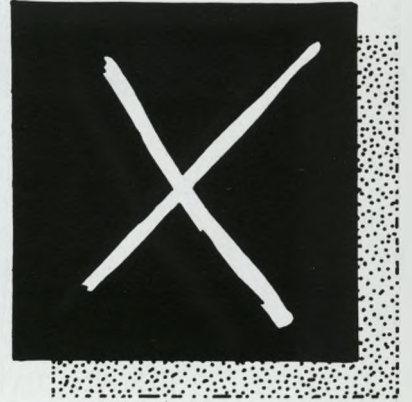
Write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Mr R Marshall, Parliament Buildings, Wellington and publicise this issue through your church, trade union and other networks. Further information is available from Maire Leadbeater, Philippines Solidarity Network, P O Box 68523, Newton, Auckland.

This article is reprinted from *Peacelink*, Issue 69, March 1989, P O Box 837, Hamilton.

VOTES THAT COUNT



Jenny Rankine writes about an alternative to first-past-the-post voting.



I imagine you're in that rickety plywood booth, ready to mark crosses next to politicians' names. It's time for the three yearly ritual of democracy, a right our foremothers fought hard for.

Voting promises much, but delivers so little. Most voters feel powerless - your cross doesn't count if you're in a safe seat, or you favour a minority party. Or it's an impossible choice between, say, a progressive woman and an anti-abortion Maori man. Often the number of seats a party wins is way out of proportion to the votes it received.

This time, though, imagine you're able to vote twice - once for an electorate member of parliament and once for a party. Even if your party gets only 4% of the vote, it gets a few MPs and a voice in parliament.

How would you vote?

This is the question which teased at the politicians on the Electoral Law Committee for much of last year. Richard Northey, Jim Anderton, Don McKinnon and Doug Graham deal in the realities of faction fights and power trade-offs.

They were faced with recommendations from a Royal Commission on Electoral Law Reform, which in their terms were radical. It suggested scrapping our first past the post system and our 97 electorate MPs. They were to be replaced with 60 MPs from newly defined, larger electorates and 60 from party lists, which would make each party's seats equivalent to its share of the total vote. The commission decided Maori parties wouldn't have to have at least 4% of the vote to get candidates elected, but all other parties would.

Imagine you're able to vote twice - once for an electorate member of parliament and once for a party

This mixed member proportional system is modelled on the West German one. Most European countries use a version of proportional representation.

The practical politicians on the parliamentary committee didn't like the idea of their jobs and their parties' power bases being scrapped. So they watered the commission's stew of suggestions down to a thin soup. They decided the 97 electorate MPs had to stay, with the addition of up to 25 extra MPs on a half-pie supplementary list system. Parties could choose whether to top up their seats from a separate list or from their candidates who got pipped for electorate seats.

So instead of the commission's referendum on whether to introduce mixed

When the settler government was established under a constitutional arrangement imported from England, Maori people had no political voice

member proportional representation (MMP) and a four year governing term, the committee's referendum was to be on whether to introduce more than 20 supplementary members and a four year term.

But proportional representation didn't get through caucus. Despite Lange's promise in the 1987 election campaign, the work of the commission and committee will be chucked into that vast government dead file for well meant proposals which couldn't get past entrenched power bases. The referendum will still be held but we only get to vote on parliament's term. As Geoffrey Palmer says: "MPs take an interest in the electoral system far deeper and more rigorously than many other subjects."

The decision to scrap proportional representation came under fire from the Combined Trade Unions, the opposition and the Democrats. Minority parties and powerless groups have criticised the current voting system for years. It means any new group has to get at least 30% of the vote to get enough members of parliament to count, an impossible task. It means a major party can become the government with less than 40% of the vote. It means people voting in marginal seats have more impact than people in safe seats. It has resulted in poor representation for Maori people.

The government's refusal to allow any electoral change won't remove these problems or the people lobbying for a different system. The Electoral Reform Coalition (ERC), which started during the commission's time, advocates MMP and claims it would enable Maori people to get at least 14 seats and some form of tribal represen-

tation. The Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) supports MMP because it encourages the formation of coalitions rather than a sharp adversarial structure. WEL believes it would enable women to participate more, as long as parties had to make their lists representative.

MPs in the two major parties have predictably opposed MMP. Electoral Law Committee member Jim Anderton predicted MMP would split National into a business and a country party, and Labour into a trade union and a social democrat party. He thought the Democrats would be squeezed out and a small Community Party could have some impact.

He also predicted MMP would mean politicians would choose the style and policies of the government when they scabbled for coalitions after elections. Small centrist parties, like the Free Democrats in West Germany, which gets only up to 8% of the vote, could determine who becomes the government.

Bruce Gregory, Labour MP for Northern Maori and chairperson of the party's Maori policy and advisory council, thought under MMP a Maori party would have almost no chance of success. Maori people elected might belong to parties most Maori didn't vote for, or could be acceptable to their party hierarchy and non-Maori voters, but not Maori ones.

Maori submissions to the commission concentrated on keeping what they had in the current system rather than the possible gains MMP could make for them. Not surprisingly - whenever the issue of their representation is raised, some Pakeha always advocate the abolition of the Maori seats.

But criticisms of the two systems on the grounds of the Treaty of Waitangi come at the issue from a different universe, as usual. The Raukawa district kaumatua (elders) proposed a Maori lower house of about 15 members elected according to tikanga Maori (Maori processes) and another lower house of 85 members elected according to tikanga non-Maori. Above that would be a senate of 10 Maori and 10 non-Maori to ensure legislation is consistent with the treaty. Now that's radical.

This suggestion touches on cornerstones of Pakeha culture. Maori people have found democracy, for many Pakeha, means treating everyone the same. Their requests for equal weight for two different ways of doing things fall on stony ground. Pakeha were happy to accept a partnership when vastly outnumbered and largely supported by Maori in 1840, but in 1989 there is enormous resistance even to increasing the number of Maori seats, let alone changing our constitutional structure to reflect the treaty partnership.

The commission ignored the proposal, although it was endorsed by the New Zealand Maori Council (NZMC), because the idea

Often the number of seats a party wins is way out of proportion to the votes it received

fell outside the things it was told to consider. Instead, it proposed consultation with a wide range of Maori groups about the constitutional position of Maori under the treaty. But it considered MMP would produce such an improvement in Maori representation that its introduction didn't need to wait for consultation.

In the NZMC's submission, Ranginui Walker detailed a list of consistent discriminatory treatment to Maori people under Pakeha voting systems. It's important we know this history if we get to vote on this referendum. When the settler government was established under a constitutional arrangement imported from England, Maori people had no political voice.

When the vote was introduced only men of property could vote, so women, and Maori who held land under communal title, were disenfranchised. After the land wars the four Maori seats were created in 1867, in a parliament with over 70 members. As one third of the population they should have been entitled to 20.

The Maori seats can be abolished at will by parliament. A new seat is not created every time the Maori population jumps by 30,000, as general electorates

are. Other discriminatory anomalies include:

- In general electorates the total population is counted, whereas in Maori electorates only those over 18 count.

- If a boundary change happens in a general electorate, all people on the Maori roll have to re-enrol, otherwise they are automatically transferred to the general roll.

- Maori electorates got the secret ballot in 1937 although general electorates had used it since 1870.

- Compulsory registration for voting rolls was not introduced until 1956 whereas general electorates had it from 1927.

Several Pakeha anti-racism groups feel any consideration of the kind of voting system we use must wait until we've resolved Maori people's constitutional role. The push for a new constitutional partnership is building. It appeared in a 1988 paper by the NZMC, Maori Women's Welfare League and other groups responding to the government's proposed changes for the Department of Maori Affairs. It proposed a Maori body with the power to pass laws which was equal to parliament, and a Ministry of Maori Policy working at the same level as bicultural government departments.

It looks like the scenario at the beginning of this article will never happen in Aotearoa. Despite the ERC's earnest efforts, MMP will stay in West Germany. But imagine you are in the plywood booth again. You face a referendum paper about the creation of two houses of parliament, one selected by Maori, one by Pakeha with an evenly divided upper house.

How would you vote? ■

LEGAL SERVICES

Deirdre Milne

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FOR BETTER, FOR WORSE — AND — FOR LUNCH

The Economics of growing old

Many women have nightmares about how they're going to cope financially once they're too old to work or their partner dies. Until recently they have been able to depend on the government-run National Superannuation scheme, funded by taxes that we all pay, which guarantees that everyone receives a pension after the age of sixty.

However a sense of panic in the government about the increasing proportion of old people in the population, has led it to conclude that it can't afford to support such a scheme indefinitely. As yet the government has offered no concrete proposal for an alternative scheme and many people are feeling more and more insecure about what their future holds.

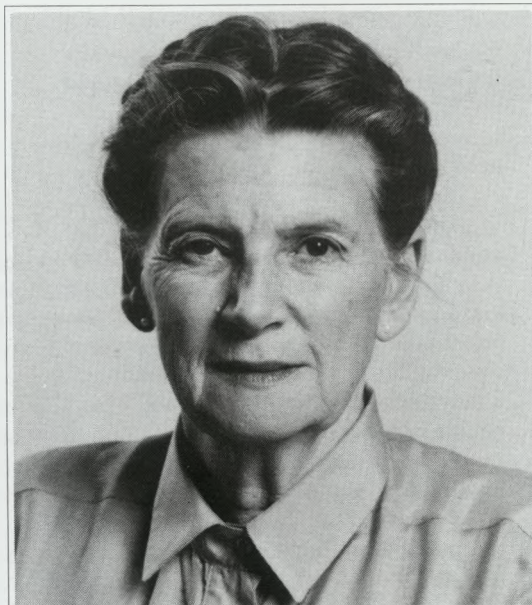
But the hedging and hesitancy of the government looks set to change.

In March, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MWA) launched a booklet called *Income Security for Older Women* and accompanied it with a seminar on Women and Superannuation, (held, one would think, most inappropriately at the Terrace Regency Hotel). This booklet was commissioned by the MWA, and appears to be a partner to the Ministry of Social Welfare discussion document *Income Security for the Elderly*. Both imply that the government is leaning toward replacing super with some sort of contributory system.

What does that mean, you may ask yourself? Well, the Minister of Social Welfare, Michael Cullen, puts it like this: "The notion that those receiving incomes should be required to contribute a percentage of their income into a fund out of which some proportion of their retirement income will be financed." In other words, you pay a separate amount to the government in order to provide for yourself in your old age.

Such a scheme entails specific problems for women.

Firstly, as we all know, women earn



MARION BRUCE

WOMEN LIVE LONGER THAN MEN. IT MIGHT BE DIVINE JUSTICE, BUT IT ALSO POSES SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC SURVIVAL FOR WOMEN AS THEY AGE. LISA SABBAGE LOOKS FOR SOLUTIONS IN A MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS DISCUSSION PAPER CALLED INCOME SECURITY FOR OLDER WOMEN.

"Too often our words for both the old, and old women especially, are derogatory."

much less in the workforce than men despite the passing of equal pay legislation over a decade ago. (The Ministry of Women's Affairs and unions are currently fighting the battle for pay equity and equal employment, much to the chagrin of the

Employers Federation and the Treasury). Women also encounter discrimination which prevents promotion to higher paid jobs.

Secondly, responsibilities like child-care, and looking after elderly relatives, often make it more difficult for women to sustain a career and a regular savings plan. Some women don't have a choice about what kind of work they can get, and take on low paid or part-time work which will fit around their children's needs. Others are full-time unpaid workers all their lives. How do these women fit into a contributory scheme when their work is not recognised?

At the Women and Superannuation seminar, Marion Bruce, a member of the Royal Commission on Social Policy, shared her more personal view of growing old with the current National Superannuation scheme and changes she would like to see.

I was born in 1925, so I am just beginning my career as an old person. For me the "rites of passage" have been marked by life-cycle events common to many women of my age – widowhood, becoming a grandparent, and the death of my own parents. I come from a family where both my grandmothers, my mother and my mother-in-law, and most of my aunts outlived their partners. I have a number of role models of women managing alone to call on as I develop my career as an elderly woman. My approach to my own old age is to see it in developmental terms – a stage of life – like infancy, childhood and adolescence. That is why I have already referred to the "rites of passage".

Income security for the aged and National Superannuation has probably never been a more contentious issue. As the population ages, an increasing number of over 60 year olds need to be provided for. The rapid succession of changes to superannuation schemes has led to the elderly

feeling increasingly insecure about their lives and their future and in particular their ability to look after themselves. Many wrote to the Royal Commission on Social Policy (RCSP). Eighteen percent of the 6,000 submissions mention superannuation. Many are based on personal experience, and some provide quite detailed evidence of the difficulties experienced living on National Superannuation at present. There is widespread anxiety about its continued availability.

Besides drawing on over 6,000 submissions the RCSP undertook the largest survey of the attitudes and values of New Zealanders that has ever been commissioned. Research was also commissioned, and it will be no surprise to this audience to hear the finding that although women had contributed a great deal to New Zealand life, there was no real equality between them and men in politics and decision making, business and commerce, paid and unpaid work, family life, or community activities.

Although I, a Pakeha, am speaking in general, evidence to the Commission showed that a more just society could not be achieved until there were significant improvements in the social and economic wellbeing of the Maori people.

Sixty-six percent of the total submissions to the Royal Commission were from women. Of all topics in these submissions, income related issues were mentioned most frequently. Benefits received the greatest attention (including DPB, family benefit, women alone, or "carer's" benefit). Financial independence was the concern of many women. Throughout the special "freephone" exercise the need for a more equitable distribution of wealth arose. Many suggestions were made which would improve the situation. The National Council of Women (NCW) surveyed its members, all supported full super at 65 years and considered it should not be paid to those in full employment.

Women consistently asked in their submissions for more power and choice in their lives, recognition for unpaid work, social structures which would allow better sharing of paid and unpaid work, acknowledgment of the high cost of caring to the carers, and financial independence.

Wide gaps between the wellbeing of men and women must be acknowledged. Some gaps are widening especially for those women who are denied full participation in society through race, lack of paid employment, disability, age, and caring responsibility for dependents. To this list we ought to add a recent disadvantage,

that of geographical locality.

Twenty-four percent of submissions came from those 61 years and older.

Peggy Koopman Boyden, writing in the "April Report" (which is what the RCSP report became known as), reminds us that the elderly have the same human needs, social attitudes and values as all other age groups. In addition they have two special characteristics by nature of being aged which differentiate them from other groups.

These she names Maturity and Diminished Reserve.

"Maturity includes the wisdom, experience and survival skills that they have

deeper understanding of cultural values. Older Maori people particularly have this characteristic which is recognised in their role as kaumatua and kuia.

Diminishing Reserve in older people is the increasing inability to cope with change, both externally and internally... It can be seen in diminishing physical capacity (slower walk, shaky hand) or the declining capacity to cope with social change (less tolerance for changing societal attitudes). Older people can also have a financially diminished reserve, or a diminished reserve with respect to political influence."

Even allowing for the tremendous diversity amongst older people it is easy to appreciate how sudden changes of lifestyle, living arrangements or income, the usual consequences of the loss of a life partner present a special stress to the elderly. The Royal Commission heard many submissions from elderly survivors who had planned for their declining years carefully and whose life savings were eaten up by inflation. Some elderly women living alone were trapped into binds of living in large family homes and unable to realise from their sale either too little to relocate... or too much... thereby disqualifying them from assistance into pensioner housing.

More and more, women are members of the paid workforce who take time out for child bearing and rearing, rather than unpaid household workers who take paid work from time to time. In 1986 34.6 percent of the full time labour force were women and just over half of all women 15 years and over were then in the workforce. Activity rates for women have risen steadily in the last 30 years. There seems no reason to suppose this trend will reverse.

Part time work is the situation most commonly sought by women who are faced with the need to earn an income and provide care. Most part time work is concentrated in low paid, low status secondary sector occupations.

Despite equal pay legislation 15 years ago, there is still a huge gap of around 25 percent between average male and female ordinary time hourly earnings. At the time of the 1986 census two-thirds of women had an income of less than \$10,000 per annum, two-thirds of men had an income of more than \$10,000 per annum.

Women have a longer life expectancy than men. There are many more older women than older men, and a significant proportion of them live alone... a more expensive option than co-operative or partnered arrangements.



PHOTO: GIL HAINLY

"Wide gaps between the wellbeing of men and women must be acknowledged."

built up over their life, relating not only to their personal life history but also to that of their cohort. Thus a particular old person may have a unique set of skills and experience, but so has a particular age group. All of those currently over 65 years have the experience of living through the Depression and the Second World War and have skills of thrift necessary in those times. Those over 80 have the communication and social skills necessary before the advent of passive entertainment. Such experience separates the elderly from other age groups. At an individual level older people have the maturity gained from their own personal life history and so carry with them various job skills, political and social skills. Maturity also carries with it a

It is obvious that the women who are now elderly and the succeeding cohort will be very reliant on National Superannuation. These women have not had the same access to employer subsidised superannuation schemes. Often this is the direct result of non-continuous service (time out for caring responsibilities etc). Entry into private schemes is more expensive for those whose work record is non-continuous.

It is not always recognised how many elderly are caring for their own older relatives. The Royal Commission received many submissions from parents and relatives of the mentally handicapped and mentally ill who were fearful that community care and deinstitutionalisation programmes meant the return of their sons and daughters to the family home. Once again the traditional caring role of women, coupled with the fact that they survive longer than men in the family was seen to further disadvantage elderly women. Suspicion that reduction in these services reflected more government's desire to reduce expenditure than their desire to recognise the human rights of all people was frequently voiced in submissions.

The NCW put it thus: "Stop believing there is a never ending supply of women who can be coaxed or bullied into giving up their own lives to the care of the elderly. Do not think community care is simply a cheap alternative to institutional care."

Security and identity are the two most important attributes of good health. I have not dealt much with identity, and I myself have spoken from my cultural perspective as a Pakeha. I am aware of course that we have a *kuia* with us, and I should like to say that I am frankly envious of the fact that there is no English language equivalent, no Pakeha concept to equal her status as *kuia*. Too often *our* words for both the old, and old women especially, are derogatory.

If the women of New Zealand, Maori and *Tauwi*, are to enjoy a positive identity, certainty and security in later life they must be able to plan for their future knowing what state provided superannuation will be available for their remaining years. Changes need to be phased in with regard to equity in transition phases. All moves that advance access to paid employment for all people and a fairer sharing of caring and unpaid work will assist women. Like the Royal Commission I would hope for political consensus and a bipartisan approach to income maintenance for the elderly.

At the same seminar the Minister of Women's Affairs, Margaret Shields focused on other points that need to be taken into account when considering any income security scheme for the elderly.

Not only do women live longer than men, but because one in three marriages end in divorce and some women do not

How do fulltime unpaid workers fit into a contributory scheme when their work is not recognised?

choose to enter heterosexual marriage, it is likely that most women will spend part, if not all their elderly years on their own. For many of these women, superannuation or a government assisted scheme, will be their only source of income. It will also be the first time that some women have an independent income (apart from the Family Benefit), and the first time they have their unpaid work acknowledged. This can mean a new lease of life for older women.

Ironically, for those women who do find their partners at home in retirement, their workload is likely to increase. While Mr Citizen wants to sit back and relax, Mrs Citizen now has to cater for him during what were once *his* work hours. Marion Bywater in the discussion paper *Income Security for Older Women* says that at this time in their lives many women discover that they "married their husbands not only for better and for worse, but also for lunch".

If the government decides that indi-

viduals should opt out of a state scheme and into a private one, it has to consider that private sector schemes have actuarial differences (or different rates for women and men based on different life expectancies). That means that because women live longer than men they have to pay more to get the same level of pension, or end up receiving a lower level of pension for the same contributions. Margaret Shields rightly points out that this adds up to discrimination against women.

However, it seems fairly certain from public statements made by both the Minister of Social Welfare and the Minister of Women's Affairs that the government is going to establish its own contributory scheme. Michael Cullen has even gone so far as to say that he does not envisage a retirement income scheme based 100 percent on contribution. He has suggested that the government should aim for about 50 percent provisions from contributory schemes and 50 percent from a "universal tax-based payment with a targetted top up where required to provide an adequate guaranteed retirement income".

Both ministers agree that the changing labour market and the need for an equable retirement income for men and women must be taken into account.

"Any pension scheme must also be flexible in taking part time waged work, job changes and interrupted work histories into account. Contributory schemes, where individuals pay into a fund on a regular basis, that do not acknowledge the time women spend out of the paid workforce in unpaid work will be discriminatory", said Mrs Shields.

Michael Cullen also referred to a "guarantee of compensation to those whose earnings-record is interrupted by unemployment, illness, disability, and time spent in unwaged work, whether that be caring for children or for elderly and sick relatives, or other unpaid work of social value"

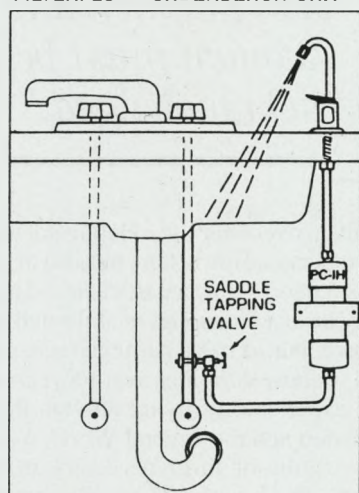
Both these statements are further clues that the government will choose a contributory scheme to replace superannuation. Just what form this "compensation" or "flexibility" will take remains to be seen. Margaret Shields said she favours a system of credits during the time that contributions are not being made by the individual. She believes this will acknowledge women's unpaid caring and community work at the time it's being done.

Will we see a new scheme for the elderly underway in the next two years? Well, next year is election year and I suspect that this proposal might get buried by a new National government. Both Ministries of Women's Affairs and Social Welfare welcome submissions on the discussion papers.

If you want to obtain a copy of *Income Security for Older Women*, write to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, PO Box 10-049, Wellington.

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DYKES & QUEERS

Dr Ngahuia Te Awekotuku was the opening speaker at the lesbian and gay conference held in Auckland at Easter.

This is a slightly shortened version of a keynote speech made to a very enthusiastic audience.

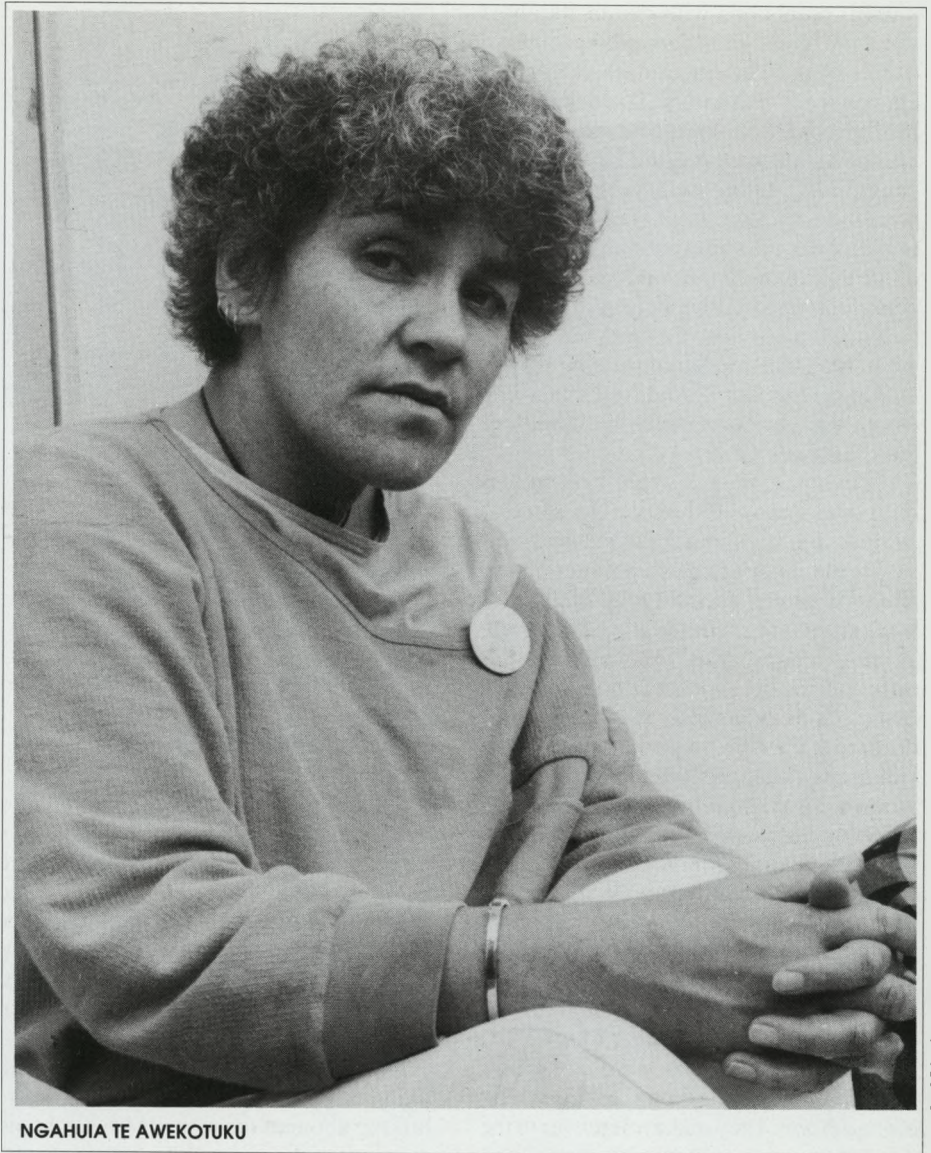
Erau rangatira ma, tena ra koutou. Karanga mai koutou kia au nei ta koutou mokai, ta koutou mangai. Te mea tuatahi, e maumahara ana ahau kia ratou, kua wehe atu ki te po, kua pangia e te mate kino o tenei ao hurihuri. Kia Nigel, kia Tilly, kia Kerry, Kia Tom, kia ratou ma. Heoi ano tena, me huri atu ahau ki te reo o tauwi...

Translating what I said:

My sincere respects to you all for inviting me, for remembering me, because I did drop out of sight for a long time. Thank you. What I said in my mother tongue is that we begin with sadness, and in the traditional way of my people we acknowledge and honour the dead. And for us at this time, our dead are many. They need not be gone, they need not be far away from us.

Recalling our first meeting almost 17 years ago to the day, there were six there in the coffee bar at the University of Auckland. Of those six three were dykes and three were queers, and two alas are now no longer with us. And so I remember them and call them down to be with us, to watch us all, to remember and most importantly and exciting of all, to look to the future they died for, which we will make.

Here we are now, in 1989, 17 years later, looking over the changes, considering our losses, remembering when and remembering how. Considering our inheritance, as human beings who love our



NGAHUIA TE AWEKOTUKU

PHOTO: GIL HANLY

own gender in every fathomable and unfathomable, every passionate and passionless, every hopeless, single human way. And we are so rich in history.

We are the inheritors of a Polynesian tradition, of the Mahu of Hawaii, Tahiti, the Cook Islands, the Marquesas, of the fa'afafine of Samoa, of the fakaleiti of Tonga, of the Carmens and Shirelles and Natashas of Aotearoa.

In this land we obviously have the traditions. The voyagers on the French ship "L'Austrolabe certainly enjoyed themselves in the late eighteenth century and they observed the "stunningly handsome" Maori men enjoying it too. "Avec une avidité étonnante." – with astonishing enthusiasm. This is in the white, historical record. Why have we never been told? I wonder about that.

Yet we do not have a common, everyday name for us. My challenge is this: reconstructing tradition, reinterpreting the oral history of this land, so skilfully manipulated by the crusading heterosexism of the missionary ethic. For we do have one word, takatapai. And ironically, this

The drag queens
and the queers,
the bull-dykes
and the fems
confronted and
crushed
(for a while)
the homophobic
hatred and
patriarchal power
of the New
York police

word is associated with one of the most romantic, glamourised, man/woman love stories of the Maori world, the legend of Hinemoa and Tutanekei. Tutanekei, with his flute and his favourite intimate friend, his hoa takatapui, Tiki, and Hinemoa, the determined, valorous, superbly athletic woman – my ancestress – who took the initiative herself, swam the midnight waters of the lake to reach him, and interestingly, consciously and deliberately masqueraded as a man, as a warrior, to lure him to her arms. Isn't that another, intriguing way of looking at this story? And isn't that a way which we, our community and tradition, have been denied?

Of women, though, there is even less on record, yet we did exist. The story of Wairaka tells us about the woman who, in saving the canoe Mataatua with her superb strength, named a locality and said, "Kia whakatane au i ahau. Let me be as strong as the strongest man." Her unlucky demise, pairing off under the pressure with a man, tells us even more. And her journey north to settle here, in this district, on this isthmus with her supporters, most of them women, away from her husband, tells us something very special. For Owairaka, the place of Wairaka, remembers her. And that is very close to where we stand here, now.

Indeed, the loving of one's own gender is an ancient, even tribal, practice, honourable and revered. This is explored in considerable detail by a number of scholars, including Judy Grahn in *Another Mother Tongue* and Paula Gunn Allen in *The Sacred Hoop*. They make references to the Amazon women of Dahomey, to the Burdache men of North America, to the various and many forgotten people, the various and many shamans, lovers and creators, to the various and many of those from whom we all descend.

And yet, the practice, the carrying through, the acting out of one's inner self, even the very acknowledgement of it without the acting out, has meant too often shame, condemnation, dismissal, hatred, ostracism, hopelessness, and despair. The judeo/christian legacy of guilt and punishment, of judgement and mortification has flourished on these islands. Despite the indigenous traditions of the Maori, despite those old, old beliefs, despite their continual rebirthing.

Over the decades of colonisation the homosexual, and more certainly the lesbian, became invisible. Occasional outbursts – the Mario case in the 1930s, in itself a bitter indication of the public attitude, the discrete presence of talented cross dressers in the Maori Battalion, brilliantly creative army cooks who fought and killed and died, like the true sons of Sparta, in the death of war, the lamentable saga of the Parker/Hume affair in the Cashmere Hills. Occasional outbursts, some positive but



There was
energy, there was
enthusiasm,
there was
exuberance

most negative and damning would take place. So, we moved into the sixties, with the Homosexual Law Reform Society and the consciousness of the inspiration of the British Lobbying Camp and the huge network of Mattachine in the United States. But by the end of that decade, the end of the sixties, enough was enough.

New York, 1969, the Stonewall nightclub. No more harassment, no more lurking about in the so-called twilight, no more embarrassment and no more shame. With chair legs and broken bottles, with high-heeled shoes and hair-spray cans, jagged mirrors and stiletto cigarette holders, with their razor-manicured nails and proud fists and sharp, bony knees, with raw hands and teeth and sensible loafer shoes, with courage and with craziness the drag queens and the queers, the bull-dykes and the fems confronted and crushed (for a while) the homophobic hatred and patriarchal power of the New York police. And so, gay liberation as a contemporary political movement, began.

And how did it cross the North American continent and the Pacific, to end up

We will never
go away.
Never. Never.
Never.

here, on these shores? Someone brought it back from Sydney. She's not here today, but she still tramps Karangahape Rd, and that person is Sally. Sally suggested to me that something had to be done because she had met people in King's Cross and they were talking about this happening in New York, this thing called Gay Liberation. Another person came back from Australia, and that was Paul Kells, and he talked about Gay Liberation too. Although there were no books about it, no concepts written, and unlike the beginnings of the feminist movement here, there were no actual manifestos.

However, something had to happen. We needed a catalyst a sort of sociological hiccup, and that hiccup just happened to happen to me. Disenchanted with the radical action groups, with the feminists, with the on-campus Maori factions, I believed there had to be something else for me, as a queer. There had to be others like that out there, there had to be more than just one who was willing to get her head chopped.

After a meeting at which I was told I was a known sexual deviant by the American consul I went up to the university forum, which happens at one o'clock every Thursday and I picked up the mike and I said, "Who out there is crazy enough to come and do this with me?" And five materialised. We went off to the coffee bar and talked about calling a meeting. We called it and over forty people came on that very first Sunday. We were so excited over getting more than 40 people that we called another meeting and 70 came! We decided we should do something – but what?

There was energy, there was enthusiasm, there was exuberance. Oh, there was energy. After all, we were the very people our parents had warned us against. We were the ones who said, "Say it loud, gay is proud!" And as lesbians, to the straight world we all declared triumphantly, albeit rather naively, "we are your best fantasy and your worst fear".

Heaps of things happened in that first year. We organised ourselves into cells – I don't know where we got that idea from – and there was a media cell, a PR cell, a cooking cell, a sewing cell, and there were a political cell and a thinking cell. And we came up with this rather brilliant idea of "cell"ebrating our cells and ourselves. What we did was put together national gay week. My god, it began with a most amazing skit which included the likes of Shakespeare, Mae West, Queen Victoria, Oscar Wilde and, most memorable of all, Santa Claus guffawing all over the university campus, "Ho ho ho ho ho, ho-mosexual." The other thing we did was go on these really strange talks to the likes of Rotary and the Jaycees and the South Auckland Christian Youth Camp – at which one of our number, this rather earnest chappie, declared himself to

be "Mr X". We had a Mr X, a Mr Y, and a Mr Q, because so many of us at that time could not come out. After all, it was 1972, and they would have been known to be committing criminal acts.

There was humour, there was vigour, there was creativity. Another thing we did which I must tell you about, because it was running a huge risk, was that a very brave little bunch of us got together and put on sandwich boards and we walked up and down up by 246 at lunch time, parading, sashaying, canoodling, wearing these great big sandwich boards that said "I am gay, ask me about it." You'd be surprised who wore those sandwich boards because now they are in quite prominent and responsible positions in the civil service.

We had such energy, it was so crazy. We disrupted meetings, we went down to Patricia Bartlett's appearance at the Sunday School Union and dragged up a banner and I got banged over the head by an aging harridan with a handbag. That was absolutely unforgettable. The wonderful Nigel Baumber, who passed away last year, was wearing a see-through pale green tank top and yards and yards and yards of love beads and these cheeky little very tight cut-off denim shorts and fish-net stockings. And of course there was too the unforgettable Dr Frankenfurter, in stiletto, platform heels. As I was being hit over the head with this handbag Nigelene leapt up, grabbed the handbag, whacked the old lady and said, "How dare you hit a woman!" Then he said to me, "Oh Ngahuia, I'm so butch and I never knew it!" That was my dearest Nigel, my dear friend, one of the first six, one I dearly miss now.

There were heaps and heaps of parties. There were heaps and heaps and heaps of drugs. There was lots of self-abuse. There was lots of substance abuse. There was for a while this thing called "bi-sexual chic". And for many of us too there was burn-out. However, another very positive thing that we started setting up – and I have to emphasise the "we" because although the media isolated me, because I had long black hair and wore long black robes and was very articulate – the group in itself was a strong collective of a lot of loving people. We did things like work in with Father Donnelly and get the very first gay counselling service set up, as well as have fun and take drugs and go silly and prance up and down Queen St and Karangahape Rd in our finery and feathers.

Eventually I withdrew and others came in. I think in Auckland of Sharon Alston. I regret that she's not here. She was brilliant, she was new, she was charismatic, she was stunning – and she still is. Following her was Rae Delaca often on the news, often exposed, and now, too, probably burned out. The rest of that decade, the rest of that time, is their story, best told, I think, by them.

— HARVEST WHOLEFOODS —

Shopping at Harvest Wholefoods – the big yellow shop in Richmond Rd Grey Lynn – is a real treat. It's a buzzy place with a steady flow of like-minded people getting their weekly (or daily) supplies and browsing or just asking questions.

The food is always of the highest quality and at peak freshness because it turns over so fast. No rancid nuts or seeds here! The fresh fruit and vegetables are organically grown and the book section is the pick of the bunch – homeopathic remedies and the nature's Sunshine range are lined up in alphabetical order for easy access. The oils are in a cool, dark cupboard where they're supposed to be.

If you've got a health problem that requires you to go on a specialised diet then Harvest is the place to go. The staff can support you with plenty of choices – they have all developed their own way of eating for health. You'll find them positive, cheerful and friendly always around busy serving, restocking shelves, filling up containers and able to answer any of your questions. If they don't know the answer they'll refer you to their qualified herbalist and naturopath who will give you free advice and guidance.

Pop in to Harvest Wholefoods and start on a new eating regime today – it will be the first step into something really pleasurable. Isn't food always? Harvest are open 9 to 6 Mon-Thurs, 9 to 8 Friday and 9 to 1 Saturday.

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Shifts have been made. There is some acceptance of open, lesbian and homosexual creativity. For example, the songs of Mahinaarangi Tocker and the film-making of Peter Wells. We can all remember and appreciate the success of Fran Wilde's bill, changes to the immigration laws, allowing gay and lesbian partnerships of an established nature (whatever that may be!) with a confirmed tenure of at least four years, almost equal rights with a heterosexual partnership in petitioning for the permanent residence of a partner.

Some gains have been made in social attitudes and expectations, but they are still nowhere near enough. There are other issues too, other realities, most urgently of all, the AIDS crisis, which intrude and confuse, feeding once again the demon of queer-bashing homophobia.

And yet I believe this: as long as it is unsafe for two men to dance together at a rugby function (despite what might have occurred in the showers); as long as it is unsafe for two women to stroll arm in arm along a sunny, daylight beach; as long as there is loathing and fear and disgust and embarrassment there will never be freedom for any of us. But we will not go away, and we will certainly not lie down and die or be trampled over, not any more. For we must demand the right to love and to rejoice in that love, with dignity and grace and pride.

We will never go away. Never. Never. Never. For we are your technicians, waitresses, doctors, cashiers, metal workers, teachers, potters, dentist, cabin crew, accountants, shop-keepers, lecturers, nurses, bus drivers, secretaries, drain layers, florists, undertakers, telephonists, DJs, pa-

perhangers, carpenters, hairdressers, mothers, fathers, uncles, aunties, brothers, sisters, daughters, sons. We are truly everywhere and we will never, ever go away.

Let me leave you with a poem, as it is my people's custom to round off an oration with a chant. This poem is by a dear friend, Paula Gunn Allen, a native American Indian. Her poem is about homosexuals, but more specifically about dykes and about Indians.

dykes remind me of Indians
like Indians dykes
are supposed to die out
or forget
or drink all the time
or shatter
or go away
to nowhere
to remember
what will happen
if they don't

they don't
anyway
even though it
happens
and they remember
they don't

because the moon remembers
because so does the sun
because so do the stars
remember
and the persistent stubborn
grass
of the earth

Kia ora ano koutou ■

BEING WELL AND FEELING BETTER

Alternative health remedies under the microscope

WRITTEN BY PAT ROSIER, WITH THANKS
TO TANYA HOPMAN, CAROL JILLSUN,
PAT MACKAY, CLAIRE-LOUISE
MCCURDY, LISA SABBAGE
AND ATHINA TSOULIS.

Broadsheet has a long and honourable tradition of taking an analytic and critical attitude towards medical treatment for women. Twenty years ago alternatives were the shared information of women and knowledge of homeopathic, herbal and diet remedies from our foremothers and friends. Now "alternative medicine" is beginning to look like an industry in itself.

Patsy Wescott in her book *Alternative Health Care For Women: a guide to natural approaches to women's health and well-being* (Collins, \$22.95) writes:

"So what is alternative health care? What can it do for you? Alternative health care can't work miracles and you should be extremely suspicious of any practitioner who claims it can. However, it can be an effective first line of treatment for a number of common complaints. It can also be a useful second string if you are undergoing conventional treatment.

Alternative health care can help you stay healthy, treat some illnesses, and relieve many conditions for which there is no cure. Basic to the alternative health care approach are several ideas:

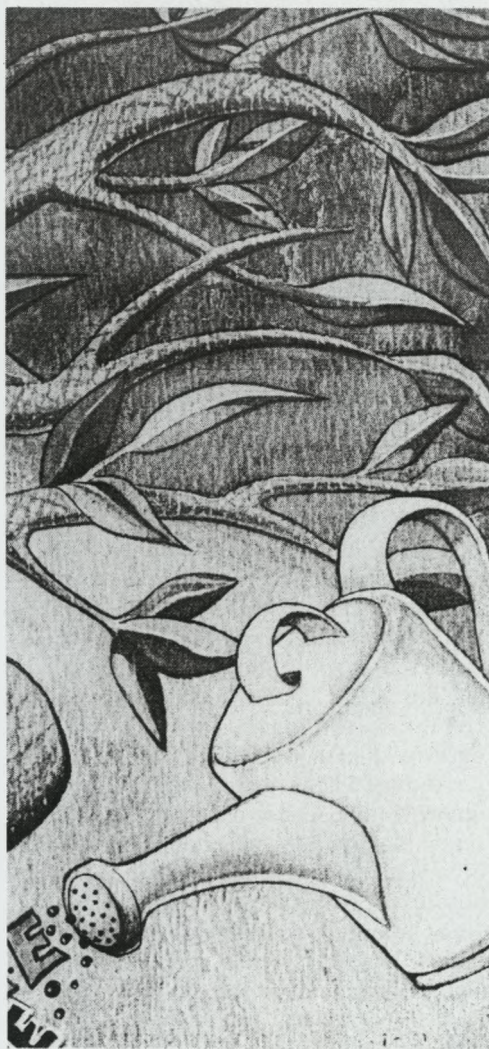
- The body is finely balanced and illness is caused by it getting out of balance.
- If you become ill the body has the capacity to heal itself, given the right support and encouragement.
- Disease is often a result of the way we live our lives."

However we may react to these ideas, they are certainly gaining ground among feminists and they have wide implications for a feminist analysis of health care. Do dying of cancer, having to live with AIDS, or diseases like multiple sclerosis indicate a lack of "support and encouragement" by ourselves, our family and friends, the health system, or what. How much control do we actually have, how much can we reasonably do in the way of lifestyle, healing ourselves, keeping our bodies in balance? How much is a direct result of poverty,

environmental poisons, working conditions and so on? Is illness a personal failure?

At the Third Complementary Medicine and Healthy Lifestyle Exhibition held in Auckland recently there were hundreds of remedies, potions, "self improvement" techniques and explanations of the universe on display. Many could be sampled on the spot, most were keen to send more information or make an appointment: at the very least passers-by were urged to take a pamphlet. All the stallholders appeared to believe passionately in their particular product or service. I was alarmed at the extent of the sexist language in many pamphlets ("man" and "mankind" were by far the most common) and by the number that included a promise of weight loss and/or youth and beauty. It is disappointing to see more and more alternative treatments get pulled into the very destructive emphasis on idealised youth at the expense of aging – perhaps the most "natural" process of all.

The range of offerings was overwhelming. Just a few examples: cell electrology; pulsing therapy; Shiatsu massage; Anritsu therapeutic magnetic jewellery; yoga; reflex massage; massage for health; bach flowers; crystals; hypnotherapy; music therapy; osteopathy; body harmony; ginseng; electrocosmetology; acupuncture; Hellerwork; homeopathy; bio energy; iridology; homeobotanics; dowsing and radionics; radiesthesia; magnetic health services; colour healing; floatation. And that list does not include ones that are more focused on the mental, spiritual and emotional, such as meditation; life after death; "your name is you"; sun energy music; the DMA approach; the Rosicrucian order; parapsychology, regression and karmic astrology; astrology; rapid learning; self hypnosis; the Culdian Trust ("truth in opposition to all else"); the grail message; Lazarus material; rebirthing; Egyptian dance; the hundredth monkey club. After a couple of hours at the exhibition I was



◆
*It is disappointing to
see more and more
alternative treatments get
pulled into the very
destructive emphasis on
idealised youth*


profoundly grateful that I do not suffer from a chronic illness. How could I have possibly made sensible decisions about what would help me from this bewildering array? Every stallholder I asked for advice would surely tell me that her or his offering was the very one I most needed.

I am offered happiness, well-being, "positivity", humaneness, a fuller life, global co-operation through personal co-operation and pure drinking water. I just don't believe that I'll change the values of the world by changing myself. And because I am not ill (and my attitude would probably be different if I was) I am not prepared to pay for pure water – everyone has a right to that.

It looks as though selecting any items from this feast is going to require just as much thought and evaluation as choosing a doctor. And I need to know whether I can afford them – none of them have health subsidies. A friend I ran into at the exhibition pointed out that after a car accident she stayed on antibiotics for six months because she could not afford the alternative that eventually (because a family member gave her the money to get it) relieved her symptoms. So some of the selection is done for those of us who are not wealthy, by those who decide how government health dollars are spent.

Several women have commented to me on the huge rise in the price of crystals over the past five years – has it become that much more expensive to produce them, or is it a case of following the demand/supply model that capitalism operates on? As with medical medicine, how much of the information we are supplied – or not – with is determined by profit-making motives? Obviously there are many genuine people, a lot of them women, working from an honest belief in what they are offering and attempting to make it as widely available as possible. But "healthy lifestyle" and "alternative medicine" are increasingly being seen as new market areas by the profit boys. As they become a profitable commodity in our consumer society the range of, for example, vitamin and mineral supplements becomes enormous – just as the boys got into publishing women's books when they saw a market, so are they exploiting this area.

Some of the ideas behind some of the offerings involve taking an idea – like "karma" – away from its cultural and spiritual context. Is this a sensible use of other people's good ideas or a spiritual imperialism that takes over someone else's beliefs and (mis)uses them? Do we assume that another culture's spirituality must be "good"? For example, in the context of Indian Hindu society karma is used to justify oppression (your position in society is pre-ordained). Is that what we want? It certainly isn't feminist. How much can we embrace the cultural and spiritual val-



Which comes first, personal health or a health-creating society?

ues of another society (Maori, North American Indian, African ...) and transplant them into our lives without co-opting them?

There's another range of questions, many of which came up during a discussion at *Broadsheet*. (All the following quotes are from that discussion.) Who can call themselves what? What training do people have to have before they can offer a "treatment"? Who is a charlatan and who isn't? How can you tell? And the ever-recurring question, "How do you select from such a bewildering array of possibilities?"

"A lot of alternative medicine has not been 'tried', but it has been used for centuries. And many use natural products that are produced in similar ways to food, unlike drugs. Also, it's holistic, it looks at the whole person, not just a few symptoms."

"But there is so much contradictory advice. 'Don't take vitamins, we get all we need in food.' 'Do take vitamins, because they're destroyed in the packaging and storing of food.' How do you decide what advice to take?"

One woman welcomed the increasing emphasis that alternative health care puts on prevention by taking heed of all the information around on things like smoking and the effects of sugar, salt and refined foods – information that was not generally available 10 or 15 years ago. For another it's "part of a plot to make us all individually responsible for our health and ignores pollution and radiation and social responsibility for things like good working conditions and housing. If you're unhealthy that means you haven't taken enough care! Yet a lot of poor health is from an unhealthy environment and food additives."

Some of the promotional material at the exhibition was certainly exploiting our fears – lose weight, have lovelier skin, fight aging wrinkles – and indicated that "healthy lifestyle" products have been identified as a new area of profit. There are at least two issues here. Firstly, when women's experience indicates that a particular substance can be beneficial – like evening primrose oil relieving the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome – only a few can afford it. Secondly, when big business grabs another chance to make big profits the advertising implies that the product, whatever it is, can benefit everyone. (Estrogen replacement therapy is an example of this.) So the advertisements

sell hopes and dreams (like "youth, "perfect skin" or healthy children) and exploit fears (like aging, being "overweight") rather than simply giving specific information about how the product works.

"I think there are some very valuable treatments offered in alternative medicine. I look for information that has been coming through consistently over a number of years and from different sources, and I read promotional material carefully, looking to see whether it is exploiting fears or creating dreams or giving real information. I am very suspicious of any global claims of the 'look younger, feel younger' kind."

"Alternative medicine is eagerly sought by women for good reasons, but it has led to more than personal responsibility for your own health – women are expected to take full responsibility for their families' health. The pressure comes from everywhere, from conventional advertising that exhorts mothers to buy margarine and not give dad a heart attack to the expectation that we'll spend hours cooking special food to keep our children healthy. It's another way of keeping women in their place, you have to spend so much time thinking about your family's health and learning new ways to cook! When I had a baby I went to an alternative doctor and he gave me so many time-consuming things to do I gave up."

Which comes first, personal health or a health-creating society? "Working conditions and housing are a major cause of ill-health. Individual solutions won't make things any better for people living in poverty."

"I also think that women should be validated for looking after themselves, and we can't guilt-trip them for not doing 'enough' politically."

"We're all into wanting to 'feel better'. The doctor gives you valium to make you feel better. Astrology makes some women feel better, and it certainly isn't as harmful as valium."

"I'm not into knocking all medicines – like antibiotics. My grandfather died of appendicitis because there were no antibiotics. It's the abuse of the substance, whether it's antibiotics or royal jelly, that we're against. Over-use and exaggerated claims are what we have to be suspicious of."

Our education system does a very good job of teaching us to see things as opposites, so the discussion can become "Fixing up ourselves will make the world better" versus "Don't take responsibility for yourself – it's society's fault". Neither is in fact very useful in feminist terms. It really is a matter of applying to alternative medicines the same search for reliable information and critical evaluation that we have learnt to apply to the medical industry. ■

Another "New Age"

Some of us love them, others hate them – the so called "New Age" philosophies are certainly a popular conversation topic at the moment. But what does New Age mean, is there a New Age, and can there be one before oppressions are redressed?

For many women it is difficult to reconcile the individualistic base of many of these philosophies – philosophies like Forum, Loving Relationship Training, Erhard Seminar Training, and other less formal ideologies – with a feminist analysis which views oppression as a societal responsibility. A New Age worldview advocates an internal quest for individual betterment, while feminism seeks to change structures as much as attitudes. On the other side of the fence there are women for whom New Age spirituality is a useful tool in their lives.

What follows is a response from Cushla Dodson to Sue Fitchett's article, "Brave New Age, Right?" which appeared in *Broadsheet*, November 1988. While Sue Fitchett sought to provide a critique of New Age ideas, comparing them to capitalist and right-wing philosophies, Cushla Dodson writes from the perspective of someone who is involved in the "New Age".

A) It is new and we are not too sure about it so it must be bad or at least very suspect. Let's pull it to bits.

B) It is new and we are not too sure about it so let's gather as much information as we can and make some decisions of our own.

Either of these approaches can be applied to innovative modern music, art, philosophy, education methods, nutrition systems, political analysis, child rearing practises, or any other aspects of newness in our lives.

Approach A blocks any potential for growth and learning. Approach B opens opportunities for discovery and understanding. The "New Age" has been at the receiving end of much Type A attention (even in *Broadsheet*). I am seeking to present my own New Age viewpoint as fuel for furthering a Type B exploration.

What is the New Age? It is almost easier to say what it is not: it is not religion in drag, it is not an easy way out with all the answers provided, and it is not some manipulative monster dreamed up in California. It's not a movement created by eastern mystics either – so what is it really?

The "New Age", "Age of Aquarius", "The New Spirituality" is an astrological timing in the planet earth's evolution, a time of new and different planetary and stellar influences which have never before been experienced, it is also a time in the evolutionary cycle of human kind when people are more able to consciously reach beyond the limitations of survival existence (physical and emotional) to the metaphysical and spiritual potential of human existence. Our thinking process is vastly different from that of

3,000 years ago, our brains are no longer "programmed" and passive receivers, they have evolved into the tools with which we shape our reality. The old scripts that have prescribed the human condition are running out and/or are no longer appropriate. Individually and collectively it is now up to us to consciously (with full awareness) create new scripts – scripts for our shared future. The New Age is evolving thought, quantum leaps of vision and understanding. For some it began hundreds of years ago, for others it is far in the future, for most the time to become part of the

newness is now. As the Goddess energy re-emerges we are more able to tap into the feminine, conceiving energy, imagination and intuition to perceive the way ahead and to redress the imbalances of centuries of patriarchy and chauvinism.

The Civil Rights Movement, Feminism, the Peace Movement and Environmental Organisations were, at their beginnings, imaginative New Age initiatives, consciously creating new awareness, planning new visions, new ways of observing and carrying out their plans for a better world. Their philosophies were New Age and despite the blurring caused by *old* reactive conditions they have been significant contributors, at the leading edge of change.

If we dismiss the New Age – without careful consideration then we dismiss and invalidate our years of participation in social and political action – we joined up in order to activate the dream didn't we? Most of us got caught up in the struggle, we were (then) unable to create something completely new and the old ways didn't mesh fully with new thinking. Disillusioned and debilitated we left the "movements" in droves and began the search for something to fill the gap created by the giving up of our hopes and dreams. Most of us were convinced that the world could indeed be a better place "if only" – and many focused that "if only" on their own shortcomings and became easy game for the false prophets offering salvation, warmth and "community", in place of struggle and hardship. Good people who we had loved and thought we understood became lost to us behind a cloud of what appeared to be self-serving, self-centredness and incomprehensible jargon. New Age began to be two dirty words.

There are charlatans cashing in on our need to fill the gap and/or feed our search for knowledge, our desire to re-ignite the sparks ignited by our political hopes and dreams. The false prophets call themselves New Age – they are not! It is the behaviour not the label that identifies New Age thought and action. All the groups and individuals wearing the New Age label are not necessarily ambassadors for clear new thinking and the special qualities of true New Age creativity. For many New Age is a convenient and popular bandwagon – a label to tack onto old or re-cycled ideas (or newish manipulative or scary ideas.) How can we tell the "true" from the "false" when the labels are jumbled



ILLUSTRATION: SHARON ALSTON

or phoney?

Any philosophy that advocates accumulation of resources at the expense of others or with disregard for impact on others is *not* New Age. "For the greatest good" is not enough. "With harm to none" is the New Age baseline. Any system, therapy, movement or philosophy that encourages dependence, supports or ignores the plight of powerlessness, presents scenarios where human kind are helpless victims of greater forces, or in anyway denies the right of individuals to create their own destinies is *not* New Age. Power over anyone or anything is out for those who seek the balance of dominion rather than domination – no matter how new a concept or technical advance may seem to be if it fails to work in concert with every aspect of the environment, living and non-living, it must be a relic of *old* thinking. (Windmills are more New Age than nuclear reactors, Bach flowers more New than open heart surgery).

There is no one way or right way to participate in the excitement and growth of the New Age. If we exercise our choices with discernment there are a wealth of resources available. However, no one resource offers all the answers or even all the questions. It

is up to each individual to create her own unique pathway taking full responsibility for her impact on others. There are no rules and mistakes are permissible. Love, Fun and Growth are key words and spiritual curiosity imperative. If individually we are able to uncover the resources, love and support that we need we can build safe, loving and supportive communities where more and more people can be free from the tyrannies of *old* thinking. As each of us steps across the *new* threshold we create a blueprint for all those who are seeking the future in an abundant and caring world where equality and peace are the norm. ■

Footnote:

My own New Age perspective works toward understanding "you can create your own reality". Why ever did I create a desire to write a New Age item for Broadsheet? It almost became a struggle. The reason seems to be to sort out some of my own thinking (I've written screeds more than appears here). I've enjoyed the process and enjoyed tossing the ideas around with others. Some of my resources have come from *Lazarus*, *Fry of Capra*, *Seth*, *Louise Hay*, *Shakti Gawain*, *Nancy Ashley*, *Jane Roberts*.

2 "MUST-SEE" MOVIES SOON AT HOYT'S AMALGAMAIED CINEMAS

"FANTASTIC"

an intoxicatingly offbeat romantic thriller. *Barbara Davis, ELLE MAGAZINE*

"A taut thriller with sting."
DAILY NEWS

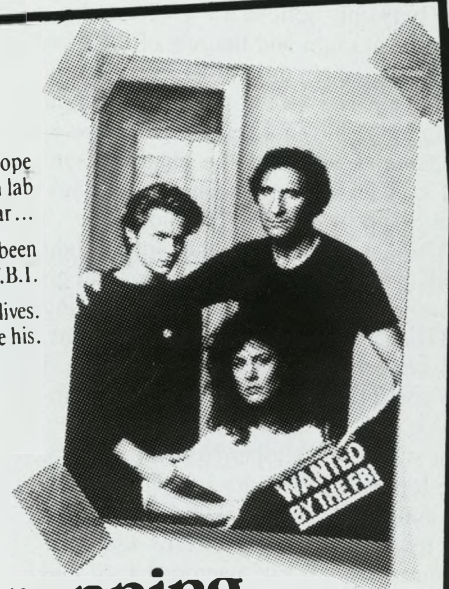
MELANIE GRIFFITH
(Academy Award Nominee
for "Working Girl")
TOMMY LEE JONES
STING

STORMY MONDAY

A Romantic Thriller

BRITISH SCREEN IN ASSOCIATION WITH FILM FOUR INTERNATIONAL AND ATLANTIC ENTERTAINMENT GROUP
PRESENTS A MOVING PICTURE COMPANY PRODUCTION
STORY BY MIKE FIGGIS
SCREENPLAY BY ANDREW McALPINE
DIRECTED BY MIKE FIGGIS
CASTING BY SANDY POWELL
EDITED BY DAVID MARTIN
PRODUCTION DESIGNER ROGER DEAKINS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS MELANIE GRIFFITH, TOMMY LEE, JONES, STING, SEAN BEAN, STORMY MONDAY

In 1971, Arthur and Annie Pope
blew up a napalm lab
to protest the war ...
Ever since then they have been
on the run from the F.B.I.
They chose their lives.
Now their son must choose his.



running on empty

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christine lahti judd hirsch martha plimpton
and river phoenix

DIRECTED BY SIDNEY LUMET

GA Some Language
May Offend

SUDDEN BLINDNESS

Jill Woollit did a two year domestic science course in Dunedin where she discovered a love of design. She abandoned home science and got a job with a joinery firm in Christchurch and was involved in designing kitchens for six years. After moving to Nelson she lost her sight as a result of diabetes. Jill talked to Athina Tsoulis about the impact this has had on her life.



PHOTO: GIL HANLY

It was unbelievable. I was getting this night blindness that was disturbing but I only noticed it when I was driving at night and the rest of the time my eyesight didn't feel any different at all. The specialist sent me straight along to the hospital and the guy I saw at the hospital sat back in his chair and said "Of course the final scenario is blindness." And it was unbelievable.

They started laser treatment straight away, and I'd have my treatment and go home. To begin with I'd be back drawing and I had laser over a period of 15 months, and even though the signs were there, I still couldn't believe it was actually happening.

It started in October/November 1986. The following February I moved to Nelson and I kept going back to Christchurch for treatment. During one of the laser sessions my left eye haemorrhaged and they decided that that was it. The right eye, which I could see out of, they felt should be left. They didn't dare carry on with the laser treatment. That was like sitting on a time bomb because I knew that the treatment hadn't been successful so it was really just a matter of time.

I came up to Auckland for a second opinion and it was quite surprising that in a country the size of New Zealand you could get specialists in the same field, which is really a small field, with such opposing views. The guy I saw here said there was no such thing as too much laser,

I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT IT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME

you just kept plugging on until you got a response and as I had nothing to lose I decided to go for it. I came up to Auckland and each time I had laser treatment it would take longer for the sharpness of my vision to return but I was still working in between treatments and that carried on till January 87 when I was told I could carry on with that eye for the rest of my life.... and then a month later it haemorrhaged.

So over the time it was first of all finding out that you had this problem, which was a real down, and then finding out there was treatment, which was an up, and then I lost the sight in my left eye and felt down, and then there was the hope that this wasn't the end of treatment, so I was up and then there was a massive down when my eye haemorrhaged.

The doctors were quite prepared to admit they didn't know why some people responded better to treatment than others and I appreciated them saying this because I don't think they do know all the answers and I'd rather that someone came straight out and said "look, we don't know." The doctors were quite prepared to talk. They didn't shut me out of any discussions when the subject of operations came up.

I was 26 when all my eye problems began and my first reaction after being told that I would lose my sight was I just

couldn't believe that it was going to happen to me. I coasted along thinking this is a nightmare and I'm going to wake up. Because life was still going on and because I could still work. So many things hadn't changed, it just didn't enter reality until, well even when I lost my sight in my left eye I still couldn't believe that I would lose the sight of my other eye.

Just like now there are other long term things that diabetics face like problems with kidneys, problems with circulation in your feet. A lot of elderly diabetics get gangrene infections and have to get amputations. Even though I'm now experiencing one of the longterm effects of diabetes I can't believe that anything like that is going to happen. I don't know if it's a blocking thing that I do to help keep me going.

I can't imagine ever accepting being blind because there is always something that reminds you that life is going on around you in another dimension, that people are experiencing what you once experienced visually. I think you adjust. I'd say that in the last few months in particular I've come a long way in adjusting to not being able to see and I think a lot of it has come since the remainder of my sight went because it's taken the pressure off worrying. When I had partial sight I would use a lot of the visual aids that were available. I had no sure prognosis. No one knew what was going to happen because of my track record and it was a continual

WE ARE ALL DISABLED IN DIFFERENT WAYS

pressure of comparing what I could see the previous day to today and worrying what I'd be able to see tomorrow.

I couldn't really get on and start planning because it just felt so insecure and I talked to a couple of people who were totally blind and they told me they wouldn't have partial sight back and I couldn't believe them. I always thought that if you had partial sight it was helping you in some way. Well it wasn't until I had lost most of my sight that I started realising the pressure is off. The brain has to adjust too. Your brain is used to getting all this visual information and as long as you are receiving any kind of picture your brain wants to believe it above your hearing, your touch.

I thought when you couldn't see you would be able to pick up all kinds of sounds, touch would be so much more sensitive, your taste and your sense of smell, all these other things would reach unheard of heights. But that doesn't happen dramatically and this is where I feel that as long as my brain told me that there was nothing in front of me it didn't matter if the sound changed because there was a door there, I would still walk into it. So partial sight to me was a dangerous thing because I still relied on what I saw. I had no end of crashes, I was always walking into things, knocking my head and what have you because I couldn't start using my other senses to their fullest. Now that degree of sight has gone I am finding that I am noticing different sounds, starting to pick up more things. In lots of ways that's good because you can start living again, start accommodating all the changes.

My father died suddenly about three months before I lost my sight and I loved Dad, we were very close. Mum and he had a wonderful relationship and although his death has been terrible it's been an opportunity for me to be here for Mum as much as she has been here for me. I've been able to give back to her. I would have felt extremely guilty of what I've been receiving emotionally support-wise. It is so good to know that I've been able to give her back some of the support.

Career wise I had to change as I was designing kitchens at the time but I decided I couldn't continue. I was always good at visualising, but where the difficulty lay was in showing your clients the design because you couldn't draw it, or you can't leaf through a magazine and say that's what I mean. Also I was afraid that I'd get caught in a 1986-87 time warp so I decided to pack it all away and start again. So my expectations career wise have had to change and that's where, because I think in terms of a career, a lot of my rehabilitation has been because what I knew I needed was a goal, something to

head for.

I spent a lot of energy trying out different options, what I could do with my future to give me a fulfilling career, because that's what I want. When you're feeling down you start thinking about the economy and how there are so many people out of work, so many trained people have been made redundant. If you add the fact that you have not been trained and the experience you had which you hope is transferable but the specific experience is no longer of use to you, you can get into a real down, because now you can't see either. It can all get on top of you.

Not being able to drive, the whole independence thing is tied up to me and my career. I was lucky to enjoy my past job so much that it was like a hobby.

I've focused on massage because when I first came up to Auckland I did a course run by Clarity and that was good. We did career and life planning, but it was designed to look at your description and then look at jobs that fitted your description rather than looking at what was available and squeezing yourself into fitting in. That was helpful because I want contact with people and a certain amount of job satisfaction.

A lot of the things I wanted seemed to point to massage and I also want to train in depth and have some recognised qualification that I can feel confident to practise with. I see massage taking off and taking different connotations. People are becoming more aware of looking after them-

MY BLINDNESS IS WHAT I'M MOST VULNERABLE ABOUT

selves and I can see that people are looking for alternatives. Ultimately I'd like to work in a clinic alongside a physiotherapist. I think over the years we have got away from physical therapy.

The security of a relationship would be wonderful but up until now I haven't found the right person so you can't sit around and wait for the right person.

I did a Woman Alone course in Nelson because I felt very alone and different so I went along to this course and it really helped me to put things back into perspective. I was the only one who was actually physically disabled. The other woman there were "women alone" in terms of relationships.


I found that I was using blindness as a scapegoat. Chances are I would have felt like that anyway (alone) but I put it down to not being able to see. So the course was a reminder to me to be aware that I can't blame all my downs on being blind and that everyone has downs.

It also made me very aware of the temptation of thinking "well what has that person got to worry about they've got their health and their faculties and they're just creating problems for themselves that don't need to be there." It reminded me that as people, we do have all these problems, and they are very real problems and that people have a right to those feelings and that I shouldn't feel bitter or angry that someone else is feeling down yet they have so much going for them. We are all disabled in different ways and in some respects I realised I was lucky in that I could blame something. A lot of people blame themselves for their problems. If I want to I can blame not being able to see and I can get angry but it removes it off my shoulders.

You can be going along quite fine and then someone can say something thoughtless and rude. Some people say the most rude and amazing things, but I try and tell myself that they would be like that to anybody and not just because I'm blind. But my blindness is what I'm most vulnerable about.

Because you can't see, some people assume that you can't talk, you can't think, you're not a person inside and it might just take somebody to say something along these lines and you can go right down. Sometimes you can brush it off but when you are feeling fragile you can spend several days feeling very low.

As time goes by, and this is part of the adjustment we were talking about, the level of the lows don't seem so low, and it becomes easier to come out of that low. That to me is what adjustment is because you will always suffer downs but it's your ability to bounce back which is important - its learning to survive. ■



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MORE THAN A POWDER PUFF

Union women are considering an agreement, being referred to as a compact, between the union movement and the government

Pat Rosier reports

In September 1988 at the Labour Party conference, the Prime Minister, David Lange, announced that the government was going to negotiate a "compact" or agreement with the union movement. There had been unofficial chat about the idea around and about, but on the whole unionists were surprised. Some women in the union movement are giving the idea attention, albeit with a touch of scepticism.

It's hard to get to grips with what any compact would contain, but it would be an agreement between the national union organisation, the Combined Trade Unions (CTU) and the government. Those unions not affiliated with the CTU (notably the Seaman's Union) would be unlikely to be part of it, and it would not involve employers' groups. A compact would be separate from the Labour Relations Act and would not alter that act.

Politicians are stating that they want to negotiate a compact with the CTU that will create jobs, be fair to all sectors of the community, promote the personal security of New Zealanders and engender mutual respect. It's all very vague. Areas a compact might cover, from the government's viewpoint, are macroeconomic policy (that means the overall policy), social policy, sectors, industries and regions and something rather alarmingly called "new workplace productive processes".

The union movement is looking for ways to have an effect on New Zealand's economic policy and its social effects. This is part of a move towards what is often called "participatory democracy", which means a democracy where "you and me" have more say in government decisions than is allowed by a once-every-three-years vote. The move arises from a belief that those in power in government



ROZ NOONAN

PHOTO: GIL HANLY

and industry do not take into account the ideas and needs of us "ordinary people".

The CTU will be making a decision about whether to enter into negotiations over the content of a compact at its annual meeting in September. Members at the CTU Women's Conference in February were looking at whether and how women should be involved. Roz Noonan of the primary teachers' organisation, NZEI, Maryann Street of the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) and Martha Coleman of the Clerical Association spoke to the conference about the compact idea. What follows is an edited version of each speech.

ROZ NOONAN

I believe one of the issues facing New Zealand today is that there are virtually no structures that ensure that the voices of ordinary working New Zealanders are effectively heard between elections. What we have seen over the last ten years is a gradual concentration of power both in the public and private sectors in fewer and fewer hands. Most of those hands are Pakeha males'.

If we use the example of the public sector what we see now is a situation where a handful (less than 30) of individuals appointed as Chief Executives of public sector departments, are in fact able to make virtually any decisions in conjunction with their ministers, without any need to consult, involve or inform, and in fact they now hold to themselves the individual right to make those decisions. That is what they have been appointed to do and only they are responsible. The whole concept of the public sector as being in a

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sense the genuine reflection of the wider public interest to the elected politicians has disappeared. What we see now is that a handful of people - big business industrialists - have the ears of a handful of ministers and have been able to capture the entire government agenda.

I believe that the question which now faces New Zealanders is that of how we can develop a genuinely participatory democracy where people have some say, not only over who will make decisions for them, but what those decisions will actually be. That is a question that has to be developed at every level of society in every aspect of our lives, it is not just a question about how parliament will operate. So in a sense I see the compact in that context. Is this one of the forms that will strengthen genuine participatory democracy in New Zealand? Is it one of the ways in which ordinary people can have a voice in the sort of society we are having?

If we had had the chance to participate in this way we wouldn't have the levels of unemployment we have got. If the voices of ordinary New Zealanders had been attended to we could have had in place macro-economic policy that could have brought down inflation without creating huge numbers of unemployed. But because there was no structure to enable us to have a say when those decisions were being made or to consider the consequences of them, many of us had no option but to believe the propaganda that there was no other way. There are other ways.

As our society becomes more complex, how can we have a say? We have to be putting forward the structures that we think will enable robust debate. It seems to me that the compact is one possibility. At the moment when I look around New Zealand there is little effective organisational base for ordinary people. The unions are one of the few potentially effective organisational bases.

Part of the climate that we are now working in and part of the agenda of the new right, as represented by Treasury, has been to try to dismantle or discredit any organised community voices including the union movement. It has done this by putting forward an analysis that says that all would have been well in New Zealand if it wasn't for these self-interested interest groups which had no regard for the general interest or anything but their own self-interest, and what we've got to do is get them out of the way and then we'll get decision-making in the interests of the half a dozen men who know what they want! That has been a consistent approach throughout the term of this government. I'm not saying it has been a conscious agenda of every elected Labour member, but it has certainly been a very clear agenda of Treasury as spelt out in their document on government economic management and it



MARYAN STREET

PHOTO: GIL HANLY

is certainly the agenda of the State Services Commission (SSC) and of the business roundtable.

Because the government and big business have access to such a high level of resources and have been largely able to command the news media, the view that unions and other organised union groups are part of the problem has become quite widely rooted in our community. How can we effectively challenge that view? Because what the Treasury and business roundtable would like, is to reduce everybody to a series of individuals whose only power is in their ability to buy goods and services. They do not want to see any sort of alternative power from people combining in groups to organise for their mutual interests. They believe in consumer sovereignty, which simply comes down to saying the best way you can exercise your power is when you buy something. That is a very limited and unequal power because people will simply never have the same level of buying power and at any rate it gives you no say over what is actually produced, it only gives - possibly, if you've got enough money - the option to choose between what they have decided will be available.

So what we have to ask is, is the compact a way in which we can work to establish the legitimacy of unions as community, democratic organisations that

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challenging
individualism
gone mad

give a voice to groups of people? That voice will not always be exactly uniform. There will be something fundamentally wrong if it is - there is richness in diversity. We shouldn't be afraid of differences, we should examine them and recognise that equality does not mean sameness, it means the right to be different, the right to have it acknowledged that your approach, your lifestyle your culture is as valid as the next one and that the challenge is to build a society in which that diversity and richness is positively celebrated and the new structures that we build allow it to flourish.

We are looking at one way of challenging individualism gone mad, at its most destructive, which seeks to ensure that there is no potential to effectively challenge the power of capital. Therefore I see the development of the potential of a compact as a small step forward. Whether or not the compact ends up being simply a club for a slightly wider group or Pakeha men will depend as much on us as it does on anyone else.

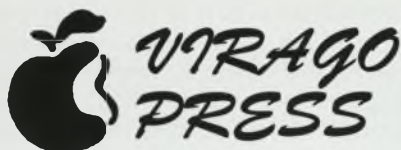
MARYAN STREET

I'm given the luxury of expressing a personal opinion on this matter. My union (PPTA) has not taken a position on this yet. It has not had substantial discussions on the nature of the compact and whether or not there should be one.

For me the whole business of negotiating a compact raises again huge questions about women's political involvement. Why are we here, why should we participate? If we do get involved, what are we going to expect, what are our bottom lines, and our negotiable items? That's a very fundamental set of political questions for women who choose to become involved in political processes.

I come from the position of a reformist not a radical, so I have chosen consistently to work within systems and try to beaver away at improving them from the inside. There is nobody who becomes more disappointed and feels more betrayed than those who try to work closely with the government. That has been the experience of women in the Labour Party and the wider labour movement in the last few years over a number of issues.

The compact raises another set of possibilities, of opportunities. I believe we ought to be in there. We have more to gain by participating than by withdrawing. We have more to gain by choosing to engage in political institutions than we have by choosing to opt out of them. We may not win everything and that is the nature of the struggle and a common experience for all of us. We should be very clear what we expect a compact to deliver for working women.

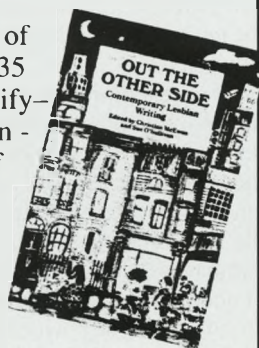


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If there is no commitment to industrial democracy or to an equitable income and prices policy, to monitoring of taxation regimes, to the maintenance and improvement of a social wage, to the delivery of pay equity and equal opportunity, then there is clearly no good purpose for us to be involved. I suggest that by engaging in the process we may use it as another opportunity to work towards those goals. That's why we should be in there.

At every point of discussion and negotiation we must ask ourselves why we should be there and whether we should withdraw. That has got to happen all the time. I do not agree that even if the CTU agrees in September that a compact with the government should be made, that we should have that set in concrete for ever. There have got to be ways of holding the government to the compact, that's for sure. There have also got to be ways of reviewing things to see that, if we achieve the kind of ideal compact we would like, we can monitor its implementation and make sure that it is still coming up to scratch. So I do not see a compact as a final document. We must aim to have something as binding as it possibly can be but there must always be the opportunity for continual negotiation. That's part of the process, the hard work.

We must never lose sight of the very basic questions, how is this benefitting women, what are women getting from it, why should we be putting our energy into it? That questioning must happen all the time.

What happens in the event of a change of government? It appears to me the union movement cannot be weaker for having gone through this process and devised a compact, which means that if a National government comes in there is a strong, organised, unified union movement that can deliver a very clear agenda, and an offer they can't refuse.

MARTHA COLEMAN

When we look at the compact and are developing a position it is necessary to clearly identify the government's motives. These are not to change the direction of economic policy they are about getting re-elected and that should be clear. We also have to look at the employers' motives in wanting such a compact. They want the ability to pay less in wages through moves such as award restructuring and flexible work arrangements. Many government members as well as Treasury will have that on their agenda.

So we also need to look at whether we can trust the government. Are we going to go into the sort of arrangement with the government that means that if they rat on us (as they did in Australia) and change

direction there is not a lot that the union movement can do in the way of taking the government to court or some sort of process?

Unions also need to identify what sacrifices they are prepared to make for a compact. We also need to think about alternatives - the best possible situation for working people in New Zealand at the moment may not be a compact, but other changes that will strengthen our bargaining arrangements and our union organisation.

Finally, there are some things that are essential in any movement towards a compact and in a compact itself.

Firstly, it must be participatory in nature. You might think you are having a hard time now trying to settle your awards, but what happens when you have got no union involvement because year after year after year everything is centrally determined? What is going to happen to the strength of union organisations if your members are never having to go and even ask employers for wage increases or any other improvements in conditions? We must maintain the democratic nature of our unions and the participation of our members in all aspects of their working lives. So there must be a role in anything that comes out for members to directly participate in both the process of the compact and in a post-compact environment.

There must also be a clearly identifiable



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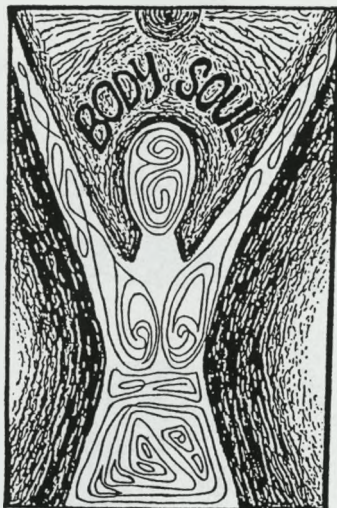
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able women's agenda. At present the agenda and discussions of the compact are very male-dominant, between the leadership of the government and the Council of Trade Unions (with respect to Angela Ffoulkes, who is a fine voice for women there - as the sole woman at that level it is very difficult to be continually hammering away "what about women?").

The processes and outcome of the compact must be consistent in honouring the commitments made under the Treaty of Waitangi. There is no evidence that that is a fact at the moment

Pay equity legislation should not be part of any debate on the compact, it should not be a bargaining item. If the compact is going to look at any restructuring of the labour market then pay equity legislation must be in place first. There must be the ability for a skills audit and a work evaluation of women's work. It is not a bargaining item, it must be in place first. ■

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■ INTERNATIONAL

Directory of Women's Media 1989 edition available for US\$15 from WIFP, 3306 Ross Pl, NW, Washington DC 20008, USA

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Scratches Records Specialises in women on record, 91 King St, Newton, NSW 2042, Australia.

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Fried Scones and Guttled Cars

Carlie White



ILLUSTRATION: LINDA SABBAGE

A sudden wail from the other room made Josie glance up from her book. She waited, willing the baby to settle down again. Bigger it, she'd put her down only half an hour ago. It was far too soon for her to be yelling.

There was a whimper, then quiet.

Josie heaved a sigh of relief and snuggled under the blankets. That's more like it! She fidgeted the book into a more comfortable angle to read and tucked the covers about her to stop the draughts.

She always took something to bed to read at lunchtime. She had her sandwich and a cup of tea, and then curled up in a snug position and entered the world of make believe. Even when the weather was warm she preferred this retreat. Sometimes she was tempted to make a tent by jamming the bedspread behind the headboard with her pillow, and thereby create her own private world. She used to years ago, on Sunday mornings, when her parents stayed in bed and she wasn't allowed up until they rose. She had played in her tent with her dolls, safe and secure, with no inclination to go anywhere else till her

parents were ready for her.

Josie had read enough to be intrigued when the whimpering began again.

Oh, for Pete's sake, she said. She listened, and this time the fretting carried on. She threw her book aside and scuffed, half in and half out of her slippers, into the next room.

She leaned on the doorjamb and stared at her younger child while she sorted out her foot from the tear in her slipper. The smell in the air told her the problem was contained in the baby's nappy, but weariness had won over discomfort and the infant was grizzling protests through her sleep.

No point in going back to her book, Josie reasoned. She won't stay like that for long, not if she's filled her drawers. Susan will be home from school soon anyway. No sense in getting comfortable, one or the other of them will be bawling for something too soon.

She wandered over to the window and gazed out at the bored houses all lined up waiting for someone to take an interest in them. Their barren sections lay supine

about them. The occasional yard boasted a swing with the complementary bare ground beneath it. A few houses were circled by drooping fences and broken gates, but for the rest there was no demarcation, no claim of proprietary. Except for the house with the grotesque butterfly winging its garish way up the front wall, they presented a common facade to the street, devoid of expression, like troops lined up waiting to be marched off to the front line.

Josie looked up to the grey skies, then down to the grey slate, and shrugged at the indifference. She saw dogs snoring their tedium on front lawns and some gulls circling and screeching as they came inland from a storm, but from inside her glass bowl it was a mute world.

The man across the road was struggling to remove the intestines of one old wreck of a car to use in another. The top half of his body was folded inside the engine compartment. It looked as if the bonnet had taken a large bite and was rearing up to catch the next mouthful hanging from its bottom lip.

Bet his wife wished he were gobbled

up, never to be seen again, Josie thought. He came home so drunk the other night he didn't know where he was and pissed in the corner of the lounge. She saw his wife now, shouting at him from the kitchen window. A scarf covered her head. That was to hide the big bald spot where her hair was falling out of her head. Nerves. If he wasn't bashing her or the kids about, he was out boozing his dole money away. She never had any money to feed their kids. They had fried scones for tea the last three nights, and the woman next door to them said that the oldest boy had bludged some breakfast from her this morning. Why she didn't leave the creep Josie couldn't understand. Perhaps she was just like the cars he had gutted, their hulks left useless and empty, unable to move.

The shrieking of the neighbour's kid, calling over his shoulder to a playmate as he ran, interrupted Josie's thoughts. Jeez! They're cutting across the lawn again. She rapped on the window and mouthed warnings at them. Piss off!

They had worn a rut from the corner of her section to their place. Why couldn't they stick to the paths? She thought about planting some stakes in the ground for them to impale themselves on as they tore unheeding across her lawn. That'd wipe the grins from their cheeky faces. What have they got to be so happy about anyway?

The baby cried. The tapping on the window had malice only for her own, the little brats next door jabbed a finger at her and continued on their way.

"Oh, shut up!"

Josie glowered, but she shifted away from the window and attended to the infant.

She cuddled the cleaner child to her. "Do you love your mummy?"

But it flopped its weariness against her shoulder, mouth dozed open, unwilling to take part in the chapters on bonding while its tender body demanded sleep.

"Well, that book can go back to the library," Josie muttered, and put the kid back into its cot.

She picked up the dirty nappy then and left the room before more demands were made of her.

She squeezed the nappy in with the others to soak. She hadn't realised there was quite so much washing to do. She thought about it for a moment. It was a bit late in the day to start. She'd feel more like it in the morning. It was a morning job anyway. Yes, it could wait till then. It would give her something to do first thing.

She felt a bit more cheerful then. It was good to have something organised first thing. Once she got going in the morning she was all right. It was a simple matter of getting a good start to the day and she could get anything done. If it was a little warmer, she might even do some more

about a garden.

Her stomach rattled and she thought about the banana. No, it wasn't fair, she'd keep it for Susan. Her emptiness went a lot deeper than a banana could remedy.

Josie wandered into the lounge. Perhaps she could light the fire and warm the place up a bit, Susan would be home in a minute. But there wasn't much firewood left in the box. She'd wait a while and save it. Maybe the kid had gone next door to play anyway.

She should have gone over to the reserve today and got some pine cones. But there was a chilly breeze and she didn't want to go out. And she had other things to do. She tried to remember what she had done all day, but as she gazed about the room for inspiration, it stared as blankly back at her.

"What a horrible room this is," she said, and screwed up her face at the few pieces of furniture set back against walls devoid of adornment. "There's not much to keep me occupied anyway."

The void inside her growled again and she felt molested by its insistence. She tightened her cardigan about herself and switched on the television for distraction. The theme music of a familiar show reached her ears before the picture flickered in sight.

"Shit! I'd forgotten that's on. I've missed half of it now!"

Her annoyance, that so much had passed her by, quite destroyed her ability to appreciate what was left. She fretted and fussed and the world of gloss and glamour struggled to subject her to its charm. But then the tentacles of romance and deceit reached out and trapped her in its mass of lies.

"Mum! Mum! Look what I did!"

At first the voice was far distant, not penetrating, but the persistent nagging at her elbow brought a divorce from the realm of Hollywood tinsel.

"Susan! Shut up will you! Can't you see I'm watching telly!"

"But Mummy, look what I did."

"Oh, for Christ's sake. Just wait a minute!"

Josie hadn't for one minute taken her eyes from the screen. She reached over now and turned the sound up loud. What was that he said?

"Jeez, Susan. I've missed the whole point now."

"But Mummy... look!"

Josie tore the drawing away from her line of vision and scrubbed it and the kid up and bundled them out the door.

"I'm watching telly. Shut up so I can hear!"

"Mummy don't you're hurting!"

"I'll bloody hurt you all right."

Josie raised her hand to strike Susan across the backside but a mysterious cushion of air arrived and placed itself before

her hand and it landed like a sponge. Frustration snarled. Josie clenched her teeth, seized a fistful of jersey and shoved Susan up the hall.

"Go to your room and stay there until I've finished my programme."

She plonked back into her chair and watched the last few minutes. But she didn't enjoy it. Even the actors didn't approve. They stopped for a moment and glared their scorn at her.

"Shut up! Shut up and get on with it!"

She swore at them. Jangled nerves shivered and she clutched her cardy tighter still.

She was glad when the programme had ended.

She listened. No sound from Susan.

She switched off the sights and sounds of the other world and went up the passage to her daughter.

Susan was sitting crosslegged on the floor. Just sitting, holding her doll by its hands as it stood looking back at her.

There was something about the way they watched one another that made Josie stop still. Vacuous facades. Weren't they familiar?

Then Josie felt she too was part of the scene. The three of them frozen life forms, mannequins in a shop window, holding hands and waiting. Waiting for their release. Waiting for something to happen. Waiting for a man to come and change them about and give them a new stance.

And while she was listening to her own thoughts, she heard more. He'll strip you bare to do it. And tell me, who left you here to start with?

"Aah! Piss on it!"

"Mummy?"

"No sweetheart, I was talking to myself."

Josie stared down at the hopeful eyes and she had startled wide. The light faded again with the whispered reassurance and Susan turned dull eyes back to the doll. The pale models held hands and circled stiffly, hollow heads, moulded shapes, unseeing eyes. And the man wound the handle faster, faster. "Play to my tune! Play to my tune!" And they bobbed up and down on the merry-go-round.

"No!" Josie shook free.

Susan jumped.

"We've got to get off! We can't..."

Then she said, "I know, we'll take a sack over to the reserve and get some pine cones. And when we get back, we could make some cocoa, and sit by the fire and make toast. It could be good."

Susan scrambled to her feet. "Can Barbie come too?" she asked, holding out the trusty doll.

"Yes, of course. Would we leave her behind?"

And the three of them smiled through their sad secrets and clasping hands locked one another into their bond. ■

STROKES AND ART ATTACKS



Lorae Parry

PHOTO: BRONWYN GRAY



**FRONTWOMAN,
writer, director
and soon-to-be actor
in its Auckland production,
Lorae Parry, talks with Pat Rosier.**

My role in connection with *Frontwoman* has been as the writer and director of the Wellington production (see review by Judith Dale in the Jan/Feb issue of *Broadsheet*). I always wrote it to be in it. Not in any role in particular, but in order to create a vehicle to perform in, because it is only recently that we have started getting reasonable parts in plays for women – one part to every seven male parts have been the statistics. So when I was out of work as an actor often I would sit down and try and write, always with it in mind to try and redress the number of parts for women, and also, as a performer, to create a vehicle for myself.

I didn't perform in the Wellington production of *Frontwoman*, although I did consider it, because really it's crazy to try and write, direct and perform in the same piece. I ended up directing because there was no other woman to do it at that time

and I didn't want a man to direct it.

A new production opens on 6 May at the Little Maidment in Auckland and runs until 27 May. The cast will be quite different, it's pretty much an entirely new venture. Except for Madeline McNamara and Nathan Gray the cast will be all Auckland actors and Sonny Amey is directing it, which is wonderful. Lucy Sheehan, Michael Morrissey (of *Gloss* fame), Philip Gordon, Belinda Weymouth (who is also stage managing) and I will be in it.

As far as I know *Frontwoman* is the first truly New Zealand, full-length lesbian play. Although there is Bruce Mason's *Blood of the Lamb*, I don't really consider that a lesbian play: the whole tone of it is that lesbians wore suits and pretended they were men. That's one voice, but I think that *Frontwoman* is the first entire play that has been written by a lesbian woman and performed in New Zealand.

The Wellington season played to absolutely packed houses. The audience included very strong support from women, although men certainly came. And there was a very strong lesbian audience. It was very exciting. Many lesbian women came twice or three times and were very supportive and really focused things to make one realise that there hadn't been anything for

us. While this is not the definitive play on the multitudinous issues of being a woman who loves a woman, it is a start. It won't please everybody but it pleases a lot of people because it operates on a number of levels. It looks at the whole nature of being a closet lesbian and the fragile safety that provides as well as the societal responses to lesbianism. Tilly, the neighbour is a gauge of one aspect of that, the husband is another, and the son yet another.

What have you been doing apart from Frontwoman?

Recently I have been very involved with *Hen's Teeth* (see review by Judith Dale in March *Broadsheet*). The piece that Carmel McGlone and I developed about the two men who had been along to a men's group and discovered "the woman within" was very successful and we are extending that for a season at Circa theatre in Wellington in late August. We have to write another hour and a half of material for the two characters – and that's a lot of material. The only way I can actually do it is by making sure I've got a deadline.

Hen's Teeth is a very movable company. It was Kate Jason-Smith's idea to have a very fluid kind of format so you have ten to fifteen women doing five or ten minute acts each, with an MC, which was

Lee Hatherly, connecting them up. So each piece was a component that could be slotted in or out on a particular night. The audience could come three nights in a row and see three lots of performers, because it was constantly changing. It's grown into quite an enormous thing and broke box office records.

There has been a real lack of anything in the way of "women's humour" in New Zealand. The only real comparison I can think of is Sue Ingleton, who was here from Australia a while ago now. It's that kind of humour that is, well, feminist, and funny.

Hen's Teeth obviously did something, because it just packed them in, it was incredible the response it got. The audience included the sort of people you don't usually see at the Depot Theatre, it's quite alternative.

Are there any plans to bring *Hen's Teeth* to Auckland?

There's nothing definite, but a possibility of a tour. At the moment it's still very vague. At the moment all my energy is taken up with *Frontwoman*.

I hope there are more offshoots from *Hen's Teeth*. A number of those involved have discovered they have skills for humour they didn't know about, a comic voice. There's no way the whole concept is going to die. Both the audience and the performers for women's theatre are there, and up until a little while ago there have been so few vehicles for women, as I said earlier.

Do you make a living in the theatre?

Sometimes it's great, sometimes it ain't! You can go through a period of being very rich (which for me is having two thousand dollars) and you can go through a period of being very poor (like having about \$26 in your account - or being in overdraft). There's no consistency in your income, it's incredibly spasmodic. Last year I did the *Rainbow Warrior* film, which was wonderful, a series that hasn't been shown here yet. We went on location to Sydney, it was great, and very well paid. Then you can spend three months on the dole while you're desperately trying to write your last draft, wondering where your next bunch of radishes is going to come from! It's very inconsistent, but I don't mind that, I've come to terms with the fact that that's what working in the theatre is.

Have you, personally, thought beyond *Frontwoman* and *Hen's Teeth*?

I think I'm probably going to tour with this show with Carmel, and I would like to do *Frontwoman* in Sydney or Melbourne. But apart from those, you never know in this kind of life what's going to happen six months on. It's a very itinerant life, and you go with what's there. If there's something good there that requires your energy, it's really important to go with that and take risks. That's very much how I feel with *Frontwoman* at the moment. It's hard

to know how it will go in Auckland. There's not much theatre happening here, so I think it's very important to do the play so that hopefully other women write lesbian plays.

I've been reading an anthology of American lesbian plays. Some of them are good and some are terrible. But there are so few of them. The woman who put together the anthology had searched high and low for plays to include, and I think there are about five in this collection. I have a strong wish to put lesbian women on the stage. It's important to me because I am a lesbian and I didn't want to shy away from that when I started seriously writing. You write from where you are at, there's no doubt about that.

I used to see myself as just an actor, along with many others. I certainly came from a political viewpoint and never wanted to do stuff that was compromising, but I was working very much mainstream, in Wellington. Over the last few years when I've got pissed off with the little men in theatre, I have had a desire to be totally independent of them. (There are some very nice male directors, but also some absolute arseholes.) I don't want to be dependent on them, hence going off into my own direction and feeling often that if you believe you can do it you can. The thought comes first and if you are branching off into a new direction you can come from the standpoint of "is there enough money to do it, is there enough support, is this viable" or you can decide to do it and go ahead. The only way I have achieved anything over the last two years is by making a deadline for myself and believing that I can do it and therefore doing it. I think we can create for ourselves an image that we can reach.

I have gone off on this wonderful tangent of being very committed to women's theatre and I'm now starting to think we need to have a women's theatre company. The response from women in general and lesbians in particular to *Frontwoman*, to *Strip*, which played at the Depot at the beginning of last year, to the *Digger* and *Nudger* characters (the two newly "aware" men that Lorae and Carmel play), makes me realise there is something there to be explored. I feel I have got away from the mainstream, which is frightening in a way, because I may want to work in that way again. But rather than see it as going into a corner I think of it as a world of possibilities opening.

Last year I was very pleased because I won, in a list of accolades in Wellington's *Evening Post* (which is admittedly one person's opinion), the best up-coming director for *Frontwoman* and the best comedy performance for *Digger* and *Nudger*, and two of the actors I directed in *Frontwoman* got the best female drama performances awards. I was very pleased

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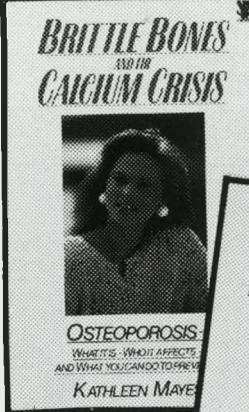
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with that because to have that kind of recognition in a way that is an offshoot of the mainstream theatre is good. It makes you realise you are having some impact on a wide scale.



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CLAUDIA POND EYLEY
RKS Gallery, Auckland

The shields that have almost become a trademark are still a central part of much of Claudia Pond Eyley's paintings. They dominate this exhibition, but with significant developments. Also included are a number of still-life prints: bold vases and flowers, leafy forms, bright blue sky, a red strip. Very attractive and appealing pieces where colour (orange/green/red/blue with black and yellow) is as much the subject as the images.

The paintings are strong, bold and complex. The symbols that have been core to most of Claudia's recent work are still there – a particular photograph of herself, shells, babies, hand-prints, Stonehenge, young, old and mythical female figures, words: earth, fire, water, stone, air. And, as well, some images of earlier shield painting. Like a complex history of herself, showing what has brought her to where she is now. Contained within the shield, sometimes a shape and no more, sometimes with a leafy border, order created.

There are important differences from earlier works, new elements. The most striking are "heaven sent": not quite maps of the heavens, more suggestions of maps, diagrams, grids. And one lot of shells are labelled, anchored with their names in science. The snakes seem new to me – have I missed them in past works? A tree-of-life image, a bit tatty, "coloured in", is in many of the paintings. Claudia takes an

idea, an image, a symbol, uses and re-uses it, brings it back, associates it differently: it becomes an element in the history of her paintings. Not buried-in-the-past history, but history to keep in the foreground, history that creates our present.

Two of the paintings are extremely large: "Tree of Life Diptych" and "Pacific Yellow-cake Diptych". ("Diptych" refers to each work being on two separate canvases.) The words on "Tree of Life Diptych" are indistinct, hard to read: entrance, emergence, attainment, initiation, demonstration (which breaks down to "monstra" and "demon" in places). You have to concentrate on them to read them. The shield borders are leafy, there's that tree of life image again, that photograph of Claudia... "Pacific Yellow-cake Diptych" is beautiful. The yellow is so bright and clear, the images iconic – baby, butterfly, artists, egg, tree – the overall effect one of life and beauty.

"Wings Over Water" is a painting using the same images as one of the prints. It's also on the invitation card for the show. The "wings" are leaves, the impression both decorative and elemental. "Square Shield" is subdued. Cream on fawn, black shield outline, no decoration. That tree of life image again. The one painting in the show with no obvious links to the shield imagery is "Communication by Air". It has a real "map of heaven" feel, with a black ground, stars, connecting lines, a non-contemporary woman, snakes.

It is always true that art gives more to those who are prepared to engage with it. Claudia's works have an immediate, dramatic impact, but also reward viewers who take time to give them attention and allow the images/icons/symbols to make

connections and new meanings. To me they are very woman-derived meanings, to do with the connectedness of past and present. Rather than speak directly to the concerns of the material world they create a sense of possible form and order, they show us, now, one woman's vision of what could be universal.

MAUREEN LANDER
Installation "Space to Breathe"
and small works.
Proba Gallery, Auckland.

Muka has always been a significant material in Maureen Lander's work. In "Space to Breathe" she uses the stalk of the flax flower – long, black, curved – as well as fibre made from the flax leaves. With the flower-stalks she has created open archways you can move through. The forms are grand, cathedral-like, even awe-inspiring. Among them are a number of hanging triangles of mesh, with hanging threads of muka. Through one side arch a mesh double triangle (diamond) threaded with white feathers stands like an altar.

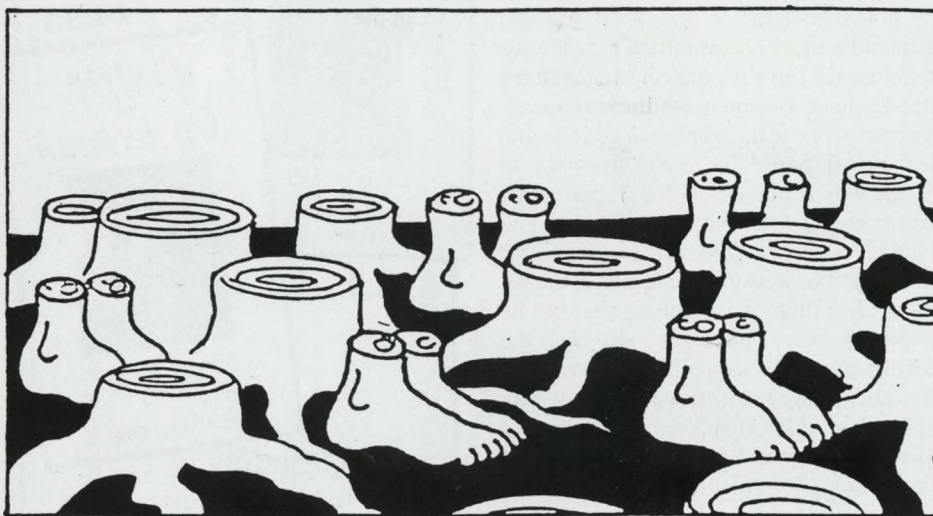
It's all set up in a white room. The overall feeling is one of tranquility. Standing in the midst of it, letting my mind drift, looking at the "hairy" triangle that hangs in what could be the the end of a corridor or an altar-place, I didn't get any of the sense of oppressive grandness that cathedrals evoke. It was open, airy, peaceful, with "space to breathe" rather than closed in, heavy, bearing down.

Maureen Lander's use of "humble" materials like the flax-flower stalks, in conjunction with carefully crafted muka, pure-white feathers and fibre-glass mesh, is a metaphor for the ideas and origins this piece connects and expresses.

This theme continues through all the smaller works hung in an adjoining room. A group of three is called "Sky Cloaks": Iorangi (light cloud, cirrus, god emblem); Manawarangi (a cloud tinged with colour); and Purapurawhetu (seedling stars). They are tiny muka cloak forms, each hanging in an open-box frame, two tied in front as though being worn, one pinned flat.

In the series of three called "Genealogy" fine cibachrome (photographic paper) strips are included with the mesh, feathers and muka. The individual pieces are called Whakapapa (to make layers, genealogy) I and II and Ahi kaa (ancestral fires, land occupation rights). The strips look like threads among the feathers, and the pieces are triangular in triangle-shaped frames hung alternately pointing up and down. They are very beautiful.

Other works are grouped as "Biculturalism". Living Together is a lovely combination of muka and feathers. Mediator/Takawaenga picks up the archway theme from the installation piece, with smaller



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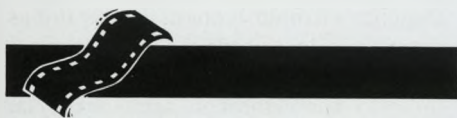


PHOTO: GIL HANLY

korari, mesh and muka combining to give an impression of quiet stability and confidence that it would be lovely to see reflected in the actual world of negotiation. Viewpoints consists of a series of seven works, again triangular, and hung in the same alternating fashion as the "Genealogy" series. They are made up of feathers and photographs of feathers (symbolic of the two cultures?), carefully arranged in triangles.

All of Maureen Lander's work is impeccably and meticulously constructed and in this it reminds me of Carole Shepherd's. She brings together ideas, thoughts and feelings from disparate sources (most notably Maori and Pakeha) and creates ordered possibilities for them, at the same time creating beautiful works of art.

Pat Rosier



THE ACCUSED
Directed by Jonathan Kaplan

Sarah Tobias (powerfully portrayed by Jodie Foster) is a working class woman who goes to her local bar one night and is raped on a pinball machine by three men.

While this is happening, others cheer – "poke that pussy, make her groan" – clap, and encourage the rapists.

Assigned the task of proving Sarah's attackers guilty of rape, assistant district attorney Katheryn Murphy (Kelly McGillis) decides off her own bat that Sarah Tobias won't make a good witness. You know the type – an uneducated waitress, drinks, smokes dope, swears – no jury in their right mind would believe her story. So instead of taking the men to court and giving Sarah a chance to open her mouth, Murphy does a plea bargain with the men's lawyers. She changes the charge to "reckless endangerment" in exchange for their guilty plea and guaranteed imprisonment for two years (nine months with good behaviour). All this without consulting the woman she is supposed to be represent-

ing.

The Accused is one of the strongest mainstream American movies I've seen for a long time. It's not perfect, it doesn't go as far as it could, but believe me it goes a lot further than most would expect.

Traditionally, being "the accused" in a rape case has been synonymous with being the woman victim in that the onus has always been on the woman to prove her "innocence" before guilt of the rapist can be assured. *The Accused* throws a harsh

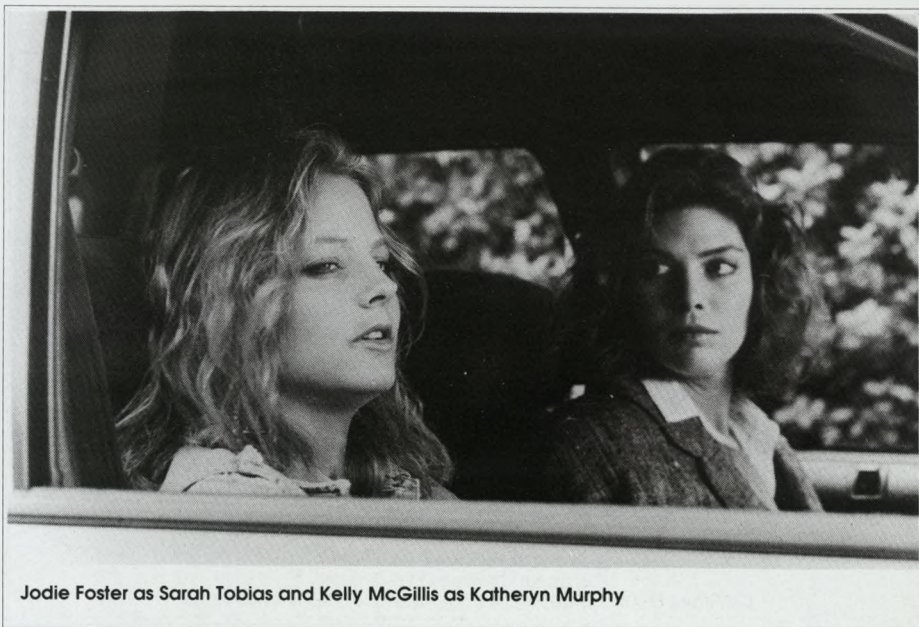
light on this inversion, and levels accusations where they rightly belong, at the feet of men.

Not only do the rapists and the cheer-men who urged them on stand accused, but questions are also asked of the male society which makes violence toward each other and toward women a stamp of a "real" man. The film is dotted with icons of macho-ness: the poster of James Dean with faithful leather jacket and motorbike; the TV boxing match watched by spectators in the bar at the same time as Sarah is being brutalised; the painted image of the woman stuffed into a basketball hoop which decorates the pinball machine on which Sarah is raped; and the ice hockey game where the district attorney and his legal eagles scream for their heroes to take out the opposition with a fist, stiff arm, anything, as long as it's hard and it hurts.

What all this achieves is to place Sarah's rape in the context of violence, something that feminism has been doing for many decades now. *The Accused* exposes a continuous scale of violence, albeit a simplified one, that not even "respectable" men are exempt from.

Nor does this film idealise the support offered to victims of rape. When Sarah is being examined and counselled by the women doctor and rape crisis worker a yawning chasm of classism opens up between her experience and theirs, a gap made more overt later in Sarah's relationship with Katheryn Murphy. Sarah's boyfriend is predictably less concerned about Sarah's feelings than how her lack of interest in sex is affecting him.

There is a telling juxtaposition of scenes which emphasises this isolation when the news breaks that Sarah's assailants have been released on bail. Sarah learns of this from the TV at work while she is serving some dissatisfied customers. None of her workmates know she has been raped; she is totally isolated and unsupported. The



Jodie Foster as Sarah Tobias and Kelly McGillis as Katheryn Murphy

PHOTO: ROB MCEWEN

next scene is of one of the rapists, the college boy, sitting in front of the same TV news item surrounded by his college mates. He acknowledges their clapping and support by bowing to them like some sports hero who has just scored the winning goal. That simple contrast of scenes says a lot about the reality of rape for its victims and perpetrators.

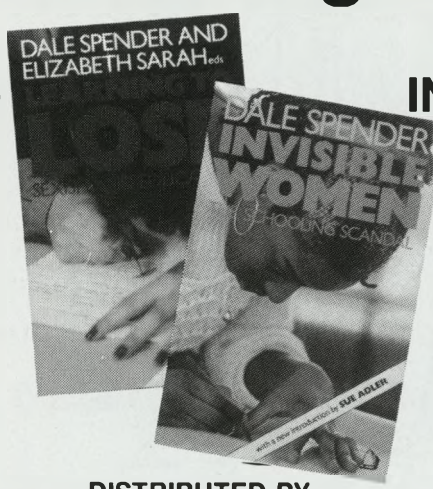
Prodded by a confrontation with Tobias in which Jodie Foster turns in a powerhouse performance carrying the audience on a rollercoaster of emotions from pure anger to despair, Kathryn Murphy is forced to reconsider the reasons she sold her client out. Then faced with the reality of her actions after talking with one of the men who cheered on Sarah's rape, Murphy decides to prosecute them for "criminal solicitation", in other words making a crime take place.

If you want to know the outcome of the subsequent trial you're going to have to see the movie yourself. Its most notable feature is the recreation of the rape scene as related by the prosecution's chief witness, Ken Joyce, who also happens to be a friend of the college kid who raped Sarah. Through him the audience is shown the brutality of Sarah's rape. The camera changes viewpoints, alternating between what Sarah sees, what Ken sees, and what the men see. The film makers did well to avoid making this scene voyeuristic. What we are presented with is the sheer ugliness, violence and disrespect of these men. It is made horribly clear in this scene that rape has nothing to do with sex and everything to do with violence.

My only criticism of *The Accused* is one or two moments of sentimentality that


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make me think that American film makers deliberately set out to ruin a good story. Why does Sarah have to sign Kathryn's astrology chart in order to say thank you, it adds nothing but saccharine to a script that doesn't gel with being sweetened. Likewise, why does Ken have to be likened to a saint with backlighting for a halo effect? All Ken did was to tell the truth, but because he resisted copping out and joining the boys' club by lying to protect his friend, the audience is supposed to see him as Mr Nice Guy. Oh well, his smile looks as sincere as Ronald McDonald's anyway.

I'm under no illusions that everyone will like *The Accused*, but I was very affected by it. Jodie Foster deserves every bit of the Best Actress Oscar she won for this role. Sarah Tobias is a gutsy character who recovers her self worth. In that sense it's a bit of a fairytale. There are plenty of women who live and die with rape. The woman whose real life gang rape on a pool table in a New Bedford bar inspired Tom Topor to write this film, died recently in an alcohol related car accident. I wonder what she would have thought of *The Accused*.

The film ends with statistics: in the United States a rape is reported every six minutes. One out of every four rape victims is attacked by two or more assailants. *The Accused* gives ordinary audiences some idea of what that means and what its implications are.

Lisa Sabbage

EAT THE RICH
 Dir. Peter Richardson
 At the Bridgeway (Auckland)
 from 5 May

The title, *Eat the Rich*, a popular slogan amongst the economically oppressed in Thatcher's Britain, is one of the best things about this film, which is an extension of the type of anarchic humour that we have come to know through series like *The Young Ones*, where nothing is sacred nor exempt from ridicule.

The setting is a futuristic Britain where naked thuggery, epitomised by the beer-swilling, punch-throwing Home Secretary, Noshier, rules the day. Problems are sorted out with the fist amidst the adulation of the public who take on football hooligan

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characteristics.

Our hero, transvestite Alex, is a waiter in an exclusive restaurant, Bastards, where the rich throng to eat such delicacies as baby panda fried in honey. Endangered species litter the kitchens, acting as a symbol for the rape of the environment in the name of profit, and are disdainfully served by the waiters. Alex carries his contempt for the customers (and his rival colleague) too far and is unceremoniously thrown out of his job. Forsaken by his friends, Alex joins the downtrodden. The only one who gives him the remotest comfort is a down-and-out who shares the sports pages with Alex in order to keep the cold wind out as they sleep rough.

Alex's destitution grows until in desperation he is driven to shooting the Department of Social Security clerk (played by Amanda Richardson of *Black Adder* and *Dance with a Stranger* fame) who sips cocktails as she deals with the poor. The plot thickens and two stories emerge, running parallel to each other. The first deals with the fascist Noshers' shenanigans; the second with Alex's revolutionary activities. Inevitably the two, Noshers and Alex, come face to face in a climactic showdown.

I'm a great fan of the Comic Strip crowd, especially people like Alexei Sayle, Rik Mayall, Nigel Planer, Robbie Coltrane and French and Saunders. However, in this film, the British public school boy humour of people like Planer and Mayall predominates. I do get tired of the masses being portrayed as gullible thickos who would follow the *Sun's* ideal political leader. But perhaps my biggest criticism of the film is that once again women are clearly on the periphery, with their existence dependent upon some man. They are either ambitious, gullible or stupid as well as largely absent in the main roles. Also, there are so few brown faces one could be led to believe that modern Britain is racially uniform. Regardless of the rest of the humour such a limiting view begins to gall. And the heavy metal music adds to the irritation.

The upshot is that I don't mind ridicule and laughter aimed at the rich and powerful but I find it inappropriate and not funny when it is aimed at members of oppressed groups.

Athina Tsoulis



HEALING YOUR CHILD
Frances and Louise Darrach
New Women's Press

I have been waiting a long time for this book. When my children were young and

got sick I would grit my teeth and take them to the doctor. Then I had to sit and listen to a male doctor spout on about the virtues of antibiotics and how a child could be given them for months on end with no harm done! My objections and observations would be patronisingly dismissed or belittled. I was thought a bit peculiar when I asked for medication without sugar or food colouring—a dangerous combination to load your child up with at the best of times, never mind when they're ill.

I longed to have information on alternative remedies at hand in order to reduce my dependency on doctors. When it came to my own health I could afford to wait and look around for a good doctor but it felt more urgent when the children got ill. And I didn't have the time to immediately locate a good alternative health person.

This book gives me access to information on treating children, organised in alphabetic order under various childhood afflictions. Each section begins with a description of the complaint, what to do in an emergency and a detailed description of different homeopathic, herbal and cell salt remedies. This layout makes it very easy to use, especially when you are feeling tired and frazzled with a sick child to deal with.

There are introductory sections on the selection, handling and use of herbal, homeopathic and cell salt therapies, as well as on resistance, immunity and immunisation. Conventional medicine is not dismissed out of hand and a list of symptoms indicating when it is advisable to seek medical advice is given.

Athina Tsoulis

**ALTERNATIVE HEALTH CARE
FOR WOMEN**
Patsy Westcott
Collins \$22.95

This is an excellent book which complements *Healing Your Child*. Its emphasis is not just on illness, but on prevention: who is more prone to get what and how to minimise your chances of getting ill. It looks at orthodox medical treatment, its advantages and disadvantages, and then details all the other treatments available. The section on cancer, especially breast cancer, is particularly useful as Prescott's view is that "because breast cancer is so common it's well worth thinking about *it now*, then if you should ever need to, you will be in a better position to make the choices that are right for you."

Although this is an Australian book, the only thing that will not be of use to New Zealand readers is the list of addresses.

Athina Tsoulis



Bandana at work, from left to right, Anna Cahill, Annabel Lomas, Andrea Kelland

PHOTO: GIL HANLY



FROM PAGE TO STAGE

Bandana is Auckland's newest professional theatre company, and it just happens to be a company of three dynamic women, Annabel Lomas, Andrea Kelland and Anna Cahill.

Born in 1988, Bandana specialises in performance in schools, combining drama with education to bring learning alive for the audience. Bandana's first project "A.B.C." by David Holman was received enthusiastically in Auckland and Wellington schools. "From Page to Stage" is the company's newest presentation.

"From Page to Stage" shows the process of bringing a script alive. Actors and director work on scenes from Renee's play "Wednesday to Come" in a dramatic and entertaining show. The production is tailored to the fifth form English syllabus and designed to help teachers with teaching production experience and critical awareness. The piece is also appropriate for sixth and seventh form English classes. It puts theatre study into simple language and defines theatrical terms, exploring the moving and shaping aspects of drama.

Bandana is taking the production on a North Island Tour, beginning in Auckland from 22 May to 9 June, and again from 26 June to 18 August. Performances in Northland will be between 12 and 23 June.

For more information and bookings phone Andrea (09)370-336.



WAITING: The Album
Turiya
Jayrem

The women's band Turiya has been quiet for the last couple of years with all three women (Jyosna, Kim and Diipali) away overseas furthering other artistic interests. The re-release of *Waiting* as an extended album has coincided with the homecoming of Jyosna and Diipali and the trio combining creative talents again.

Turiya began composing and playing experimental acoustic/electric music back in 1983 in a loft above a bakery in Auckland. Since then they've produced several tapes, a video for TVNZ, toured New South Wales and the North Island, and joined up with the contemporary percussion group From Scratch to produce "Pacific Peace 3,2,1,0," which performed at the 1986 Biennale. In 1987 Turiya received a QEII Arts Council grant to produce a multi-media show "Song and Silence", a tribute to the great spiritual women of Eire, Tibet and India.

Turiya (meaning "unity") blends strong vocal harmonies, poetic lyrics and acoustic exploration into a tapestry of melody, emotion and imagery.

TURIIYA
ARE
JYOSNA
DIIPALI
AND
KIM



Original and unusual effects from self-made instruments and imaginative percussion feature throughout the album. In "Whale Song" the rise and fall of an instrumental break is underscored by a waterphone creating the sensation of watery depths and ultra-sonic communications; an amplified bread-tin, wire-strung and filled with seashells captures the timeless sound of the ocean. This piece calls us to surrender, not in a passive sense but to take responsibility for our lives, to assess our egos, values and motivation, and to learn the lessons of compassion and cooperation which the whales symbolise.

Waiting is a combination of atmospheric instrumentals, political ballads and acoustic "heart" songs.

"Ship in the Harbour", a medley of percussion, clarinet and cello bow on electric bass, evokes the journey of a ship through a storm, while "our life journey... to just be who we are" is captured in one of

the new tracks "Homecoming":
*many moons have passed
seasons come and gone
you remain in our hearts
both now and beyond
now the cycle has turned
and we must go on."*

This sense of timeless connection and spiritual inspiration underlies Turiya's music.

And now after a two year break Turiya is bringing together new elements drawing upon their experiences apart. They will be performing around Auckland and touring in the USA at the end of the year. Any women wishing to buy an album can contact Kim (09)760-162.

Arani Cuthbert

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The first song on side two is the hit "Orinoco Flow" with the haunting lyrics "sail away, sail away, sail away". This is the song you may have seen on television with Enya draped in swathes of cloth against a background of birds, flowers and ships.

The same lyrical feeling that "Orinoco Flow" evokes, emanates through the entire album. The music and rhythms are beautiful and Enya's voice is sometimes sepulchral. I urge anyone out there to listen to the layers of instrumental sounds spread over layers of vocals which sound like a choir at times. It will send you to another time and place.

One particularly haunting song "Cursum Perticio" is written in Latin and was inspired by the inscription on the portico of Marilyn Monroe's last home which means "my journey ends here."

Enya is Irish and *Watermark* conveys that Celtic tradition in its melodic songs incorporating organs and bagpipes. Some of the songs are written entirely in Gaelic which further enhances a feeling of being in an old, medieval world of innocence.
Tanya Hopman

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LISTING

< BOOKS WE DON'T HAVE SPACE TO REVIEW >

These four women have been friends since college (American-style). One dies, which brings the other three together. They've got careers and money and they're really into men. They're witty and clever (just like the author, Barbara Ruskin) and spend a lot of time at airports. Their age-group is indicated in the title **Hot Flashes** (published by Corgi), they believe in women's liberation and are more or less liberated personally. They are presented as "typical" women of their time, but of course they aren't. *Hot Flashes* is fairly well written but has far too many lists of what these women do and don't do, think and feel. Almost worth reading but dangerous in the way it over-generalises the experience of a few, well-off women.

Out The Other Side: Contemporary Lesbian Writing is edited by Christian McEwan and Sue O'Sullivan and published by Virago. It's a very rich and varied collection of lesbian writing from the UK and the US, some famous others not. The six sections: Beginnings; Inside the body; Family and relationships; Speaking action, Living words; Recovery; and Power and Coalition group the work sensibly. Everyone who reads this collection wants to tell you about their favourite pieces - it gets us talking.

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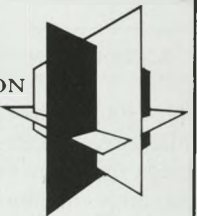
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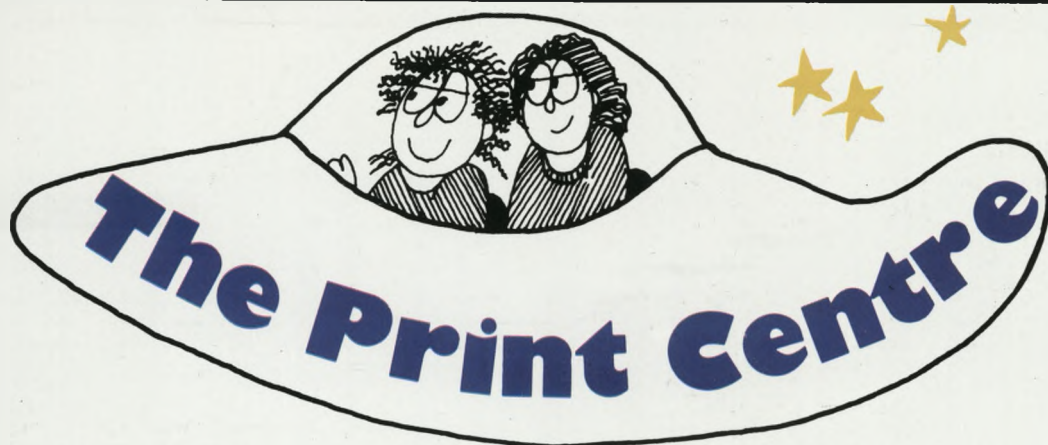
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